

The Source and Object of Man's Love

Introduction

1. **Jesus said:** “This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends” (**John 15:12-13**).
2. **Most everyone of us here this morning certainly understands the great love that God and Jesus demonstrated toward us.**
 - A. **God loved us so much that He gave His only Son**
John 3:16

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

3. **Because of this great love of God, we should be moved to love in return.**

The Source of Man's Love

- 1. We must first recognize the source of our love. Whatever love there is in man, whether it be toward God or toward his fellow man, has its source in God.**

1 John 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

1 John 4:19 We love Him because He first loved us.

- 2. Love in the heart of man is the offspring of the love of God. Only the regenerated heart can truly love as God loves.**

1 John 4:21 And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.

A. The spiritually reborn or restored man is able to see his fellow man as God sees him, value him as God values him.

B. Not so much because of what he is by reason of his sin and unloveliness, but because of what, through Christ, he may become.

- 1) He sees man's intrinsic worth and possibility in Christ.**

2 Corinthians 5:14-17

The Object of Man's Love

The object of our love should be made manifest in our love of God and our love of our fellow man.

1. **God must be the first and supreme object of man's love.**

A. He must be loved with all the heart, mind, soul and strength.

Mark 12:29-34

1) Our love to Him must be undivided

B. Our love to God is shown in the keeping of His commandments.

1 John 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.

2 John 6 This is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, that as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it.

1) Love here is set forth as more than a mere affection or sentiment; it is something that manifests itself, not only in obedience to known Divine commands, but also in a protecting and defense of them.

a. It is also a seeking to know more and more of the will of God in order to express love for God in further obedience.

Deuteronomy 10:12 "And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul,

C. Those who love God will hate evil and all forms of worldliness, as expressed in the avoidance of the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life.

1 John 2:15-17

1) **Whatever may be in our surroundings that would draw our soul away from God and righteousness, that the child of God will avoid.**

D. Christ, being God, also claims the first place in our affections. He is to be chosen before father or mother, parent, or child, brother or sister, or friend

Matthew 10:35-38

1) **The word "hate" in these passages does not mean to hate in the sense in which we use the word today. It is used in the sense in which Jacob is said to have "hated" Leah (Gen 29:31), that is, he loved her less than Rachel; "He loved also Rachel more than Leah" (v 30)**

2) **To love Christ supremely is the test of true discipleship, and is an unfailing mark of the elect.**

1 Peter 1:8 whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,

2. **The love of our fellow man must also be the object of man's love.**

A. **Love for our fellow man is a natural consequence of the love of the fatherhood:**

1 John 3:10 In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.

B. **For a man to say "I love God" and yet hate his fellow-man is to brand himself as "a liar."**

1 John 4:20-21 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.

- 1) **The degree in which we are to love our fellow-man is "as yourself" (NKJV - Matt 22:39).**
- 2) **According to the strict observance of law. Christ set before His followers a much higher example than that, however. According to the teaching of Jesus we are to supersede this standard:**

John 13:34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; **as I have loved you**, that you also love one another.

- a. **The exhibition of love of this character toward our fellow-man is the badge of true discipleship. It may be called the sum total of our duty toward our fellow-man.**

Romans 13:10 **Love does no harm to a neighbor**; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

- 3) **The qualities which should characterize the love which we are to manifest toward our fellow-men are beautifully set forth in **1 Corinthians 13: 1-8a****

C. Our love should be "without hypocrisy" (Rom 12:9).

- 1) There should be no pretense about it; it should not be a thing of mere word or tongue, but a real experience manifesting itself in deed and truth.**

1 John 3:18 My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, **but in deed and in truth.**

- 2) True love will find its expression in service to man.**

Galatians 5:13 For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, **but through love serve one another.**

D. Love bears the infirmities of the weak, does not please itself, but seeks the welfare of others.

Romans 15:1-2 We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. **Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification.**

Philippians 2:3-4 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind **let each esteem others better than himself.** Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

- 1) Love gladly forgives injuries.**

Ephesians 4:32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, **just as God in Christ forgave you.**

- 2) Love gives the place of honor to another.**

Romans 12:10 Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor **giving preference to one another;**

Conclusion

1. **What, then, is more vital than to possess such love?**

A. It is the fulfilment of the royal law.

James 2:8 If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well;

B. It is to be put above everything else and is the binder that holds all the other characteristics of the Christian life in place.

Colossians 3:14 But above all these things **put on love**, which is the bond of perfection.

C. By the possession of such love we know that we have passed from death unto life.

1 John 3:14 We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death.

D. And, it is the supreme test of our abiding in God and God in us.

1 John 4:12-16

