

**transform**  
discipleship mentoring



**LEVEL THREE**

## **Love, the spirit of Serving**

Transformed Service

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**A Discipleship Ministry Resource Provided by  
Faith Assembly of God**

254 Spackenkill Rd., Poughkeepsie NY  
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**Love...**  
**The spirit of serving**

**EQUIP**  
Transformed SERVICE

**INTRODUCTION**

“The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Matt. 20:28).

Jesus ministered out of who he was; his influence came from his character. As we move on from level 2 to three, it is critical that we continue to grow in Christ like character. The way Jesus exercised power was consistent with the humility and submission that governed his character and service (John 14:12-14).

As disciples of Jesus we can have the same impact Jesus had. Serving in the spirit of love, creates a firm and healthy foundation that carries every aspect of ministry to others.

Over the next 12 weeks or so, level three course will provide a greater understanding of the importance of love, discerning the will of God (Decision making), The powerful baptism in the Holy Spirit, your gift and talent’s place in the local body, and spiritual Warfare.

I encourage you also in the next 12 week to pray and ask the Lord to show you where you belong in the body of Christ (the local church.) Yes! Everyone one of you are at Faith Assembly for a reason and a season. God wants to use you! You have something very special to offer our church body in the area of ministry and through these next several weeks I pray you discover your purpose as we attempt to equip.

May God’s richest blessings follow all of you all the days of you lives.

Pastor John Ogden

## The spirit of service in Christianity is Love

### Read 1 Corinthians 13: read it carefully and slowly!

The service of God in this world has always been attended with difficulty and opposition.

In Old Testament times the servants sent to the Lord's vineyard all came back disappointed, beaten, or stoned; some n

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ever got back at all, but were put to death by those from whom they sought fruit for Jehovah.

In the New Testament service, the one who was chiefly used in carrying the gospel of God's glory to the Jew first, and then to the Gentile, had to feel not only the cruel opposition of the world at large - the scourge, stones, and bonds - but to lament, at the end of his course, the desertion and neglect of the greater part of those who had received the truth from him.

There would be enough to deter even an active and zealous man in such a course; and I well remember the words of an old servant of the Lord to one who was discouraged by the ingratitude of those he had endeavored to serve: "Christianity is not shown forth in seeking anything upon earth, not even the gratitude of Christians, but in bringing into the earth power from another sphere."

The spirit of service in Christianity is love, and love that is willing to spend and be spent for others (as we see in the apostle quoted above), with no reward, but even ready to love the Corinthians all the more the less they loved him. (2 Cor. 12: 15:)

It must have been very trying to carry on this service to the Corinthians. There is indeed a pleasure in working for others who show a little gratitude and interest in return for the service; but what must it have been to the heart of the devoted apostle to receive nothing but unkindness and ingratitude from those for whom he had suffered and labored so much? If in natural things it is so much more painful to have a thankless child than to feel the serpent's tooth, what is it in spiritual things where the active care and service, the fruit of true Christian affection, is slighted?

The motive and reason for continuing thus to serve the ungrateful is found in the love itself, and not in its objects. This is exactly the character of love, the divine nature; there is nothing self-seeking in it, and if the eye be single, the most gifted

## The spirit of service in Christianity is Love

We should notice the self-denying way in which the apostle met the needs of the weakest; being free from all, he made himself the servant of all, that he might gain the more: "To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."

The spirit of service in Paul was evidently the spirit of love; there was that true seeking the good of others, though at his own expense, and the perseverance in it that is peculiar to love.

In 1 Corinthians 13 love is insisted upon by the apostle. The gifts are found in chapter 12, the use of them in chapter 14, and the thirteenth chapter comes between as being the preparation for their use.

I suppose, to make a very simple illustration, a number of tools of steel; before using them they must be tempered in oil. Gifts must be tempered in *love* to be used in the assembly of God; and at this point I would ask my reader to go through 1 Corinthians 13 before proceeding lesson 1 of level 3.

Source – Anonyms

Q. What part of this devotional thought spoke to you the most?

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Q. What portion of 1 Corinthians 13 spoke to you the most on the subject of love?

