



# Women Devoted to God

Lesson 02

## Loving One Another

by Esther Neal

*. . . That they may be perfected in unity,  
so that the world may know that You sent Me,  
and loved them, even as You have loved Me.*

John 17:23

*Our love for one another  
proclaims the Gospel*

John 17:20-23 *I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; <sup>21</sup> **that they may all be one**; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, **so that the world may believe that You sent Me.** <sup>22</sup> The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; <sup>23</sup> I in them and You in Me, **that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.***

“After we have done our best to communicate to a lost world, still we must never forget that the final apologetic which Jesus gives is the observable love of true Christians for true Christians.” Francis Schaeffer

## *The foundation for loving one another*

<sup>36</sup> "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?"

<sup>37</sup> And He said to him, "'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' <sup>38</sup> This is the great and foremost commandment. <sup>39</sup> The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' <sup>40</sup> On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

Matthew 22:36-40

## *Starting with God loving us first*

1 John 4:19 We love him, **because he first loved us.** (KJV)

1 John 4:11, Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

### **A love that is certainly not because of our own \_\_\_\_\_ . (Titus 3:3-5; Romans 5:8)**

Titus 3:3-5, <sup>3</sup> For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. <sup>4</sup> But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, <sup>5</sup> He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy. . .

"There is tremendous relief in knowing that his love to me is utterly realistic, based at every point on prior knowledge of the worst about me, so that no discovery now can disillusion him about me, in the way I am so often disillusioned about myself, and quench his determination to bless me."

J. I. Packer

**A love that \_\_\_\_\_ (Psalm 103:10-12)**

Psalm 103:10-12, *He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. . .*

**A love full of \_\_\_\_\_ (Psalm 103:13-14; Psalm 40:11)**

Psalm 103:13-14, <sup>13</sup> *Just as a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him.*

<sup>14</sup> *For He Himself knows our frame; He is mindful that we are but dust.*

Psalm 40:11, *You, O LORD, will not withhold Your compassion from me; Your lovingkindness [chesed] and Your truth will continually preserve me.*

Chesed: “a kind of love or manifestation of love that is loyal and persistent, it is relentless; it is indomitable. It is undiscouragable and unquenchable. You can’t erode it and you can’t exhaust it. It’s always going to be yours and it will always be kind.” (Pastor Mark Minnick)

*Seeing ourselves through God's eyes*

Matthew 22:39, <sup>39</sup> *The second is like it, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’*

1 John 4:18, *There is no fear in **love**; but **perfect love** casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not **perfected in love**.*

*God's Expectations of Me . . .* are often different than my own. I want to do something glorious, noble, exciting, something that sets me apart—something that brings respect and approval from others. But God wants . . .

*He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:8).*

“We sometimes hear the inspiring statement of William Carey, ‘Expect great things from God. Attempt great things for God’ . . . But what do we have in mind when we speak of ‘great things’? . . . It does not appear that the Lord has such grand plans for the majority of his people . . . . Most Christians will end up making a modest contribution to the work of God in the world. And that is not necessarily a sign of disobedience or a lack of surrender . . . . But here’s the problem that can set in: we easily become discouraged and unmotivated with our modest contribution. We can become slow to attempt any contribution because we feel like it doesn’t make much difference. And we can settle into a lethargic and selfish pattern of life. At times like this, we need to be urged with a counterpoint to Carey’s sermon: attempt small things for God. Yes, you read that correctly: attempt small things for God.” Ken Casillas

*Loving God with all our heart, soul,  
and mind*

*Philippians 4:8, Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.*

*2 Corinthians 10:5, We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are **taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.***

# Loving one another

## This really matters to God

### Loving your neighbor passages

Luke 10:27-29 *And he answered, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."*

<sup>28</sup> *And He said to him, "You have answered correctly; DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE."* <sup>29</sup> *But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"*

(other passages are Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 5:43; 19:19; 22:36-40; Mark 12:28-34; Romans 13:9; Galatians 5:13-14).

