

## Love People

Focus for 2012 = Love God, Love People (do this and you will have done everything)

Last week - Loving God - not free for all, but loving God as Bible says we should love God

- obeying God / not loving world/ loving others / with our whole-selves (**all** of us/time/situations)
- question = how does how we love God stack up with how Bible says we should? (Are you in?)

This week - Loving People - which is one of the clearest ways our lives show our love for God

- again not free for all, Jesus gives us a standard (read John 15:1-17 = how Jesus loved)

But before we get to the how to - **IMPORTANT!!!** -

in order to be able to love like Jesus consistently / to greater extents / long term...

**JESUS SAYS WE MUST BE GROWING IN OBEDIENCE TO HIS COMMANDS (vs 9-10)**

- obedience is at the heart of a what it means to have & be in a relationship with Jesus
- issue: not perfect obedience - but, is obedience both the desire/direction of your life?
- did you become more like Jesus in 2011? More faith/ trust/ victory/obedience/peace/patience...
- all of us room for growth - if you haven't grown (at best: coasting / at worst: not following Jesus)
- hear Jesus again: v.14 - You are my friends **if** you do what I command

And it's in that context that Jesus says...(read v.12-13)

- so how did Jesus love us? how does he wants us to love one another? (characteristics of his love?)

**HUMBLE!** (Phil 2:3-8) Jesus' humility

- consider others more important = serve others because of their value to God - point them to God

**SACRIFICIAL (vs. 6-8)** closely connected to humility/ result of humility

- a sacrificial love is willing to lose so that someone else might gain (especially spiritually)
- somewhere along the line loving like Jesus will cost you/ no be fair

**MERCIFUL & GRACIOUS (Romans 6:23 - wages=death/ gift=eternal life)**

- doesn't repay according to what others deserve, but freely gives them love don't deserve

**UNCONDITIONAL (Romans 5:8 - God demonstrates his own love for us in this...)**

- just like there was no criteria we had to first meet or work for in order to receive God's love
- no one should ever feel there's certain criteria they must possess in order to receive our love

**SPECIFICS OF JESUS' LOVE - 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (how we've been loved/how God expects us**

**Loving like Jesus loved is not: easy, fun, won't always feel good, turn out great, will cost you**

- so why do it? two reasons: that's how Jesus loved us (1John 4:19 can't love like Jesus until... )
- two: the results far outweigh the cost (Matt. 10:39 expand )
- Phil 2:6-11 expand & 1 John 3:14
- (John 15:10-11) - we will have Jesus' joy in us, our joy will be complete (this life/next)
- (John 13:35) - first/foremost - this love is the love we are to practice in body of Christ
- when we do the world will know we are Jesus' disciples (point = see Jesus!)

Aside: -this is not permission for Christians to treat each other however they feel like it

This is not about your strength, ability, effort - none of that will be enough to love like Jesus loved

- but as you commit to living in obedience to him in both your desire and your direction
- you will find this Phil. 2:12 God will give you the desire & the power to love this way
- question: do you love this way, if you're a Xian, this is not a choice=command - what's next step?