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## LOVE: Displayed More Than Defined

### KEY VERSE:

*Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things. Love never ends. (1 Corinthians 13:4-8 ESV)*

Can you come up with a definition for love (that accurately describes what love is) in two or three sentences? (use a separate piece of paper) Homework - Hand in next week.

It's not an easy task. No matter how we define love, our definition always seems to be lacking. Trying to define love can be like describing chocolate to a tribesman in sub-Saharan Africa who has never heard of nor tasted chocolate before. We may have trouble defining it, explaining it, and even finding it, but we know deep down inside that we need it.

In **1 Corinthians 13**, the Apostle Paul wrote one of the most famous descriptions of love. Notice that he does not give a dictionary definition but instead a description of love displayed. The love Paul describes values:

1. Giving over getting
2. Commitment over feelings
3. The long haul over the short term

The scripture is clear. You can see this love displayed in patience, kindness, humility, forgiveness, integrity, and ongoing perseverance. This kind of love survives and stands the tests of time and tribulations.

***Does this describe the love you're seeking? More importantly, does this describe the love you're sharing?***

Taken from: [shortdailydevotions.com](http://shortdailydevotions.com)

***Q. Of the 3 descriptions mentioned above, which one could you use some help with?***

Explain your answer: \_\_\_\_\_

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## From Judgment to love

### KEY VERSE:

*For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. (John 3:17 ESV)*

Often times, I get asked the question, why do I live in the United States when I was born in Canada? I love the question because it often opens up a door for me to share God's calling on my life. However, on the other hand sometimes it opens up a discussion about the hypocrisy in the church. A lot of people feel that Christians do nothing but condemn everyone outside of their "little world", and exist simply to judge those around them.

Fortunately though, there comes a time further on in the relationship several people will often confess that I am nothing like they thought I would be. What they are realizing is that my "religion" doesn't play itself out by me judging everyone and everything in my path, but by **loving** those around me.

Now this doesn't mean I cuddle right up to sin and tell people there is no such place as hell... that would perhaps be the most unloving thing possible. But what I do often try to keep in mind is this: "God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him." So if Jesus, being perfect and without sin didn't come to this earth on a mission to condemn, then neither should I.

**There are four areas in our lives and relationships in which we can live out our Christ-given love: Read each one and ask yourself where you need to grow.**

1. *We can show our love for God (Read Mark 12:30). As we show our love for God, those around us will see we serve a loving God who also loves them.*
2. *We can show our love for each other (Read John 13:35). If we can't even show those around us that we love other Christians, then why would they think we would love them?*
3. *We can show our love for our enemies (Read Matthew 5:43-46). This can be the hardest, but the most rewarding for us. If we can love those who don't love us, we show the opposite of their condemnation.*
4. *We can show our love for the needy (Read Galatians 2:10). Giving and showing love to the needy is doing it without expecting anything in return. Instead of condemning them and telling them they are in need because of their own actions, we demonstrate our love by meeting their physical needs and clearly communicating the Gospel of grace.*

May God bless you and have a loving day! - Pastor John Ogden

## Real love is agape love!

### KEY VERSE:

*This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. (John 15:12-13 ESV)*

So what is love really? In the English language we have one word for love. We use this word to say...

I love that pasta dish... I'd love to go on a hike in the woods... I sure miss you bro. Love you man... I'm really glad you are my wife - I love you baby. But we don't mean the same thing with the word love in each of those phrases.

The Greek language, in which the New Testament was written, actually has 3 words that are translated as "love" in English:

**Eros—physical, sexual, sensual love.** From which we get the modern word erotic. Eros is about chemistry, physical attraction, passion, sexual desire, and romantic love.

**Phileo—brotherly or friendship love.** This is where the city of Philadelphia derives its name- "the city of brotherly love." Phileo is about companionship, camaraderie, partnership, mutual affection, or giving and receiving.

