

Learning Sacrificial Love

John 15:9-17 (NIV)

"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. ¹¹I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹²My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit--fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. ¹⁷This is my command: Love each other."

1. AS HARD AS IT IS TO LOVE OTHERS, STAYING THERE IS HARDER.

vv. 9-10a "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love..."

- God has put us in relationships for the long haul.
- Loving others can be hard work, if it were natural, He would not have had to issue a command.
- Once we learn the lesson, we learn how to remain there.

2. SACRIFICIAL LOVE DEVELOPS INTO GREAT JOY.

v. 11 "I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete."

- When love is "hit and miss," we usually miss the joy.
- Joy and happiness are not the same.

3. THE CROWNING ACHIEVEMENT OF LOVE IS SACRIFICING FOR OTHERS.

v. 13 "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends."

- The reason Jesus keeps commanding us to love others is that the default mode is to love ourselves.
- Sacrificial love puts the focus clearly on others.

Romans 5:6-8 (NIV)

You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. ⁸But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

4. WE HAVE BEEN ENLISTED TO DEMONSTRATE THE CONSEQUENCES OF LOVE.

v. 16 "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit--fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name."

- You and I have been hand picked for this assignment even before we signed up.
- Demonstrating sacrificial love draws people to Jesus.

On Memorial Day we remember those who have paid the ultimate price for freedom, but we cannot forget the reality that the price Jesus paid for our freedom from sin can be remembered every day.