

---

**Pastor Rodney V. Pamer**

Wednesday Bible Study: April 07, 2010

## Let's Be Known as a Christian

let me start with another Bible version .....

**Matthew 7:17-20 (AMP)**

...Every healthy (sound) tree bears good fruit [worthy of admiration], but the sickly (decaying, worthless) tree bears bad (worthless) fruit. A good (healthy) tree cannot bear bad (worthless) fruit, nor can a bad (diseased) tree bear excellent fruit [worthy of admiration]... Therefore, you will fully know them by their fruits.

Jesus told His disciples that you can tell if someone truly belongs to Him by the kind of spiritual fruit that they produce. What does that mean?

Everything that you do. Every thing that you say.  
You begin to look more like Jesus.

Does the way you live identify you as a Christian?

**Galatians 5**

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Here are the 9 signs to check for:

1. Love
2. Joy
3. Peace
4. Longsuffering
5. Gentleness



Galatians 5 Contemporary English Version  
22 God's Spirit makes us loving...

Galatians 5 New Century Version  
22 But the Spirit produces the fruit of love...

### Christian Love

John 13  
By this shall all [men] know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

NLT: Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.

New Century Version: All people will know that you are my followers if you love each other."

The Greek word used in Galatians 5, and again here in John 13, is agape.

This is the kind of love that God loves us with - It is self-sacrificing. It is unconditional.

Talking about love that is impossible for any human to achieve on their own. It can only be developed as a fruit of the Spirit.

But, Jesus says that developing this kind of love in your heart is the only way the world will be able to identify you as His.

### Love is known as THE CHRISTIAN VIRTUE

Ephesians 4  
1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,  
2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

Contemporary English Version: Patiently put up with each other and love each other.

Christian love was something so new that the Christian writers had to invent a new word for it; or, at least, they had to employ a very unusual Greek word-agape.

In Greek there are four words for love.

1. **eros**

which is the love between a man and a maid and which involves sexual passion.

2. **philia**

which is the warm affection which exists between those who are very near and very dear to each other.

3. **storge**

which is characteristically the word for family affection.

4. **agape**

which the Authorized Version translates sometimes love and sometimes charity.

#### IMPORTANT

The real meaning of agape is unconquerable benevolence.

If we regard a person with agape, it means that nothing that he can do will make us seek anything but his highest good.

Though he injure us and insult us, we will never feel anything but kindness towards him.

That clearly means that this Christian love is not an emotional thing.

This agape is a thing, not only of the emotions, but also of the will.

It is the ability to retain unconquerable good will to those that are not someone that we would think to love .....unlovable....

towards those who do not love us, and even towards those whom we do not like.

Agape is that quality of mind and heart which compels a Christian never to feel any bitterness, never to feel any desire for revenge, but always to seek the highest good of every man no matter what he may be.

in that same chapter of Ephesians.....

#### EPHESIANS 4

31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

(See also Romans 12:14; III John 10; Jude 16.)

The power of love:

#### 1. Love has the Power to Lift Up or Tear Down.

Author Denis Waitley writes....

The winner's edge in any organization is not talent, a high IQ, gifts or aptitude...the winner's edge is ATTITUDE.

If you want outstanding results...you need good people with great attitudes.

#### 2. An attitude of love multiplies when exposed to others

Many characteristics on a team, organization or in a church are not contagious.

Talent. Experience. Willingness.

But you can be sure of one thing: Attitude is catching. When you demonstrate love, it will multiply; it is contagious.

As we are inspired...we will inspire others.....

As we are taught...we can then effectively teach others.....

As God blesses us...we can effectively be a blessing to others.

God helps us....not to help ourselves; but to be a help to others.

God will strengthen us, and then we can strengthen others.

As God encourages us, then we are to encourage others.

When He touches our hearts....then we can effectively touch the hearts of others.

When we love one another....we will see it multiplied.

## Bob Huggins....

When Da'Sean Butler injured his knee in semi-final game on Saturday in the NCAA tournament....

He just kept telling him that "I love you....."

result of that attitude greatly effects a team, a family, a business, a church or any organization.

### NOTE:

Bad behavior from a lack of love multiplies faster than good ones.

There's only one thing more contagious than demonstrating love ...and that is a lack of love.

For some reason....many people think that it's acceptable to be mean.

But the truth is that a mean spirit hurts the person that has it. And it hurts the people around them.

