

March 8, 2020

## Obedient Love

1 John 4:21 And He has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.

Okay, let's get serious here for just a moment. What is your first thought when you hear the word command? Is it that this is something you have to do? Well in a sense, that's exactly what command means. We are commanded to love our brother and sister. The first important point is that this must be a result of our love for God. His love is so special and fulfilling; far greater than any other love we could experience because it is pure, genuine, and perfect. And because He has loved us with this everlasting love; because He proved His love to us through the cross; because He loves us forever, He then tells us that we are to love in the same way.

This is the main point of His love: it does not end with a person or a period of time; it just keeps giving and giving and giving.....So, it is literally the love of God that commands us to love each other because that is what love is and that is what love does.

If you are struggling to love someone else, then you have to ask God to show you how big, and awesome, and eternal, and complete His love is for you. If He can love you like that, then you can love someone else because He loved you first. 1 John 4:19, just two verses earlier says: We love because He first loved us.

The fact that God loves you, no matter what you have done; no matter how bad you've messed up; just shows you that you can then take that kind of love to others. In doing so, you are obeying one of the greatest commands of all: Love God with all your heart and love your neighbor as yourself.

A pastor friend once told me this: What if when Jesus said, "Love your neighbor as yourself," He really meant it. Meditate on that thought for a while.

Dear Father, I accept Your command to love others. I do this, not out of compulsion to do something because I have to. I do this because I want to and that comes from the love that You have poured out on me. Help me love people as though I'd never been hurt; as though they are the prize; because they are. In Jesus Name, Amen