How to LOVE as Jesus Loved

See: John 15:

John 15:
v.9 – How does the Father love the Son?

1) Completely
2) Always (all the time)
3) Permanently (without end)

“continue ye in my love” – “continue to love as I have loved you” or “follow my example of love”

v.10 - “Abide In my love” - in this context Jesus doe not mean by this statement: continue to love me (although we should); nor does He intend to mean: continue to allow me to love you (although He does)

He means: “continue to love as I have loved you”

John 15:12
This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

The Lord Jesus Christ gives us the perfect example of How to Love God and others:

I. Christ-like Love is <u>obedient</u>
(Love Obeys God)

Jesus obeyed the Father while on Earth:

John 15:10
If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

Luke 2:49:
And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?
John 5:30:
I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.
John 6:38:
For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.
John 4:34
Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

John 8:29
And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.
John 10:37
If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.

John 14:21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

See I John 5:3:
1 John 5:3
For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

A. Your love for God gives you the incentive to obey Him CONSCIENTIOUSLY

v. 3

"<u>This</u> is the love of God" - Love for God is very specifically defined – it is <u>not</u> ecstatic feelings for God; <u>not</u> mental acknowledgement of God; <u>not</u> a religious experience from God; but it is <u>practical</u>, thought out, conscientious obedience to God.

Love is action; love is effort; love sweats for God; love gives time and effort for God; love yields one's own wants, desires, and pleasures, in order to fulfill the wants, desires, pleasure and will of the one it loves.

Jesus said: "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

"Keep" - *tereo*. Two ideas:

1) to keep in the sense of <u>guard</u>; to watch over something so as to protect it (cp. protection in Rev. 3:10; Jn. 17:15)

2) To keep in the sense of to <u>observe</u>, to obey (Mt. 28:20).

Both ideas imply a conscientiousness toward God's commands.

"His commandments" - "The Christian life is a life of principled, conscientious obedience to God's will as <u>revealed in the Bible</u>." (A.N. Martin).

Obedience is not real obedience if we do not obey God . . .

*exactly
*completely
*without delay
*without excuse

- Husbands, you love God when you obey His command to love your wives and lead your family.

- Wives, you love God when you obey His command to submit to your husbands and serve your family's needs.

- Children, you love God when you obey His command to obey and honor your parents.

- Singles, you love God when you obey His command to "flee fornication" and "be content."

- Employees, you love God when you obey His command to work, not as men pleasers but as diligent servants of Christ.

- Christian, you love God when you obey His command to fulfill the Great Commission and make disciples of all nations.

- Christian, you love God when you obey His command to not forsake the assembly of the saints (Heb. 10:25).

We often say that hate is the opposite of love. In actuality, sin is the antithesis to love. Hence, Jesus said regarding the last days: "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (Mt. 24:12).

Whenever we sin, we sin because at that moment, our love for God isn't what it should be. The degree to which you love God will determine the degree to which you keep from deliberately sinning against Him.

"Ye that love the Lord, hate evil."

Don't say you love God when you are downing a six-pack of Budweiser or reading pornography or pursuing a divorce of your spouse or committing fornication or adultery or snorting cocaine.

B. Your love for God gives you the drive to obey Him CONTINUALLY

"Keep" - the present tense of the verb implies a continual, habitual or repetitive activity – not a one-time deal, not a mere month-long, explosive, excited, storm of obedience to God, followed by a long, dry, desert-like duration of disobedience.

One who loves God is not a "fire cracker Christian" who burns hot then explodes, but whose flame dies out into cold uselessness.

Love for God is the plodder, who day by day, week by week, year by year, decade by decade, is still serving God faithfully, still in the Word, still in the class teaching, still to be found doing humble acts of service.

C. Your love for God gives you the attitude to obey Him <u>CHEERFULLY</u>

"His commandments are not grievous" - when love for God is your motive for obedience, the obedience is not a heavy burden; it is not painful drudgery; it is not an oppressive weight.

When you love Him you are close to Him, and when you are close to Him, you find yourself yoked to Him, and since you are yoked to Him, He shares the heavy end of the load and you find that "his yoke is easy" and His "burden is light."

