

# Midtown Messenger

Volume 3

February 2, 2020

Issue 5

## Great Love of the Brethren

By: Mark Reynolds

“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:34-35). The circumstances surrounding this command enhance its meaning. Jesus had continually told his disciples, even His own mother, “The hour is not yet come.” But now, at the beginning of the chapter it states, “Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father...” (John 13:1). It was time for Jesus to fulfill His purpose in coming to this earth; He was going to the cross. Before He leaves, however, He shows His love for the disciples by washing their feet, and then gives this great command to love one another as He has loved them. In studying this command one will see perhaps the greatest challenge ever offered to man. One will also see how obeying this command would literally change the church as well as the rest of the world.

### **The Preeminence of Love**

What was so special about this new commandment? First we must see the importance our God gives to love. Do you remember when the Pharisees sent one of their lawyers to ensnare Jesus by asking which commandment of God was the greatest? He answered by saying, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thy-

self” (Matthew 22:37-39). Rather than say: “Thou must not make graven images,” or “Thou shalt have no other gods before me,” or “Thou shalt not kill;” He says instead, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.” The greatness of the commandment of love makes all logical sense. If one loves God with every fiber of his being one would never make graven images; one would never worship a false god, and one would never even consider murdering one of God’s children. Every command of God, and our obedience to them, begins with love.

Further, think of some of the things love is placed above in Scripture. Faith is certainly important to God. In fact, in both the Old and New Testaments we read the phrase “The just shall live by faith” over and over again (Hebrews 2:4; Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38). One cannot read Hebrews eleven without seeing the importance of faith. Hope is also a valued virtue in Scripture. It is the anchor of our souls (Hebrews 6:18); the motivating power for purity of living (1 John 3:3); we are saved by it (Romans 8:24); and it surpasses the miraculous gifts of tongues, knowledge and prophecy (1 Corinthians 13). Could anything be greater than hope?

As great as faith and hope may be, and they are, the Bible shows that one thing surpasses them. “And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love” (1 Corinthians 13:13). This is why the new commandment given by Jesus on the night of His betrayal is so im-

portant.

### **The Newness of the Command**

As already noted, Jesus had already said the law and prophets could be summed up in two commandments, namely, to love God and neighbor. Was He really teaching something new? The answer is absolutely YES! Remember that the love commanded in the Old Testament was to of course love God with all one's heart, soul and mind. Nothing has ever changed regarding the command. But the next part of the command has absolutely changed. The Old law commanded God's children to love others as much as one loves himself. But what was the NEW command? "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; AS I HAVE LOVED YOU..." (John 13:34). Do you see it? The old law had taught that we should measure our love for others by the way we love ourselves. The new command is that we must now measure our love by the love Christ has for us. Dear friend, this changes everything!

In order to love like Christ, then, we must see how He loves:

1. His love is unchangeable: "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them to the end" (John 13:1). From the time that Christ called His disciples, there was never a time when they could question His love for them. Despite all their infighting, bickering, and selfishness, Christ always loved them.

2. His love is a divine love. "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you" (John 15:9). It gives us a direct connection with God when we learn to love this way.

3. His love is a sacrificial love. Think of all Christ went through so that humanity could see love personified. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13).

4. His love is inseparable. "Who shall separate

us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Romans 8:35,37). Nothing could separate them from His love. Every once in a while I will remind my children that there is nothing they could ever do that would make me stop loving them. They could disappoint me; even break my heart, but I will always love them. What shall separate us from the love of Christ? Nothing.

5. His is a compassionate love. The gospel of Mark shows the great compassionate side of Christ's love. He shows the compassion Jesus had for the leper (Mark 1:41). He displays the compassion Christ had for the man possessed by demons (5:19). He shows the tenderness Jesus displayed to the hungry multitude (6:32); the father of the mute child (9:22), and then perhaps the greatest show of compassion is when the angel told the women who had come to the grave of Jesus, "Go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee" (16:7). What is so special about the angel telling the women to make sure they tell Peter? You will recall that the last time Peter saw the face of Jesus, he had denied him the third time, and ran out weeping bitterly. Jesus wanted Peter to know He still loved him.

