

**Welcome to the
Common Ground Café!**



Sunday, June 24, 2018

**A Commandment for the 11th Hour
A Study of John 13:34-35**

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When we study the topic of “love” at church, how does it make you feel?

- Excited
- Apprehensive
- Blah, Blah, Blah
- Squishy
- Just a little uncomfortable

If you were asked to give yourself a rating on how you measure up to loving others as Christ has loved you, would it be: (Only share with the group if you are comfortable doing so.)

- Nailed it! I’ve got this one down pat.
- Mostly, but with room for improvement.
- Average I think, but I could do better
- Below average, most others do better at this than me.
- I don’t even know where to begin with this concept.

Studying John 13:34-35 should prompt us to review our lives with three questions.

Question 1: “What does Jesus want from me?”

Read John 13:34

- How does Jesus’ use of the word “Commandment” change the significance of this instruction in your opinion?
- Jesus said we are to love one another “even as” or “just like” He loved us. How did Jesus love us?
Hint: Read John 3:16, John 15:12-13, 1 John 3:16
- Ask everyone to write out a paraphrase of John 13:34 then read it to your group. Does it mean anything when Jesus repeats an instruction twice in the same sentence? What?

- Based on these thoughts, what do you think Jesus wants from His disciples?

Question 2: “How can I possibly fulfill this commandment?”

Read John 13:34 again.

- Do you feel it is possible or impossible to fulfill this commandment? Why? How?
- In your experience, does Jesus ask us to do things without giving us the capacity to fulfill them?

Read 1 John 4:11-13.

- What would you say makes it possible to love one another as Christ loved us?

Question 3: Why is this so important?

Read John 13:35

- What “side effect” comes when Jesus’ disciples love one another as He loved them?
- How can this “side effect” impact the mission mentioned in Matthew 28:19?
- Why is it so important for Christians to love one another as Jesus loved us? (1 Peter 2:9)

Conclusion

Sometimes we misrepresent loving as Christ loved us. We miss the mark if we think this means never having an opinion or expressing an opposing view. Love is an active word. We can speak the truth in love. We can confront one another in love. We can disagree with one another and still do it in love.

If you study the life of Jesus, and pay attention to how he loved, you will discover rebuke, correction, and instruction all done out of love. Here are some thought provoking statements:

- Is love expressed more in giving someone a handout or a hand-up?
- Love can be tough.
- Did Jesus love by allowing people to “get away with stuff” or by gently correcting and confronting others?
- Is love simple or complicated?
- Does this change how you view this greatest commandment of all?



Close with praise reports and prayer requests