

### **11.17.19 ~ Ephesians 5:1-2, Loving One Another, as God Loves Us**

Jesus Christ died for sinners like you and me. He paid the highest price and He suffered the greatest pain -- so that anyone who believes in Him will be spiritually born again into God's eternal family.

The OT is full of God's promises about the coming Savior, born of a woman yet the Son of God, He would serve as the Sacrificial Lamb of God, the Propitiation for all our sin.

The NT records the fulfillment of these promises declaring that Jesus Christ is the Savior, and that He paid the penalty for our sins, demonstrating God's love for us, that we might not perish but have eternal life.

**Read Ephesians 5:1-2.** We are commanded to imitate God, to live a life of love, as did Jesus Christ, for He was God in the flesh, and we are to follow His example: **Colossians 1:15**, "He [Jesus Christ] is the image of the invisible God the firstborn over all creation."...**19**, "For it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him."

**Colossians 2:9**, "For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form."

**1John 2:6**, "the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked."

**Read 1John 4:7-8.** Love and obedience are synonymous and they are to be reflected through the actions and the attitudes of a Christian's life.

Just as God has expressed His love for us, we also are to express our love for one another; in fact, for a person to say he/she is a Christian, and at the same time to be unwilling to forgive another Christian, is a contradiction; for, God is Love, and if you are His child you will also love.

**Read 1John 4:9-10.** God sent His Son to take our punishment for sin. This is God's greatest expression of love and His greatest gift to mankind; for through the sacrificial death and sovereign resurrection of Jesus God promises that everyone who will trust Christ to save them receives eternal life from God (cf. **John 3:14-15**; **2Corinthians 5:21**; **Romans 10:9-13**).

Jesus is the once-for-all atoning sacrifice for all our sins (the final and full payment that satisfied God's righteous judgment on sin). Jesus died for the sins of the whole world, but only those who repent and believe are freed from the penalty of sin (cf. **John 3:16-21**).

In fact (**John 5:24**), "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life" (cf **Romans 5:8**; **8:1**).

**Read 1John 4:11-12.** You and I do not deserve God's merciful expression of love, sending His own Son to die in our place, for our sins. But, if you have been born again by God, you will seek to serve God by living a life of love, i.e., knowing and obeying God's Word, as you follow the example of God's Son.

Jesus allowed Himself to be put to death and then He raised Himself from the grave by His own power; He alone is the Creator and the Savior of mankind (**John 10:17-18**), "I lay down My life so that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father."

After Christ completed all He came to do, He went back into heaven to the right hand of the Father. Now, we who belong to God, continue to demonstrate God's love here on earth, especially toward our sisters and brothers in Christ (**1Peter 2:17**), "love the brotherhood."

Concerning who our brothers and sisters are, Jesus said (**Luke 8:21**), "My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it."  
**John 1:12-13**, "As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God."

**Read 1John 4:13-18.** God confirms in our heart that we belong to Him; and at the moment of genuine salvation God places His Spirit in us, marking us as His own possession (cf. **Ephesians 1:13-14**).

**1Corinthians 6:19**, "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?"  
**2Corinthians 13:5**, "Test yourselves *to see* if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test?"

When you acknowledge Christ, confessing Him as Savior and Lord, believing that He died for your sins and God raised Him from the grave, you sovereignly belong to Him.

**Read 1John 4:19.** We are able to love others because God first loved us. And if you have received God's love, you will express God's love by loving others in His name. Jesus Christ is not only our Savior, He is our example of what real love is and how we are to love others (cf. **1John 3:16-18**).

Love is not a feeling or an emotion, it is a verb that declares both action and attitude, your sacrificial service unto God is to live a life of love; and this is clearly seen in the way you treat and talk about your sisters and brothers in Christ.

**Read 1John 4:20-21.** If we are to reflect God's love, we will express our love toward our brothers and sisters in Christ (**John 13:35**), "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

I believe everyone of us here today needs to ask God to reveal in our own heart where we have failed to love others on His behalf; where we have failed to forgive those who have offended us, and where we have failed to seek forgiveness from those whom we have offended.

Let there be no mistake, you cannot love God and at the same time continue to be unwilling to express your love toward your brothers and sisters in Christ (i.e., reaching out to, caring for, freely forgiving and freely receiving forgiveness from other Christians).

**Ephesians 5:1**, "Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; **2** and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma."

And all God's children said? Amen!

*Pastor Mike*  
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