

BIGGERsteps

Part Three: *Christ-like living*

February 19, 2023

This month we're taking bigger steps to reach spiritual maturity. *What is spiritual maturity?* The measure for spiritual maturity is how much you resemble Jesus! Last Sunday, I said you must increase your knowledge of Christ and obey Him to become like Christ. This morning, I want to show you how a Christ-like Christian lives.

- **You must understand Jesus before you can imitate Jesus.**

You must understand who Jesus is, what He taught, what He did during His earthly ministry, and what He did for you on the cross. But the most important thing you need to know about Jesus is...What does He love? You cannot become like Jesus until you understand what He loves.

What does Jesus love?

1st - Jesus loves God. Matthew 22:34-38

Obviously, by their question, the scribes and Pharisees wanted to know how Jesus ranked the different commands in the Law of Moses. Their hope of course, was to condemn His theology and show everyone that He was not the Messiah. But Jesus simply quoted part of the "Shema" to answer the scribe's question (Deut. 6:4-9; 11:13-21; Numbers 15:37-41). The Shema was a confession of faith recited twice a day by every orthodox Jew.

According to Jesus, the greatest commandment is to love God. Like Jesus, we are to love God with every part of our being. Our love for God is demonstrated by obedience to Him (1 John 5:3).

How do you grow your love for God?

- Your love for God will grow as you meditate on God's love for you! 1 John 4:9-10

2nd - Jesus loves people. Matthew 22:39-40

What does it mean to love your neighbor as yourself?

- It means to love others like you want to be loved. 1 John 3:16-18

What do you want when you are hungry? Food! *What do you want when you are thirsty?* Something to drink! *What do you want when you are lonely?* A friend. *What do you want when you are moving?* Help! *What do you want when you are enslaved by sin?* Good News! To love others as you love yourself means to give others what you would want if you were in their situation. It means to show love through actions (1 John 3:16-18)!

Jesus didn't just tell people He loved them; He showed people love. And He wants us to do the same! He wants us to show our love by our actions. In this way, we fulfill the requirements of God's law (Romans 13:8-10).

- **You are not like Christ until you love like Christ!**

Two questions to think about this week:

1. Do you love God with your entire being?
2. Do you love people like you want to be loved?