

## Loving One Another

### Selected Scriptures

1. **Command** (John 15:12-17)

The Law given through Moses, along with the rest of the Old Testament Scriptures, were authoritative for the believers of Jesus' day (cf. Matt 5:17-19; 22:36). Along with the Old Testament, the commands which Christ gave to His disciples, and all of the commands given to the church by the inspiration of the Spirit (cf. 1 Tim. 3:16-17), are authoritative and as on the conscience of the Christian. The command which Christ has given to His disciples is that we are to love one another (cf. 1 John 2:7-8; 3:23; 2 John 5).

2. **Excel** (1 Thess. 4:9-12)

The love that a local church, as well as the individual members of that church, have for other believers is something that should be evident to outside observers. Love for the brethren is a basic component of a healthy Christian church, and we are regularly reminded of its importance (Rom. 12:10; 1 Pet. 1:7, 22; Heb. 13:1). There is a danger in the complacency of obedience, and that is why Paul encourages continuing to abound in the love for one another (1 Thess. 4:10).

3. \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Pet. 4:7-11)

Peter now urges them to maintain their present activity of loving one another. Peter has recognized that these believers have shown love for one another as a result of having been born again (1 Pet. 1:22-23) and he has reminded them that love for one another is a general principle for faithful living (cf. 1 Pet. 2:17; 3:8). During times of difficulty and persecution it will be easy for our love for one another to grow cold (cf. Matt 24:12) and so we must be diligent to maintain it (Eph 4:31-32). Maintaining this love for one another is essential because love is to animate everything about Christian life and service (cf. 1 Cor. 13:1ff).

4. \_\_\_\_\_ (1 John 4:7-12)

A final reason why love for one another is important is that it is definite indication of the real spiritual condition of a professed believer. Love for one another is directly connected to saving faith (1 John 3:23), with faithful obedience (1 John 3:24), as well as with loving God (1 John 4:20) and His abiding in the believer (1 John 4:12). Love for one another and love for God is something that only believers can do because it is a result of being born again (1 John 4:7).