

God Loves You Pt 12

April 3, 2022

They Will Know We Are Christians By Our Love

Intro music “Let it Be Love” by Unspoken

John 13:34,35... ³⁴ *“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.”* ³⁵ *By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”*

There is no doubt in my mind that most all of you would agree that Love is the Key Component Characteristic for Christians. Sometimes, however, Love does not show itself in every thought word and action. It is easy to let other emotions and previous ways of response guide the way we respond.

Remember my goal is to saturate you with such a strong understanding and focus on love that it is the natural and 1st response that comes from us.

I want to share some thoughts from Charles Stanley’s Life Principle Notes on Loving God that may be helpful. Portions in Blue are a direct quote from his work.

Portions adapted from LIFE PRINCIPLES NOTES | LP121007 Loving God Charles Stanley

➤ **Let’s 1st look at some possible reasons why people don’t really love the Lord!**

- They don’t know Him.
- They’re afraid of the Lord’s judgment.
- They’re uncomfortable because their sin doesn’t mix with His holiness.
- They don’t want to alter their lifestyles.
- They think loving the Lord would interfere with their conduct and lifestyle choices.
- They are ashamed of what others may think

MOTHER'S FACE... Calvin Miller reminds us of the fable of the little girl whose mother's face was hideously scarred from an early injury. As the little girl grew, made friends, and gained her own identity, she became more and more ashamed of her mother's horrid appearance. As she walked down the street with her mother, she noticed people moving over to the far side of the walk or even crossing the street to avoid them. Gradually, the girl found ways to avoid being with her mother in public. Eventually, the girl became an adult, married, and moved to another town. Her lonely mother suffered financial setbacks and faced basic hunger. Her daughter continued to ignore her, even in such destitute circumstances. One day the daughter discovered an old diary of her mother's. It described a horrible fire that swept through their home. The mother rushed into the burning house, scooped her daughter into her arms, and ran back out, burning herself beyond belief.

The truth dawned on the girl. Her mother's horrific scars came from saving the daughter's life.

A new kind of shame raced through her heart and soul. She went to her mother and threw her arms around what now appeared to be a beautiful face. In tears she expressed her gratitude for all her mother had done. A new love relationship controlled their lives from then on (Miller, *Until He Comes*, p. 139).

So often we depend on outward appearances as we choose our leaders and friends. We do not look behind appearances to find the truth about a person, a program, or an organization and their abilities to help us. They feel uncertain about God and the future because they have no assurance about what awaits them after death.

- They can't understand why the Lord allows tragedies and disasters to happen. They don't realize God has a definite, loving purpose in whatever He permits.

➤ Second, let's look at some misconceptions people who say they love God may have

- ❖ Mistaking the fear of the Lord for love of Him. We can revere God by recognizing He is holy and just, but that doesn't necessarily mean we have fully given our hearts, souls, and minds to Him.

- ❖ Confusing our need with love. Most of us are quick to bring our cares and concerns to the Lord in prayer because we need His help, but that may

merely be evidence of our need for Him, not our love for Him.

- ❖ Equating serving God with loving Him. Instead of being motivated by devotion to Christ, some people simply enjoy the satisfaction that comes with serving.

- ❖ Assuming giving is always a sign of love. If we simply put money into the offering plate because we've been taught to give or because we know we should, love for God plays no part in our generosity.

- ❖ Thinking that religious acts equal love for God. Singing, teaching, preaching, and sharing the gospel may not be expressions of love if they are done only out of obligation.

➤ **Finally, Let's Look at some characteristics of someone who truly loves God, and Loves Others**

John 13:34,35... ³⁴ *"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."*

- **Desire to** obey and serve Him.
- Delight in sharing Him with others.
- Trust Him.
- Crave fellowship with Him.
- Desire to worship and give to Him.
- Want to defend Him and the gospel.
- Make time to study His Word.
- Be willing to suffer for Him.
- **We will** make it a pattern to tell people that they are loved by God and loved by you.
- We will be kind, considerate and respectful of other people.
- We will listen, and seek to guide people with wisdom, insight, patience and respect.
- We will seek to be involved in acts of service for other people.
- We will share the gospel in a way that is understandable and respectful of their free will.
- We will not give up on them, yet allowing them the space they need to process God's love

"If we genuinely love the Lord, our lives will show it, and others will notice that there is something different about us. We'll have inner satisfaction and contentment that no amount of success, prosperity, or popularity can provide. That's because we were created to love God, and no other pursuit will ever satisfy us. As we learn more about our heavenly Father, our love for Him grows, and it permeates our lives as we live for His glory and purpose and give ourselves totally to Him". (Stanley)