

Three Degrees of Love for 2018: Communal

1. Three degrees of love for 2018

a. Personal

- i. The love that God has for us out of which all genuine love flows.
- ii. You cannot love in the manner in which you should love as Christians until you are certain of Christ's love for you.
 - (1) Predestined
 - (2) Precious
 - (3) Personal
 - (4) Personified in Christ
- iii. You can find the outline online

b. Communal - Love one another

c. Missional - Love your neighbor

2. Love one another

a. The oft repeated command

- i. **John 15:12 (ESV) *This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.***
- ii. How often
 - (1) Three times in the gospel of John
 - (2) Twice in Romans and six more times in other letters
 - (3) Once in Hebrews
 - (4) Three times in 1 Peter
 - (5) Seven times in 1 John

b. Christ sets love among Christians as a priority for his disciples

- i. They are follow Him
- ii. They are to make disciples
- iii. They are to love one another

3. What "love one another" looks like in real life: "As I have loved you"

a. Means

- i. For the reasons I have loved you
- ii. In the way that I have loved you

b. Reasons and Ways Christ Loves His Disciples

- i. **We are not to love one another any old way or for any old reason, but we are to love one another for the reasons and in the way that Jesus loves us.**
- ii. This priority love is left neither to chance nor imagination nor individual will.
 - (1) It is commanded by Christ
 - (2) It is exemplified by Christ
 - (3) So we ought to turn to Jesus and see how and why he loved and then, do what He does.

4. How Does Jesus Love?

- a. Jesus loves with life sustaining devotion to the Father.
 - i. The first step in love is an unbroken relationship with the Father
 - ii. **John 14:8-11 (ESV)** ⁸ *Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.”* ⁹ *Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹ Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.*
 - iii. Knowing that He is sending His disciples out into the world to love one another as a living testimony to the relationship of the Father and Son, Jesus prays that they will share in the same relationship: **John 17:20-21 (ESV)** ²⁰ *“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.*
 - iv. What is happening in your relationship with the Father these days?
 - (1) Busyness
 - (2) Burnout
 - (3) Bushwhacked
 - v. Come home to love: You don’t have to be driven away from grace by the cares and concerns of this world
 - (1) Devotional choices
 - (2) Bible studies with others
 - (3) Corporate worship
 - (4) Serve other by faith and in the power of Christ
- b. Jesus loves with life surrendering determination
 - i. **John 15:13-14 (ESV)** ¹³ *Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you.*
 - ii. “I Stand Amazed”, Charles Gabriel (native of Iowa)
 - (1) v. 2 For me it was in the garden, He prayed: “Not my will, but Thine.” He had no tears for His own griefs, But sweat-drops of blood for mine.
 - (2) Jesus loves with complete regard for the glory of God and the spiritual need of others
 - iii. Love like this requires the death of self, and sin, and pride, but it is love that experiences glory, saves lives, and changes the world
- c. Jesus loves with life changing precision
 - i. Examples
 - (1) Jesus touches the leper
 - (2) Jesus embraces the children
 - (3) Jesus heals the woman

- (4) Jesus raises the dead
 - (a) Lk 7.11-17 He touches the bier
 - (b) Jesus willingly confronts the misapplication of “uncleanness” in order to love
 - ii. Jesus loves not merely with intent but with action, getting personally involved in the gift of love
 - d. Jesus loves with life embracing compassion
 - i. Jesus feeds the multitudes
 - ii. What is it called when you spend your resources and energy to meet the physical and emotional needs of others by feeding them?
 - (1) Hospitality
 - (a) Love is not about you.
 - (b) Love is not about you meeting your needs to your satisfaction.
 - (c) Love is about spending yourself to meet the needs of others.
 - (2) Coffee After,
 - (a) as an expression of hospitality, is a means to love one another and those whom God brings to join us on the journey, even if only for a single visit.
 - (b) **3 John 1:5-8 (ESV) ⁵ Beloved, it is a faithful thing you do in all your efforts for these brothers, strangers as they are, ⁶ who testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God. ⁷ For they have gone out for the sake of the name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles. ⁸ Therefore we ought to support people like these, that we may be fellow workers for the truth.**
 - (3) As Jesus has loved you, so you should love one another.