

Love: "Love Each Other as I Have Loved You"

JOHN 15:9-17; MARK 12:28-34

Love is...a warm puppy...never having to say you're sorry...like the measles—everybody catches it sometime. Love has inspired some to die and others to kill. It may make the world go 'round, but it certainly causes a lot of confusion in the process.

This confusion has found its way into spiritual experience because of the high priority given to love in biblical revelation. "God is love," we are told, and we are commanded to love. It heads the list of the fruit of the Spirit as well as being one of the things that will remain forever. What then is this love of which Christians speak so often and sing so loudly?

1. In what ways has love's meaning been confused in your own life?

READ JOHN 15:9-17.

2. What is involved in *remaining* in Jesus' love?
- ✦ 3. What is love as Jesus defined it?
- ✦ 4. Give some examples of how God has modeled his love for us.
5. What is significant about being Jesus' *friends* rather than his servants?

6. What does it mean to you that Jesus has chosen and appointed you to bear fruit?

- ✦ 7. How can we emulate Jesus' love and fulfill his command in verse 17?

READ MARK 12:28-34.

8. How is the definition of love expanded here?
9. Restate verse 30 in your own words.
- ✦ 10. What does it mean to love your neighbor *as yourself*?

11. What added insight in the teacher's answer made Jesus affirm him as he did in verse 34?

12. Consider the relationship between love for God, love for self, and love for one's neighbor. How are these bound together in the Spirit life?

13. What one step can you take this week to respond to the challenge of meeting a hurting world with God's love?