### NEURONS

We all know the old adage...practice makes perfect.

We watch ourselves do things and become more and more proficient in doing them.

There is now strong evidence to suggest that humans have "mirror neurons" found in our brains. It's what these neurons do that's amazing--they begin to activate in the same way when you're watching someone else do something as they do when you're doing it yourself!

We learn from watching others. We learn from imitating (mirroring) others.

The potential problem, though, is that these neurons are always working.... imitating others without our conscious intention.

So when we are around someone critical...according to the latest medical science...

we become more and more like them.

### Emotional Contagion

Steven Stosny, an expert on anger wrote that .....

"Anger and resentment are the most contagious of emotions."

"If you are near a resentful or angry person, you are more prone to become resentful or angry yourself.

NOTE:

Jesus said that when men speak evil of you (slander) know that you are blessed.

Matthew 5

11 Blessed are ye, when [men] shall revile you, and persecute [you], and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great [is] your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

What are we to do? Doesn't mean that we exonerate them or excuse their behavior..... but.....

Pray for them.

Matthew 5

44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

Jesus tells us that everything boils down to this:

Matthew 22

36 Master, which [is] the great commandment in the law?

37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

38 This is the first and great commandment.

39 And the second [is] like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.

This is the first and greatest commandment.

A second is equally important: Love your neighbor as yourself. The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.

**IMPORTANT:**

There is no wonder why Paul lists love first in his description of the fruit of the Spirit.

Luke 6  
27 ¶ But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,  
28 Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.  
29 And unto him that smiteth thee on the [one] cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not [to take thy] coat also.

BOOTH: loved the poor

General William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army is an example of this.

When asked for the secret of his success, Booth replied that when he began to love the poor of London and in his heart got a vision for what Jesus Christ would do for them.... it was then that God began to bless his ministry.

As recipients of the love of God, we must love one another.

The Apostle John says it well:

1 John 4  
7 ¶ Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.  
8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.  
9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.  
10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son [to be] the propitiation for our sins.  
11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

## FINAL Command: LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

Luke 6

32 For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.

33 And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.

34 And if ye lend [to them] of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

Some commands of the Bible seem reasonable. Some seem far from it. It would be reasonable to hear and heed Jesus' command to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength..." (Mark 12:30 NIV).

It's the second half of Jesus' command that trips us up, "The second is this 'Love your neighbor as yourself'" (v. 31).

Love my neighbor? (I don't even like him . . .)

Love him as myself? (How can I do that?)

To further make His point, God repeats this command no less than five more times in the New Testament:

Matthew 19:19

Luke 10:27

Romans 13:9--10

Galatians 5:14

James 2:28

Galatians 5:14 goes so far as to say, "The entire law is summed up in a single command: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

your neighbor includes your enemy!

examples:

Richard Nixon

Whatever your view of his politics, few would disagree that Richard Nixon was not the most lovable of American Presidents. After his disgraceful resignation, Mr. Nixon lived in isolation behind the walls of

his San Clemente compound. As he struggled to recover from the deep emotional wounds of Watergate and his life-threatening phlebitis, Nixon saw only his family and a few close friends. No one, other than gloating reporters, tried to visit him for nearly a year.

One man came, however. He was a member of the United States Senate, and though of Nixon's party, had opposed the President passionately. Now, in Nixon's distress, Senator Mark Hatfield, an evangelical Christian, traveled twice to San Clemente without fanfare. He told Chuck Colson that his only reason was "to let Mr. Nixon know that someone loved him [Charles Colson, *Kingdoms in Conflict* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1987), 282]."

### Bill Clinton Story

After being elected for a first term as governor of Arkansas... the young Bill Clinton faced many problems and challenges. He struggled greatly and was soundly defeated in his attempt to gain re-election for a second term. Suddenly...he went from the Arkansas governor's mansion as the youngest governor in the U.S., to being for all practical purposes...unemployed. Clinton said that everyone...including those in his own party....turned against him. People were afraid to be seen with him because he had faced such a terrible defeat in his re-election bid. People would actually cross the street rather than to talk to him.

But there was one Pentecostal preacher that kept reaching out to Clinton in love. That was James Lumpkin, an Apostolic pastor in Arkansas. Clinton said that Bro. Lumpkin seemed to be the only friend he had.

Although Bro. Lumpkin was unable to get through to Governor Clinton in a church service....he was able to touch him by being his friend.