

TRAINING TO LOVE OTHERS

By Terry Jones, August 3, 2008
Christ's Church at Tiffin, Ohio

John 13:34-35

INTRO. - (Video from Sermonspice.com - Gizmo and Zoink, Loving Others, Pt. 2, 4:20.

Jesus gave us a new commandment. How is the command to love others so new? In the OT God teaches us to love our neighbor as ourselves. What is so new about this command to loves others? Jesus speaks of newness in two ways.

First, the depth of the love Jesus taught had never been experienced in the world. Jesus loved others to the extent He gave His life for them. Jesus brought a new love into the world. Our love today is old and worn. Our love is a self-love that continues to fail. We need a new love for others that is willing to die for them. Second, Jesus created a new standard to judge love. The OT taught us to love others as much as we love ourselves. Since most of us love ourselves a great deal, loving others more than we love ourselves is a great love. Jesus changed the foundation of love for others. Love one as I have loved you. Jesus set the standard for loving others. Now we know to love others means to love people as Jesus loved people.

Our VBS will seek to train children to love others. We will present the love of Christ as the foundation to love others. What we will teach them will be wild to those who base their love for others on their love for themselves. Jesus invites us to be a part of His wild kingdom. Loving others as Jesus loves us will cause people to notice that we are followers of Jesus.

I. LOVING YOURSELF

- A. Loving yourself means it's what's on the inside that counts.
 - 1. In Matt. 22 Jesus said the second greatest command was to love another as yourself.
 - 2. The assumption is that we care for ourselves.
 - a. We call it a healthy self-esteem.
 - b. We can think too highly of ourselves or we can despise ourselves.

- B. The elephant is our symbol for loving ourselves.
1. Illus. - The elephant is the largest animal on land. The elephant has to have a big set of lungs, a big stomach, a big heart, and an amazing brain to survive the jungle. The elephant has supporting systems inside his body to be so big and strong.
 2. How strong is the elephant? The lions do not attack an elephant.
 3. It's what's inside that counts!
 - a. Illus. - Strong winds can destroy big strong trees. Small trees may survive these storms. Often the big trees have a hollow interior. We cannot see the termites and insects working year after year eating away on the interior of the tree. Once it falls, it is obvious what has happened.
 - b. What can cause us to be hollow inside? Hate, fear, worry, selfishness. They will destroy our inside causing us to fail in pleasing God.
- C. Applic. - In VBS we want to teach children how to be wild in making what's inside count. Jesus wants us to have a good interior in order to love others.

II. LOVING YOUR FAMILY

- A. Loving your family means doing your part.
1. When Jesus said to love others He includes our family.
 2. Illus. - My younger brother and I often fought when we were young boys at home. He and I regret those fights now. He and I are closer than we are to the other siblings. However, when we went to school, we would fight for each other.
 3. Loving your family means we help around the house.
 - a. Every child needs chores to do with an allowance and some without an allowance.
 - b. Illus. - Our son's job was to get the garbage out one day a week. I had to help him until he was strong enough to carry the garbage. Sometimes I had to awaken him to do his chore. Would it not have been easier for me to take out the garbage instead of assigning him the job? Yes! He needed to learn how to help.
- B. Scriptures about loving family, Eph. 5 & 6.
1. The husband is to love his wife as Jesus loves us.

- a. Knowing how Jesus loves people helps us husbands love our wives.
 - b. Jesus never had a wife therefore His love to others is our example.
 - c. Illus. - While Jesus is dying on the cross, He said to John the Apostle, "John, treat My mother as you would your mother." Tradition says that Mary lived with John and his wife as long as she lived.
2. Wives show love with respect for their husbands.
 - a. The wife's respect is a motivation for a husband.
 - b. Ex. - Who makes the best cheerleaders? Men or women? When girls' sports became popular some years ago, people expected men to be cheerleaders for women's sports. Women make the best cheerleaders.
 3. Children show their love for their parents when they obey them.
 - a. Children show their love for their parents with obedience.
 - b. Illus. - The symbol for this lesson is the parrot. Parrots are the most intelligent birds on earth. They can learn to imitate what we say. The parrot is a very social bird learning to get along with its siblings and other birds. We will learn to get along with others and help them.
 4. Fathers discipline and instruct children to love their children.
 - a. Ex. - My parents always wanted their children to do better than they did. They wanted us to have a better education, better jobs, better house, better character, and a stronger faith. They repeated these goals to us often so discipline was for our good.
 - b. The absence of discipline causes children to be angry and abuse called discipline makes children angry.

III. LOVING YOUR FRIENDS

- A. Loving your friends means taking care of them.
 1. Jesus said to love one another.
 2. John 17 - No greater love than to give life for friends.
- B. People need friends.
 1. We can be so lonely.
 2. Illus. - Charlie Plum was a POW in the Vietnam War after his plane was shot down. The worst part was the loneliness. In his

book, he said some ants crawled into his cell. He was so happy to see some living creatures he played with these ants.

3. Illus. - I visited with a lady who was almost a 100 years old. I told her what a joy it must be to have lived that long. She disagreed because all her family and friends were gone. She was lonely. She needed friends.

C. Applic. - Our VBS is sponsoring again the VBS in Suriname, South America. We have ordered Christian literature in the Dutch language to ship to Suriname. Our VBS offering will pay for the materials and postage. You have friends in Suriname.

IV. LOVING YOUR ENEMIES

A. Loving your enemies means treating them like friends.

1. Someone may not like us.
2. Jesus had enemies who wanted Him dead.
3. He loved His enemies.

B. Loving your enemies does not mean you allow them to hurt you.

1. Loving our enemies means we do not hurt them if they hurt us.
2. If our enemy is in need we help them.
3. Illus. - The symbol for this lesson is the lion. We know lions are strong ferocious animals. Jesus was called the Lion of Judah because He is strong against evil and oppression.
4. Picture Jesus dying on the cross for our sins and then think of Him roaring as He comes out of the tomb at His resurrection.

CONCLUSION - One of the best commercials on TV is the little pup singing this jingle, "Ain't no bugs on me, ain't no bugs on me. There may be bugs on some of you mugs but there ain't no bugs on me." Let's change the words to express our theme for VBS. "Ain't no hate in me, ain't no hate in me. There may be hate in some of God's folks, but there ain't no hate in me."