Nothing God expects from us is too heavy for us to bear.

He would not ask you to do something which He didn't equip you to do.

This does <u>not</u> mean that obedience to God is so easy that it will never require sweat, patience, and great effort. Indeed it will! But obedience will never be so heavy that it is impossible.

I Cor. 10:13 - There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to <u>bear *it*.)</u>

Love never gives up, but "beareth all things. . . endureth all things" (I Cor. 13:7).

Love is the power for obedience – Have you turned on the power switch?

Doing our Christian responsibility does not elicit the response:

"Oh, do I have to?!"
"I'm too tired!"
"I'll do it, but I don't like it!"

It is no drudgery to give of your money to the Lord, when you love Him, "for God loveth a cheerful giver" (II Cor. 9:7).

Conclusion:

So you say, "I love God."

Is there visible, tangible, concrete evidence to substantiate that statement?

II. Christ-like Love is <u>sacrificial</u>

(Love Gives to Others)

A. Jesus Christ Demonstrated Sacrificial Love in His INCARNATION

(Love is seen by what it gives up for others)

2 Cor. 8:9
For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

THE GRACE OF CHRIST BROUGHT HIM DOWN TO THE DEPTHS OF POVERTY (v. 9a)
How low did Christ go?

"Our Lord Jesus Christ" - note full title:
1)"Lord" - He who is master (of the Universe) - the eternal Yahweh became poor!

2)"Jesus" - He who is Savior (the only deliverer from sin and hell) became poor!

3)"Christ" - He who is Messiah (the anointed King of kings) became poor!

"Though He was rich" -
--This points to His pre-existence (Jesus existed before incarnation)
--This points to His pre-eminence (He was ruler over all creation)

Before He came to earth, the Lord Jesus shared the same glory as the Father (Jn. 17:5).

Phil. 2:5-11 - Christ's Humiliation

"Let this mind be in you . . . made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man."

Jesus humbled Himself so much as seen by:

1) His coming to earth
2) Taking on a physical body with all of its limitations

Christ had:

2)A Humble birth

--swaddling clothes (Lk. 2:7, 12)
"Swaddling clothes" = lit. strips of cloth - Christ was wrapped up like a mummy.
NOTE: This wrapping was part of a sign (v. 12) (a sign is something out of the ordinary).
--Manger - a feeding trough for animals in a stall or stable (possibly a cave or an underground barn).

--Bethlehem (Micah 5:2 - "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.")

3)a humble family (Lk. 2:24)
Mary and Joseph could only afford to give two turtledoves or two young pigeons, rather than a lamb (READ Lev. 12:6 - cp. with 5:7).

4)a humble trade (Mk. 6:3 - "Carpenter . . . they were offended at Him" (Mt. 11:6 - "And blessed is He, whosoever shall not be offended in me.")

5)a humble upbringing - "Nazareth in Galilee" Nathaniel said: "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (Jn. 1:46) (Town was very small and had a negative reputation) Jn. 7:52 - "They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet."

6)a humble ministry
--He had no pillow to lay His head (Mt. 8:20)
--He had no money to pay His taxes (Mt. 17:24-27)

Christ's life shows that He plunged into the depths of poverty. At birth, he slept in another's manger; in ministry, He cruised in another's boat; in ministry, He ate in another's house; at triumphal entry, He rode on another's donkey; at death, he was buried in another's tomb (Mt. 27:57-60).

The hymnwriter wrote:
"There's not a friend like the lowly Jesus--
No, not one! No, not one!
None would could heal all our soul's diseases--
No, not one! No, not one!

No friend like Him is so high and holy--
No, not one! No, not one!
And yet no friend is so meek and lowly--
No, not one! No, not one!

Jesus knows all about our struggles,
He will guide till the day is done"

The Lord of the universe put up with poverty, persecution, scorn, abandonment, and the cruelties of the cross.

Why?

So that we might be rich.

