

The Bulletin

Meeks Street Church of Christ

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November 12, 2023

“Our Love For The Lord”

By R J Stevens

A true test of one's spirituality can be measured by his love for the Lord. The Apostle Paul had much to say concerning the subject of love. He wrote, *"If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord come!"* (1 Corinthians 16:22).

In his great chapter on love, 1 Corinthians 13, he points out that he may accomplish some great feats, but if all is done without love- "I am nothing" (Vv. 1-3). He stated in Colossians 3:14: *"But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection."*

In this short article, let us observe some things about our love for the Lord.

Our love for the Lord is reciprocal.

"We love Him because He first loved us" (1 John 5:19). This is love's proper motive. Concerning the love manifested toward mankind, Paul explained it in this manner- *"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us"* (Romans 5:8).

Paul also said, *"For the love of Christ constrains us"* (2 Corinthians 5:14). The great love of Christ for us involved His learning *"obedience by the things which he suffered"* (Hebrews 5:8). He became "sin for us" (2 Corinthians 5:21). He sacrificed Himself as an offering *"once for all"* (Hebrews 10:10). He *"bore our sins on the tree"* (1 Peter 2:24). He made provision for our *"redemption through His blood"* (Ephesians 1:7). He *"died for our sins"* (1 Corinthians 15:3). *"Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends"* (John 15:13). And we could go on and on. What great love! And it was all done for us! As Paul said, *"Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!"* (2 Corinthians 9:15).

Surely, in view of all the above scriptures, we should certainly reciprocate His marvelous love!

Our love for the Lord should be undivided.

Of Peter, Jesus asked, "do you love Me more than these?" (John 21:15). The church is the bride of Christ (Romans 7:4; Revelation 22:17). We are betrothed to one husband (2 Corinthians 11:2). Because of this relationship, Christians who turn their backs on the Lord and become friends of the world, are said to be guilty of spiritual adultery (James. 4:4). Divided love is not tolerated in physical marriage; neither is it to be tolerated with respect to our spiritual marriage to Christ.

Also, we need to take into consideration that he who claims to love the Lord, and at the same time, "hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him" (1 John 3:15). To become a spiritual adulterer or murderer because of a lack of love is a very serious, deadly spiritual condition.

Our love for the Lord should be obedient.

Christ taught, *"If you love Me, keep My commandments...He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me...If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word...He who does not love Me does not keep My words"* (John 14:15, 21, 23, 24). Could it be any plainer?

As He learned obedience by the things which He suffered, *"He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him"* (Hebrews 5:9). Paul spoke of our Lord taking the form of a servant, coming in the likeness of men, *"And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross"* (Philippians 2:7-8).

He is the perfect example of suffering, obedient love. He is the epitome of it! True love runs deeper than mere words-it acts! Because Jesus loved us, He gave Himself for us (Ephesians 5:25). Because we love Him, we must freely and fully give ourselves to Him by faithfully obeying His commands. Just saying, "I love you," means nothing unless those words are demonstrated by loving obedience to all His commandments.

We close with these meaningful words: *"Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen"* (Ephesians 6:24).

"5 Views of Baptism: What View Do You Hold?"

By Steven J. Wallace

Jesus stated nearly 2000 years ago, *"He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned"* (Mark 16:16). To the simple, unbiased and unprejudiced mind, Jesus' statement is very clear and easy to understand. It is as easy to understand a doctor's statement, "He who eats his food and digests it will live; but he who does not eat will die." All of us would easily understand that unless we eat and digest, we will die! However, for those who have allied themselves with human creeds and have been depraved with worldly wisdom, Jesus' simple statement becomes confusing and contradicting. Although the Bible ALWAYS places water baptism (in Jesus' name) before salvation, men have sought ways to undermine His authority and confuse the simplicity of our Lord's teaching.

ATHEIST'S VIEW

For example, the Atheist would say, "He who believes and is baptized will NOT be saved." He has rejected the existence of God and the authority of the Bible. Unbelievers believe there is no God, yet one would have to be "God" himself to prove such a position. For one to know that there is no God, he would have had to have been everywhere, seen everything at once and know all things! Yet Jesus had him in mind when he said, *"...he who believes not shall be condemned,"* and again, *"...he who does not believe is condemned already"* (John 3:18). Truly *"the fool has said in his heart 'There is no God'"* Psalm 14:1).

UNIVERSALIST'S VIEW

The Universalist approaches the scripture with the bias that God is a God of only love and therefore He can never condemn anyone. They say, "He who believes NOT and is NOT baptized shall be saved." While such a faith accepts the actuality of God, it rejects His word and leaves, nonetheless, a corrupt and misguided picture of Deity. Warning! *"He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him-the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day"* (John 12:48).

CATHOLIC'S VIEW

The Catholic comes along and teaches, "He who believes NOT and is baptized shall be saved." I say this as a former Catholic who was sprinkled as a baby. Catholics baptize babies because of the erroneous view of inherited sin (Ezekiel 18:20); however, Bible baptism was NEVER administered to babies.

Jesus taught that babies are safe (Luke 18:15-17). Notwithstanding, subjects of Bible baptism must have first believed (see again Mark 16:16), yet faith comes by hearing the word of the Lord (Romans 10:17). How can a baby believe when they cannot understand the word of the Lord? Can they also confess with their mouth the Lord Jesus (Matthew 10:32; Romans 10:9,10; Acts 8:37)? False doctrine makes us believe unbelievable things!

PROTESTANT'S VIEW

Then the Baptist comes and says, "He who believes and is NOT baptized shall be saved." Yet is this what Jesus said? Is it Deity's view? No amount of human manipulation will change the eternal truth of Mark 16:16. Beware all of these "NOTS" are formulated by men in the devil's "tale" to cheat your soul!

JESUS' VIEW

"He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:16).

News and Notes:

Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Daniel Holloway, Debbie Keplinger, Robbie, Sheila, Sherry Doles, Sandi Poole, Nathan Cox, Sandra Oliver, Chad Harris, Eli Johnson, Burt Ward, Jamie Jones, Fred Johnson, Mary Ann Holley, Larsen Plyler, Willis Fields (Brandi Meade's Dad), Sam Kennemur (Upcoming surgery soon).

LuAnne Parrish had a light stroke last week and is home recovering.

Prayers for Nancy Bingham Tomlinson's family and Willis Fields' family in their loss.

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer:	<i>To Be Announced</i>
Preaching:	Jim Allen
Sermon #1:	<i>To Be Announced</i>

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:

Workbook:	Fred Johnson
Author:	1 & 2 Thessalonians
Starting Page & Question:	Mark Mayberry <i>Page #57, Question # 13</i>

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements:	Russell Briggs
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading:	Dan Cottrell
Scripture Reading:	<i>Proverbs 3:5-8</i>
Song Leader:	Jerry Kennemur
Lord's Supper:	Fred Johnson
Assisting:	— —
Preaching:	Jim Allen
Sermon #2:	<i>To Be Announced</i>
Closing Prayer:	Danny Sheffield

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

November 15, 2023

Auditorium Bible Class:	Paul Busby
Workbook:	Preparing To Teach Our Neighbors
Author:	Max Tice
Starting Page & Question:	<i>Page #49, Answer Briefly #2</i>
Invitation:	Dan Cottrell
Song Leader:	Tim Harris Sr.
Closing Prayer:	Russell Briggs