



Love One Another

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:34-35).

In his book, *Living Faith*, former President Jimmy Carter tells a story which reminds us of the practical meaning of the Christian faith we share: “There was a story in my Sunday School lesson text about a group of Christian laymen involved in missionary work who descended on a small village near an Amish settlement. As is often the habit of eager amateurs seeking a possible convert, they confronted an Amish farmer and asked him, ‘Brother, are you a Christian?’ The farmer thought for a moment and then said, ‘Wait a few minutes.’ He wrote down a list of names on a tablet and handed it to the lay evangelist. ‘Here is a list of people who know me best. Please ask **them** if I am a Christian’” (*Living Faith*, pp. 240-241).

The Amish farmer knew the way he lived his life would identify him as a Christian. Various characteristics adorn a Christian’s life, the greatest of which is love. Jesus tells us in the text *to love one another*. The love of Christians is unique because it is in response to the One who first loved. John says in his first epistle, *In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins* (1 John 4:10). The world certainly knows about love, and sadly enough, it also knows about hatred. As Christians we can love one another because Jesus, our Savior, loved us and gave himself for us.

At the graveside of His friend Lazarus, John tells us that Jesus wept. The Jews who were there remarked, “... *See how he loved him!*” (John 11:36) The love of Jesus was there for all to see. Jesus said that one had no greater love than to lay down his life for his friend. He has done that for you and me. His love enables us to love one another.

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God (1 John 4:7). This is a mark of a Christian. Because we have been loved, love is very much a part of our lives. We have received it in the greatest way through our Savior Jesus Christ. Because He is at work in us through Word and Sacrament, this love is strong and alive in us. May we rejoice in this love and continue to “*love one another*”. Amen.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, as You have loved us, You call us to love one another. This is the mark of those You call to be Your very own. By Your love, move us to love one another. Amen.
Scripture references are from the ESV.