



Life Guide

applying God's Word to life

Easter Hope Lives through Love May 8-10, 2021

John 15:9-17

⁹ "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. ¹¹ I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹² My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵ I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. ¹⁷ This is my command: Love each other.

1. Did you do anything for/with your mother on Mothers' Day?

Answers will vary.

2. What trait do you most admire about your mother?

Answers will vary.

3. What similarities do you see between God's love for you and your mother's love for you?

Typically, they both show Agape love: sacrificial, undeserved, unconditional, in words and actions, uplifting, not degrading, impacting our hearts and lives

4. What differences do you see between God's love for you and your mother's love for you?

A mother's love is still imperfect, tainted by sin; it is not unlimited, it is sometimes self-serving or conditional, not equally administered to every child or situation

5. In v. 9, why does Jesus draw a distinction between his love for us, and our remaining in his love?

Jesus' love is constant, unending, unconditional. We can't change it. However, we can refuse to remain in it. We do that by choosing to live in disobedience to his commands. Impenitence = rejection of God's love.

6. Is God's love for us dependent upon us keeping God's commands? (cf. v. 10) No, God's grace is undeserved love; it is not dependent on the behavior/worthiness of the recipient. Cf. Romans 5:6-8; John 3:16

7. Agree/disagree: The fear of losing God's love should motivate the Christian to keep God's commandments.

Disagree. While fear of punishment (or losing God's love) might serve as a curb for our Old Man, it's ultimately confidence/trust in God's unconditional love and forgiveness that motivates our Old Man. God's indicatives ("You are loved by God") always precede God's imperatives ("Love your neighbor"). The first empowers us to do the second willingly.

8. "Love each other as I have loved you." Is this law or gospel?

The first half is certainly law (2nd table of the Law); the second half as it refers to Jesus' perfect life as an example follow is also law. But because the 2nd half also reminds us of the unconditional love that Jesus has shown to us, it is gospel (especially as fleshed out by the accounts of Jesus' life and death for us).

9. In what way(s) have you failed to love others as Jesus loved you?

My love is so often conditional, dependent upon my mood or doled out according to the perceived "worthiness" of the other person. I don't meet people's needs the way Jesus did/does.

10. "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last." (v.16) What comfort and what challenge do you find in these words? My salvation is not dependent upon me choosing to accept Jesus. He chose me, by grace. But he chose me so that I can produce fruit with lasting value. How focused am I on doing what he chose me to do?

11. How can Jesus promise, "the Father will give you whatever you ask"? Isn't that promise too open-ended? That promise must be understood in the context it was made. God wants/equips you to bear good fruit. Ask him for those kinds of fruits, in Jesus' name, and he'll give them to you. Besides, as a believer, you wouldn't want to ask for something that wasn't in keeping with God's will.