

# IMPACT

**I** **M**ust **P**ersonally **A**cknowledge **C**hrist **T**oday  
Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; *in all your ways acknowledge Him* and He shall direct your path.  
Proverbs 3:5-6

**Passage:** Matthew 22:37-40 “Jesus said to him, ‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

**Quote:** “Agape love is not a feeling; it’s a motivation for action that we are free to choose or reject. Agape is a sacrificial love that voluntarily suffers inconvenience, discomfort, and even death for the benefit of another without expecting anything in return. We are called to agape love through Christ’s example.”<sup>1</sup>

**A**gape love is a fundamental **expectation** and **evidence** of saving faith. Jesus said, “A new **commandment** I give to you, that you love [agapao] one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. **By this** all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love [agape] for one another.”<sup>2</sup> Biblical love forms the foundation for worship of God and for relationships that function as God intends them to function. A sobering truth—“*He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.* In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation [payment] for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has seen God at any time. *If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.*”<sup>3</sup> The bottom line—without selfless love for God and man, you can have no assurance that you are one of His children!

Our text in Matthew tells us how we are to love.

## Our love for God.

1) Exclusive love: It is above all others, unique and unrivaled, even by the legitimate love that we have in our most intimate family relationships. Keeping love for God as the foremost priority in our lives is a constant battle, but to fail in this is to make love for others that come ahead of Him idols of the heart!

2) Entire love: We are to love Him with all of our being. There must be no place in a Christian’s life where the love of God is not reflected as a beacon of hope in this sin-cursed world that is becoming increasingly hostile to God’s truth. At home, at work, at play, we are to demonstrate that “the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”<sup>4</sup>

3) Enlightened love: We are to grow in our knowledge of Who God is. Theology is “the study of religious faith, practice, and experience: *the study of God and God’s relation to the world.*”<sup>5</sup> Every Christian must be a theologian—a student who studies to show himself or herself approved unto God by learning more about Him and applying that to our lives.

## Love for God and for Others,

4) Enthusiastic love: He has given us living hope and eternal life! We can rest with confident expectation that God will send Christ back to claim His own, and that what lies ahead for us is “joy unspeakable and full of glory”<sup>6</sup> as we worship God for eternity.

## Our love for others

1) Fellow Christians. When a person places his or her faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, he or she continues to battle the flesh—that bent towards self-fulfillment and self-satisfaction. Loving Christians, who at times are not loveable from an emotional standpoint, is still possible because God expects it and exemplifies it by loving us, even in our most “unlovable moments!”<sup>7</sup>

2) All others. Jesus said, “But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, THAT you may be sons of your Father in heaven....”<sup>8</sup> Like our Father’s example, the love that we are to demonstrate extends to the most hostile relationships. This is **BIBLICAL CHRISTIANITY!**

<sup>1</sup> Compelling Truth <sup>2</sup> John 13:34-35 <sup>3</sup> I Jn.4:8, 10-12 <sup>4</sup> Rom.5:5 <sup>5</sup> Webster’s Dictionary <sup>6</sup> I Peter 1:8; I Jn.2:5; 5:3 <sup>7</sup> I Jn.4:7, 12, 20 <sup>8</sup> Matt.5:44; Read Luke 6:32-38 and James 2:8-9