

I Pe. 1:22-25, 4:7-8

Q1: Before the message, we participated in the Lord's Supper. For those who have new/immature believers in the group, it might be helpful to discuss the purpose. As we know, this is to remember Christ – what He is like and what He has done for us. So, to link this to today's focus, from Scripture what evidences do we have of Christ's love for humanity?

Pastor mentioned the woman at the well, the woman taken in adultery, and the thief on the cross. What other passages/events from the life of Christ speak to you regarding His love? For me, it is the healing of the lepers, particularly that He touched them when they were otherwise considered untouchable.

Q2: In I Pe. 1:22 we are commanded to love one another **fervently**. What does this mean? What would be an example of loving in this way?

The word comes from the Greek *ektenoe*, which means earnestly or intensely. It is also translated as "to stretch out the hand." The idea is that we are purposefully reaching out – not expecting others to come or conform to us, but that we are reaching out (for example, in their need – e.g., like someone drowning and we reach out to pull them in.)

- How do you desire someone to fervently reach out to you? Do you practice reaching out to others that way?
- Who have you struggled to forgive—to look past their sin and treat them the way God sees them?

Q3: Why should we live holy and love others?

There are really two primary reasons:

1. It should be a natural response to what Christ did for us
 - a. I Jn. 4:19 – We love him because He first loved us.
 - b. Jn. 14:15 – If you love me, keep my commandments.
2. It is also to live as an example to others (particularly unbelievers)
 - a. Jn. 13:35 – By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

Both of these are summarized in what Christ says are the great commandments – love God and love others (Mt. 22:37-40).

- According to Scripture, what are some categories of purity that should exist in a believer's life?
- What does that purity look like in a practical sense?

Q4: Notice that the a large portion of the above verses come from the writings of John (the Apostle). The transformation of John's attitude is a great example of the transforming power of Christ. What were John and his brother James called early in Christ's ministry – The Sons of Thunder. They were brash, even wanting to call down fire from heaven to destroy people whom they thought were acting inappropriately (Lk. 9:54). But, what is John called later in his life – The Apostle of Love. He never lost his zeal for truth, but he matured in Christ, understanding the importance of love. How have you matured in this way, or what do you need to do in this area to become more mature?

- Have you ever experienced a "sobering" event that caused you to become more serious about your faith? Can you briefly describe the aftereffect of that event on your faith/describe the spiritual changes to which it led you?
- What in your life could be realigned so that you are a better "living sacrifice"?