Christ went from riches to rags so that we might go from rags to riches.
Christ went from the top to the bottom so that we might go from the bottom to the top.
Christ went from everything to nothing so that we might go from nothing to everything.
Christ went from wealth to poverty so that we might go from poverty to wealth.
He experienced rockbottom humiliation so that we might experience mountain top wealth (in Heaven)

B. Jesus Christ Demonstrated Sacrificial Love in His LIFE'S MINISTRY

(Love is seen by what it does for others)

As a lowly, loving servant, Christ washed the disciples feet (Jn. 13:13ff). He preached salvation to the lowest of the low. Demonstrated love by rubbing shoulders with the down & outers; the publicans; etc. He was willing to touch the leper; cast out the demons of the demon possessed; Heal the sick & afflicted etc.

Jesus "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister . . ." (Mt. 20:28)

C. Jesus Christ Demonstrated Sacrificial Love in His CRUCIFIXION

(Love is seen by what it provides for others)

Ephes. 5:25-27
Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; [26] That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, [27] That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

"THEY INSULTED THE KING!"
Matthew 27:27-44

***He allowed Himself to be humiliated so that you could be honored!**

1. They Insulted His Claim to be KING (v. 27-38)

- They mocked Him with an old scarlet robe (v. 28)
- They mocked Him with a crown of thorns (v. 29a)
- They mocked Him with a reed for a scepter (v. 29b)
- They mocked Him with a bow of insincere homage (v. 29c)
- They mocked Him with spit in His face (v. 30a)
- They mocked Him with physical violence (v. 30b)
- They mocked Him with death by crucifixion (v. 31-37)
- They mocked Him with association with two criminals (v. 38)

2. They Insulted His Power to do MIRACLES (v. 39-40)

3. They Insulted His Ability to SAVE (v. 41-42)

4. They Insulted His Relationship With the FATHER (v. 43-44)

See: I John 3:16-18

Love is not mere talk, but sacrificial action toward others in need (v.16-18)

v. 16

There is no greater demonstration of love than to sacrifice your life for another (Jn. 15:13 - Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.)

Those who are convinced of God's sacrifice for them, are properly motivated to reciprocate that same love toward others.

People tend to treat others the same way they perceive they have been treated. For example, one who has been forgiven ought to have the capacity to forgive (Eph. 4:32 - "And be ye kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.")

What have you sacrificed for the sake of another believer lately? (How can you say you love when you don't sacrifice time, energy, money, resources, etc., to meet a brother's need? How could you say you would be willing to give your life for someone, when you can't even give of your abundant resources to help him/her?)

v. 17

To be aware of someone's need, and to do nothing about it, when you have the means of life to do something, is to reflect a hard, cold heart (void of God's love).

Love does not dwell in the miser (Stott, p. 144).

v. 18

John is not saying: You shouldn't tell others you love them (God has told us that He loves us). Rather, he is saying, your love should not be mere talk. Rom. 5:8 - "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.").

It's easier to say, "I love you" than to show it. It's easier to talk about your love for others than to demonstrate it. Mere talk is cheap. We should love in our words, but real love does not stop there. Talk alone is cheap (ILLUS: the "Pineapple Story" in Papua, New Guinea).

"Deed" - work (a beneficial action)

What actions can you extend?

--a hug --a helping hand --a phone call or card --a loving rebuke -- prayer on their behalf --meeting a need or extending a favor --babysitting their children so they can go out --helping them move --a ride to and from church etc.

"Truth" - genuine, real (not hypocritical love) from pure motives (out of love for God).

To do an act of kindness but to do it for self-recognition or reward is faulty motivation and will not be rewarded by God.

Why do you do what you do?

--Love is from God (v. 17 "love of God" It is not self-originated)
--Love is positive (it's not merely "I don't do anyone harm"; it's "I do others good")
--Love is volitional (a choice)
--Love is visual (can be seen by what it does)
--Love is practical (produces good)
--Love is personal ("it is easier to be enthusiastic about humanity with a capital "H" than it is to love individual men and women, especially …the unattractive" Stott, p. 143).
--Love is sacrificial (it gives of itself to benefit one in need)

Conclusion: I Cor. 13