### **Results of the New Commandment**

When the church loves like Jesus, notice the promise Jesus gives: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35). When the church loves one another as Christ loves us the world will take notice. When my love for my brother is unchangeable, divine, sacrificial, inseparable and compassionate, the world will see it. Dear reader, just think if the church would love like Christ loves!

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**PRIVILEGED TO SERVE**  
Week of February 2, 2020

**Sunday Morning:**

Announcements: Jeff Harris  
Scripture Reading: Isaac Jobs

**Lord's Supper & Offering**

Bread: Mark FitzSimmons  
Fruit of the Vine: Doug Jobs  
Offering: Lupe Escojido  
Assist: BJ Davis, Kirk FitzSimmons, Christian Sneiderger

**Sunday Evening:** Mark FitzSimmons, Doug Jobs

**Prayer**

A.M. Closing: Mike Atkinson  
P.M. Closing: Lupe Escojido

**Song Leaders:**

Sun. A.M.: Anthony Scherffius  
Sun. P.M.: Doug Jobs  
Wednesday: Mike McVey

**Usher:** Allen Clifton

**Wednesday Devotional:** Kevin Sheeran

**Open/Close Building:** Will Burlison

**Sound System:** Trenton Jenkins

**Greeters:** Bryce Dolan  
Doug Jobs

**Prepare Communion:** Jamison

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**LADIES' DAY 2020**  
**"BIND US TOGETHER"**

Speaker: Jennifer O'Banon

Saturday, February 8, 2020 @ Mid-

Town church of Christ

Registration: 9-9:30am

Lunch will be provided.



**IN NEED OF PRAYERS:**

Janice FitzSimmons who will need further medical testing and treatment. Clifton Rutherford who is recovering from eye surgery to remove cancer. Kasi Jobs coworker's husband has terminal pancreatic cancer.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

Feb. 2: Congregation Potluck Luncheon after morning services, 1pm service in lieu of the 5pm service.  
Feb. 2: Men's Business Meeting at 2pm  
Feb. 4, 11, 18, 25; Men's & Ladies' Bible Class @ 10am  
Feb. 8: Ladies' Day hosted by MidTown. Registration begins @ 9am. Lunch will be provided.  
Feb. 9: Jr/Sr. high devo  
Feb. 16: Chili Cook-Off after evening services.

**AREA EVENTS**

Feb: 27-Mar. 1: Arise and grow as a family workshop at Southwest church of Christ in Austin, TX  
Mar. 26-28: "Women of Valor" Retreat. More info on the bulletin board.  
June 3-7: "Wait on the Lord" Men's Development conference in College Station.

**BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES:**

Happy Birthday: Richard Tisue (2), Letty Randle (7), Wayne Martin (8)

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**KEEP IN PRAYER**

**MIDTOWN MEMBERS:**

Jeff Cannady  
Les Daltry  
Dee Gilpatrick  
Wayne Martin  
Ann Pantel  
Veronica Serenil  
Clark Withers

**SHUT-INS:**

Faye Henderson  
Sandy Malone

If you would like to add or remove a name on the "Keep in Prayer" List, please see Nina Siegel.

# MIDTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST

**Minister:** Ronnie Scherffius  
**Secretary:** Nina Siegel

## TIMES OF SERVICES

Sunday Bible Class: 9:00AM  
Sunday Morning Worship: 10:00AM  
Sunday Evening Worship: 5:00PM  
Wednesday Bible Class: 7:00PM

## RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

Week of January 26, 2020

Bible Class.....116  
A.M. Worship.....146  
P.M. Worship.....96  
Wednesday Bible Class.....80

Offering      \$4,538

## Reading for this week:

Jesus said, "Everyone to whom much is given, of him much will be required" (Luke 12:48).



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## SUPPORTED WORKS

India - Mani Pagidipalli  
Bible Land Passages - John & Carla Moore  
Southwest School of Bible Studies - William Pedigo

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## MidTown Church of Christ

5901 N. Main  
Victoria, TX 77904  
(361) 573-0030  
[midtowncoc2017@gmail.com](mailto:midtowncoc2017@gmail.com)

