

I GIVE YOU A NEW COMMANDMENT:

“LOVE ONE ANOTHER,, AS I HAVE LOVED YOU”

IT WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE JESUS WAS CRUCIFIED,, AND THE TWELVE APOSTLES WERE TOGETHER,, EATING A MEAL WITH JESUS,, AT WHAT’S TO BECOME KNOWN AS; “**THE LAST SUPPER**”.

JESUS HAD JUST REVEALED WHO HE KNEW,, WOULD BETRAY HIM,, JUST BEFORE JUDAS WOULD LEAVE TO “**DO WHAT HE NEEDED TO DO**” AS JESUS SAID HE WOULD.

AFTER JUDAS LEFT,, JESUS TURNED HIS ATTENTION BACK TO THE REMAINING FAITHFUL ONES. THEY HAVE BEEN LIKE CHILDREN,, FOLLOWING HIM,, LOOKING UP TO JESUS,, FOR GUIDANCE AND HELP.

BUT SOON,, HE WOULD BE LEAVING THEM,, AND WHERE HE’S GOING,, THEY CAN’T FOLLOW HIM. THEY HAD BEEN FOLLOWING JESUS FOR OVER THREE YEARS,, BUT THAT’S ABOUT TO END.

EVERYONE KNOWS THEM,, AS JESUS’ DISCIPLES,, BECAUSE THEY FOLLOWED HIM EVERYWHERE. BUT THEY’RE NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO FOLLOW JESUS MUCH LONGER,, BECAUSE,,

JESUS WOULDN’T BE AROUND TO FOLLOW.

SO,, BEFORE JESUS DEPARTED,, AND WHILE HE WAS SHARING THE “**LAST SUPPER**” WITH HIS DISCIPLES,, JESUS DECIDED TO GIVE THEM,, A NEW COMMAND.

“YOU ARE TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER: JUST AS I HAVE LOVED YOU,, YOU ALSO,, ARE TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER. BY THIS,, ALL PEOPLE WILL KNOW THAT YOU ARE MY DISCIPLES,, IF YOU HAVE LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER.”

THE COMMAND,, TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER,, ISN’T NEW,, IT’S BEEN TAUGHT FOR CENTURIES,, IN THE CHURCH,, AND IT INCLUDES: **OUR FRIENDS**,,

AND,, **OUR ENEMIES!**

LOVE OUR ENEMIES! I GET THE FRIEND PART,, BUT OUR ENEMIES?

WHEN WE FIND IT DIFFICULT TO LOVE OUR ENEMIES OR THOSE WHO AREN'T QUITE LIKE US,, OR BELIEVE DIFFERENTLY THAN WE DO,, JUST REMEMBER WHAT JESUS DID FOR US,, ON THE CROSS,, AND THEN,, LOVE OTHERS,, LIKE JESUS LOVES US.

OUR GOSPEL TODAY,, IS PART OF JESUS' FAREWELL TALK TO HIS DISCIPLES. IT TAKES PLACE ON THE NIGHT BEFORE THE CRUCIFIXION,, AND JESUS IS GIVING HIS DISCIPLES THEIR FINAL INSTRUCTIONS,, FOR CONTINUING HIS WORK,, JUST LIKE WE MIGHT GIVE TO OUR FAMILIES BEFORE WE MOVE SOME PLACE ELSE.

NOW,, MANY OF YOU,, HAVE PROBABLY GIVEN SIMILAR INSTRUCTIONS FOR LOVED ONES,, AT OTHER POINTS IN YOUR LIVES.

FOR EXAMPLE: IF YOU WERE GOING ON A TRIP,, YOU PROBABLY GAVE INSTRUCTIONS TO FRIENDS,, FOR CHECKING YOUR HOUSE WHILE YOU ARE AWAY,, OR,, PICKING UP YOUR MAIL.

IN ([JOHN 13: 31-35](#)) JESUS IS TEACHING HIS DISCIPLES ABOUT HUMILITY,, ACCEPTANCE,, AND LOVE. THIS SPECIFIC PASSAGE OCCURS,, JUST AFTER JESUS WASHED THE FEET OF HIS DISCIPLES & AFTER JUDAS LEFT TO BETRAY JESUS,, WHICH BEGAN THE PATH BY WHICH JESUS WOULD BE GLORIFIED BY GOD.

