

John 15:12-17
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I. Introduction.

A. Text: John 15:12-17.

B. In this chapter, God gives us the great priorities of life.

C. This section emphasizes the relationship we have with others.

II. The goal of the Christian life is to become a loving person.

A. Man was made for love—every book of the Bible emphasizes this.

B. The end of our endeavor is love.

C. To love and to be loved makes life satisfying and worth living.

D. Love can be commanded because love is more than an emotion.

1. Love is particularly manifested when you love someone you do not like.

2. This shows that love is a decision.

E. What love is.

1. Love treats people as persons of importance and it meets those people's needs.

2. Love is not necessarily liking someone.

3. A sense of feeling flows from the decision of love.

F. You love someone because you share the same life with him or her.

III. How we are to love.

A. We are to love someone as Jesus has loved us.

B. The Lord's love always kept the disciples steady.

C. We can only love in response to God who loved us first.

1. When you are loved by God, a capacity to love others is formed within us. (Romans 5)

2. We need to love God by responding to the love we are already getting in order to love others.

3. Love for God awakens within us the capacity to love each other.

IV. Marks of genuine love.

A. A willingness to give of yourselves to others, which involves reaching out to those feeling down.

B. A willingness to share yourself personally, which involves confession, prayer and bearing one another's burdens.

C. Bearing fruit in another person's life by praying for one another.

Application questions:

1. Why is love not simply an emotion? How does love for people you do not like reveal what love truly is?

2. What problems are you wrestling with this week? How will sharing your burdens with others help you to love more?

3. Which mark of genuine love challenges you the most? How can you love someone in this way today?