### 1 Corinthians 13

## Christ Himself is our example

John 15:12, *"This is My commandment, **that you love one another, just as I have loved you.***

Ephesians 5:1-2, *Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; **and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you.***

- 1) Valued intents of the heart (widow's mite, Luke 21)
- 2) Sought out the unloved and neglected (Zacchaeus, Luke 19; Samaritan woman at the well (John 4)
- 3) Gave hope to the fallen (After Peter had denied him, Christ gave him something to do: feed His sheep, John 21)

## Members of the same body

1 Corinthians 12:14-25, <sup>14</sup> *For the body is not one member, but many.* <sup>15</sup> *If the foot says, "Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. . . .* <sup>21</sup> *And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; or again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you."*

“As the cross grows bigger and bigger in your life, you will begin to live out the Gospel in your relationships. You will stop demanding perfection from people – because you will be more and more aware every day of how far you fall short and how desperate you are for mercy and grace. You will begin to overlook offenses because you will be aware of God’s gracious forbearance to you every single day. Yes, you will see your sin. But you will see and lay hold of and cling to the eternal forgiveness that is yours because of Christ, your Savior. And that forgiveness will begin to splash out on the people around you! This is good news. This is God’s work in you – for His glory and your good. Trust Him. Worship Him. And remember the Cross!” Tara Barthel

## *Seeking to be Christ-reflectors*

“We need people in our lives who understand us . . . but we also need people who are coming from different backgrounds, stages of life, and points of view. We need these people to help us broaden our perspective, look at life from different angles, and get out of our comfortable shell. And they need us too” Gina Dalfonzo

*Have we aimed to have a deeper relationship with:*

- Our family
- Our single friends who we identify with
- Other singles in this church
- Married couples and their young children / teenagers
- Middle-aged & older couples
- Older widows & widowers
- People from our neighborhood
- People who are a different ethnicity than us – we fear what we do not know.

*1 Peter 2:17, Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.*

## *Practical applications*

- Do hard things! Do things that don't come naturally.
- What to do at church – come early, stay late
- Are we being humble? How do we choose our friends? Do we look to be friends with lowly people?
  - Romans 12:16, *Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.*
- Are we reaching out to everyone? and not showing partiality? Do we make fun of those who are not like us?
  - 1 Thessalonians 3:12, . . . ***increase and abound in love for one another, and for all people . . .***
  - James 2:9, *But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors.*
  - Exodus 4:11, . . . *Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes him mute or deaf, or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the LORD?*

“We talk very lightly about our Christian ‘brothers and sisters,’ but how many of us truly serve each other like that, even when there are significant differences in status and position? How many of us look past those differences and value each other that highly?” Gina Dalfonzo

- Are we striving to keep peace with all men? (John 17:23)
- Are we being careful with what we say, and how we listen to what others say? (James 3)
  - Proverbs 26:20, *For lack of wood the fire goes out, and where there is no whisperer, contention quiets down.*
  - Proverbs 31:26, *She opens her mouth in wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.*  
“Even if a thought is true, if it isn't kind, she holds her tongue. She tries to say a compassionate or kind word for everyone” (John Phillips).

- Do we have redemptive friendships, ones in which we can be transparent about our own sin and failure? (Prayer time)
  - 1 Thessalonians 2:8
  - Hebrews 10:24-25, *and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup> not forsaking our own assembling together . . .*
- Are we reaching out to those who are struggling either from sickness or depression? (text, call, meal, flowers, etc.)
  - Job 6:14, *For the despairing man there should be kindness [chesed] from his friend; So that he does not forsake the fear of the Almighty.”*
  - Galatians 6:2, *Bear one another’s burdens . . .*
- Are we willing to show our support for brothers and sisters in our church (wedding showers, baby showers, funerals)
  - 1 Corinthians 12:26, *And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.* (see also Romans 12:15)

### What is the church?

“A group of pardoned rebels . . .  
 whom God wants to use to display his glory . . .  
 before all the heavenly host . . .  
 because they tell the truth about Him . . .  
 and look increasingly just like him – holy, loving, united.”

Mark Dever

### Recommended Sources

Barthel, Tara. *Women’s Study: Living the Gospel in Relationships* (Peacemaking Church)

Casillas, Ken. “Attempt Small Things for God.”

<https://theologyin3d.com/attempt-small-things-for-god/>

Dalfonzo, Gina. *One by One: Welcoming the Singles in Your Church*. (cannot endorse entirely, although the 1<sup>st</sup> half was very helpful).

Dever, Mark. *What is a Healthy Church?*

Miller, Paul. *A Loving Life: in a World of Broken Relationships* (not referenced in this handout, but very valuable)