JESUS KNEW,, JUDAS' ACTIONS,, WOULD RESULT IN VICTORY,, OVER SIN,, AND DEATH.

BUT THE DISCIPLES DIDN'T GET IT,, EVEN THOUGH JESUS TOLD THEM SEVERAL TIMES,, THAT HE WOULD DIE AND RISE AGAIN.

JESUS WAS THEIR SOURCE OF COMFORT AND STRENGTH. BUT HE KNEW,, THAT THEY WOULD BE LEFT ALONE AND HAVE TO LEARN,, TO SUPPORT ONE OTHER,, AFTER HIS RETURN TO HEAVEN.

THAT'S ONE REASON WHY JESUS ISSUED THIS NEW COMMANDMENT,, **TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER!** IT'S ALSO THE NEW COMMANDMENT,, THAT WE,, MODERN DISCIPLES,, ARE COMMANDED TO FOLLOW. JESUS TOLD HIS DISCIPLES; HE'D BE GLORIFIED,, THROUGH HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION!

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,, JESUS' DEATH AND RESURRECTION,, OPENED THE DOOR,, TO OUR ETERNAL SALVATION. BUT,, TO SPIRITUALLY GROW AS HIS DISCIPLES,, WE MUST OBEY JESUS' INSTRUCTION,, TO:

“LOVE EACH OTHER,, LIKE I HAVE LOVED YOU”.

THIS COMMANDMENT IS NOT ENTIRELY NEW!

IN (***LEVITICUS 19: 18***),,, THE PEOPLE WERE TOLD: ***TO LOVE THEIR NEIGHBORS.*** AND,,

IN (***LEVITICUS 19:34***) THEY WERE ALSO TOLD: ***TO LOVE BOTH FORIEGNERS AND FELLOW ISRAELITES.*** ***THIS COMMANDMENT,, IS IMPORTANT,, FOR (4) REASONS.***

FIRST: JESUS WAS A PERFECT MODEL OF THE LOVE THAT HE REQUIRES,, AND HE PROVED THAT,, BY WASHING THE FEET OF HIS DISCIPLES.

SECOND: THIS COMMANDMENT FOCUSES ON THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY. WE ARE CALLED ON,, TO LOVE EVERYONE,, FRIENDS,, ENEMIES AND EVEN TOTAL STRANGERS.

THIRD: IT CREATES A NEW COVENANT,, BASED ON LOVE,, AND NOT OBEDIENCE TO THE LAW. AND,,

FOURTH: THIS NEW COMMANDMENT,, OF JESUS,, ***“IS OPEN ENDED”.***

THERE'S NO END,, TO THIS REQUIREMENT! SO WE CAN NEVER SAY,, THAT WE HAVE OBEYED IT,, ENTIRELY.

EVEN IF WE CAN'T FEEL AFFECTION FOR SOMEONE,, WE CAN STILL HELP THEM,, AND WHEN WE DO THIS,, WE SHOW CHRIST'S LOVE,, TO THE WORLD!

LET ME SITE TWO EXAMPLES OF THIS KIND OF LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER. BOTH OF THESE ARE TRUE AND BASED ON REAL PEOPLE!

IN 2004,,, I'LL BET THAT YOU WILL REMEMBER THE MOVIE THAT MEL GIBSON DIRECTED. IT WAS,,, A BLOCKBUSTER MOVIE,,, BASED ON JESUS CHRIST,,, CALLED:

“THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST”.

WE ALL KNOW,,, THE TRUE AND PASSIONATE LOVE,,, THAT JESUS DEMONSTRATED FOR US,,, AS HE GUARANTEED OUR ETERNAL SALVATION,,, BY HIS;

LIFE,,, DEATH AND RESURRECTION,,, DON'T WE?

BUT,,, DID YOU KNOW,,, THAT TWELVE YEARS LATER,,, IN 2016,,, MEL GIBSON WOULD DIRECT ANOTHER BLOCKBUSTER MOVIE. IT'S A BIOGRAPHICAL WAR DRAMA,,, BASED ON A BOOK WRITTEN BY ANDREW KNIGHT,,, THAT DEMONSTRATES THE DEEP AND PASSIONATE LOVE,,, THAT ONE MAN,,, CAN HAVE FOR ANOTHER,,, REGARDLESS OF WHO THEY WERE.

