

Love Commanded

Scripture

“See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil, in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, that you may live and multiply; and the LORD your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess” (Deuteronomy 30:15-16 NKJV).

Commentary

It sounds funny to hear, “I command you . . . to love the Lord your God.” However, we are commanded to love our wives, brothers, neighbors, even our enemies. When the world looks at this command, it must be even more bizarre. That is because the world sees love as something you feel, something you get from others.

In marriage counseling, one is likely to hear, “I just don’t love him/her anymore.” What he/she means is he/she is no longer getting the emotional zing from the relationship they used to get. Love is defined as pure emotion to be taken instead of given.

However, biblical love is quite different. It is defined by willful giving and sacrifice. Otherwise, how could the Lord command us to love? Love must involve the will more than the emotions. This is obvious when we are commanded to love our enemies. Truly, benevolent feelings can be attached to an enemy, but the initial act of love must come as a result of the will. The will first decides to love then after considering the grace of God and the plight of the enemy, compassion is embraced and true love grows even for the wicked.

“Love suffers long [and] is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.” (1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NKJV)

The question for the day is will you love God? To love God is to walk in His ways. His ways include loving your enemies. Make the decision right now to love your enemies and especially those close to you. Don’t do it hoping to get something. Do it because it is right and God commands it. Yes there is a blessing for obeying God but be careful or what you think is love may just be another form of selfishness. Try to do everything as a means of glorifying God.

Prayer

Father, by your grace and for your glory, give us the opportunity and desire to practice selflessness today. May we see, as you see, the plight of the ungodly and be moved with compassion. Amen.