



The Overflow of Grace Week 2 | Relationships

| KEY THOUGHTS

- “Love” has different meanings, and people everywhere talk about it a lot. The word also appears 745 times in the Bible; but are we all talking about the same thing?
- **Jesus commanded His disciples to love.**
 - How can you command someone to feel something they don’t feel?
 - Biblical love is **an unselfish commitment to another through action.**
 - If you wait until you feel it, love becomes all about you.
- Jesus commanded His disciples **to love one another**; does that mean disciples should only love other disciples but not people outside the faith?
 - We can’t take this beyond what He said; **it’s not that we’re to love the world less, but that we’re to love one another more.**
 - This isn’t philosophical; it’s real. It’s challenging. It was as radical for Jesus’ disciples as it is for us today.
- Jesus commanded His disciples to love one another **the way He loved them.**
 - This is what makes the commandment “new”—not that we are to love, but how.
 - **Jesus’s love is the standard, the metric by which genuine love is measured.**
 - Jesus loved past inconvenience, past discomfort, past self-interest, past pain; it literally cost Him everything. **That’s the standard.**
- Jesus loved all the disciples that way—including Judas, even though He knew he was even then plotting to betray Him.
 - Judas was a traitor, but so are we; **we’re all traitors to God. And Jesus died for traitors.**
 - **That’s the kind of love He commands His disciples to demonstrate.**
- **When I love others like that, it gives people a picture of who Jesus is;** it grabs their attention, because it’s so different from anything they know.
- Anyone can love people who love them; but only in Christ can we love people who have hurt us, people who plainly don’t deserve it.
- **When we love the unloveable, people will ask questions. It’s a testament of Christ in our lives.**

| SCRIPTURE

³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. ³⁵ By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. **John 13:34-35 (ESV)**

...if you have love and unselfish concern for one another. **John 13:35 (AMP)**

⁴⁶ If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much. ⁴⁷ If you are kind only to your friends, how are you different from anyone else? Even pagans do that. **Matthew 5:46-47 (NLT)**

But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. **Romans 5:8 (NLT)**

| PRACTICAL

- How can I possibly love someone I really dislike?
 - You can't! You can't love *like* Jesus until you've received that kind of love *from* Jesus.
 - Admit to God you don't want to love that person.
 - Confess that although they don't deserve love, neither do you; understand that God loves you even though you have *never* deserved it.
 - Ask God for the faith to trust Him in this.
 - Make the decision to love, no matter what.
 - Believe God will give you the grace to act in the kind of love Jesus demonstrated.
 - Step into that love, even though you don't *feel* it.
 - Sometimes, perhaps only after a long time, the feeling will show up. But you can't wait for the feeling before you act.
- One way to learn about how relationships work in Christ is to join a small group.
 - Groups are kind of like relationship laboratories, where there is learning and experimentation.
 - Those who aren't naturally good with relationships can learn from others who are gifted in that way.

| REFLECT

- Because of God's decision to love us, all believers are adopted into the same family.
 - How many of us deserved that kind of love at the time of our salvation?
 - How many of us deserve that kind of love now?
 - How many of us are commanded to love others the same way?
- What lies have your life experiences taught you that God wants to replace with His truth? Where might that truth be found?
- It's possible to know and understand John 13:34-35 inside and out, but not live it out. Those who know it but don't practice it are just pretending to be disciples.
- When this commandment is obeyed, the love of Jesus becomes a banner over the Church that declares to the world that Jesus is real.

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