THAT MOVIE IS THE TRUE STORY,,, OF AN ARMY MEDIC,,, DESMOND T. DOSS,,, A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR,,, WHO SERVED IN WWII AT THE BATTLE OF OKINAWA AND WHO WAS THE ONLY AMERICAN SERVICEMAN TO RECEIVE THE CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR,,, WITHOUR EVER FIRING A SHOT. THE MOVIE WAS: ***“HACKSAW RIDGE”*** AND THAT MEDIC WAS CREDITED WITH SAVING OVER 75 SOULS IN THAT BATTLE.

ALL ALONE,,, HE LOWERED DOWN 75 SOLDIERS BOTH AMERICAN,,, AND ENEMY,,, WHILE THEIR FELLOW JAPANESE COMRADES TRIED TO SHOOT HIM!

IT'S UNKNOWN,,, EXACTLY HOW MANY ***SOULS***,,, DOSS ACTUALLY SAVED THAT DAY,,, BUT HE DID SAVE 75 ***LIVES***,,, AND THIS,,, IS AN EXAMPLE OF THE REASON,,, WHY OUR LORD JESUS INSTITUTED THIS NEW COMMANDMENT.

THIS MAN,,, SAW THE ENEMY,,, AND KNOWING THEY WERE THE ENEMY,,, HE ALSO SAW THEM,,, AS HUMAN BEINGS IN NEED,,, AND HE CARED FOR THEM.

AS JESUS SAID IN:

(MATTHEW 5: 43-45) “*LOVE YOUR ENEMIES.*”

THAT DAY,,, GOD BROKE DOWN THE HATRED AND THAT MEDIC CONQUERED IT,,, WITH LOVE.

THE LIFE OF JESUS,,, CALLS US TO LIVE A LIFE LIVED AS A SERVANT OF OTHERS,,, AND WHEN WE DO,,, WE DISPLAY A TRUE SERVANT’S HEART,,, AS WE SERVE OUR LORD AND SAVIOR,,, JESUS CHRIST.

WE LOVE OUR NEIGHBOURS WHEN WE SEEK THEM OUT,,, WHEN WE MAKE OURSELVES AVAILABLE TO SERVE THEM AND WHEN WE HELP SHEPHERD THEM,,, IN THEIR WALK WITH THE LORD.

JESUS’ SHOWED HUMILITY AND SERVICE TO OTHERS, WHEN HE WASHED THE DISCIPLES FEET,,, AND IT’S A GOOD EXAMPLE FOR US TO FOLLOW.

HERE,,, THE MASTER WAS CLEARLY SERVING OTHERS,,, AND IF JESUS COULD SERVE OTHERS,,, WHY CAN’T WE?

WE SIMPLY CANNOT IGNORE THIS NEW COMMANDMENT,,, BECAUSE OBEYING IT,,, IS A SIGN OF OUR LOVE FOR JESUS!

SOMETIMES,,, IT’S HARD FOR US TO LOVE OTHERS AS JESUS COMMANDED,,, BECAUSE IT GOES AGAINST OUR SELFISH NATURE,,, OUR REASONING AND LOGIC.

IT’S NOT LOGICAL TO LOVE OUR ENEMIES OR THOSE WHO HATE US,,, IS IT? IT REQUIRES US,,, TO THROW OURSELVES ON GOD’S MERCY. IT’S NOT LOGICAL,,, TO LOVE PEOPLE WHO ARE DIFFERENT FROM US,,, OR,,, AT LEAST,,, THAT WAS WHAT THE JEWS THOUGHT. THEY DIDN’T WANT ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE GENTILES!

IN FACT,,, THE JEWS OFTEN REFERRED TO THE GENTILES,,, AS “DOGS”.

**BROTHERS AND SISTERS,,, WHEN WE FIND IT HARD
TO LOVE OUR ENEMIES,,, OR THOSE WHO ARE
DIFFERENT FROM US,,, ALL WE HAVE TO DO;
IS,,, REMEMBER *WHAT JESUS DID FOR US*,,,
AND RESPOND,,, AND DO,,, **TO WHAT HE DID FOR US**,,,
BY LOVING OUR NEIGHBOURS,,,
AS JESUS LOVES US!**

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER,,, AND OF THE SON,,, AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

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1,302 Wds, 6 Pgs

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