**Agape—unconditional love.** The word "agape" was not used commonly in ancient manuscripts. Many scholars believe that early Christians used and possibly even coined the word. Agape is all about unconditional, selfless, and sacrificial love- the love displayed by God through Jesus. There is this underlying idea of total commitment to the object of love even if it doesn't deserve or desire it. Wow!

The problem with agape love is that it's risky and dangerous, because if you choose to love someone else and expect nothing in return, to look out for their best interests at the expense of your own self-interests, at some point you are going to get burned, at some point your love is not going to be reciprocated. That's exactly how Jesus loved us, and only through Jesus can we love others with this awesome agape love.

**Which of three Greek words for love most often describes how you love others? What prevents and hinders you from loving others unconditionally?**

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## Walking the love walk!

It is such a joy to spend time in God's Word—reading, studying, and meditating daily in the scriptures keeps us close to the Holy Spirit and helps us to grow spiritually. When we are growing spiritually we are growing in the love of God!

One of the things that always grieves the Holy Spirit is when we fail to live and walk in the love of God and allow our flesh to rule us with bad attitudes, envy, unforgiveness, anger, strife, pride and a critical spirit!

**When you walk with the Holy Spirit then you will walk in love.**

The Spirit-controlled life and the Spirit-ruled life is a love-ruled life. It's impossible to be full of the Holy Spirit and at the same time be full of strife and division - for it is the work of the Holy Spirit in us to make us, shape us, and mold our character into the image of Jesus!

### Being Like Jesus

According to Romans 8:29, the Bible lets us know that the whole purpose of the Christian life is that each and every believer be conformed to the image of God's Son. That means we are to act like Jesus, talk like Jesus, walk like Jesus, treat others just like Jesus and live a lifestyle that brings glory to God.

Everything about the person and ministry of Jesus manifested and exuded the **love** of God...can the same thing be said of us? Living the love-ruled life will put an end to Christians getting divorced; it will prevent church splits, and stop competition in the ministry.

"The ultimate aim of the Christian ministry is to produce the **love** which springs from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a genuine faith" (1 Tim. 1:5 Phillips Translation). Walking in **love** is the highest spiritual force, and will keep you in harmony with God and man. Walking in the love of God releases the supernatural power of God.

In this teaching, I want to share with you from my studies in God's Word on the love walk, and I encourage you to get your Bible out and study along with me - underlining all these verses as we review - **The 21 Key Truths About Walking in Love:**

1. Walking in love is the personal responsibility of each Christian—a commandment from Jesus, not an option. (John 13:34-35)
2. Walking in love requires that you guard your tongue. Avoid corrupt communication: gossip, criticism and strife. (Eph. 4:29-31)
3. Walking in love involves living free from unforgiveness and bitterness, regardless of how much people have hurt you. (Mark 11:25)



## Walking the love walk!

4. Walking in love is the foundation for faith to truly work. (Gal. 5:6)
5. Walking in love is not based on your feelings or emotions, it is a decision to act on God's Word and yield to the Holy Spirit. You choose to love people, including the unlovely and difficult people. (2 Cor. 5:14)
6. Love never tries to take advantage of any person. (Rom. 13:10)
7. Love is unselfish and always puts other people first. (Rom. 12:10)
8. Love never argues with people because a gentle answer turns away anger. (Prov. 15:1)
9. The indwelling Holy Spirit has poured the divine love of God into your heart. (Rom. 5:5)
10. Love is an action that is self-giving and seeks to help other people in need. (1 John 3:17-18)
11. Love protects and hides the faults, weaknesses and mistakes in other people. (1 Peter 4:8; Prov. 10:12)
12. Love is a fruit. There is no such thing as the gift of love, the baptism of love, or the anointing of love. (Gal. 5:22-23)
13. Love begins in the home—avoid strife, don't get involved with arguments, be kind, considerate, and helpful. Be a blessing to your family and see each one as a precious gift from God. (1 Peter 3:7-11)
14. Love is kind. (1 Cor. 13:4)
15. Love is the catalyst that gives meaning to speaking in tongues, to prophesying, to understanding God and His ways, to charitable works, and to self-sacrifice. (1 Cor. 13:1-3)
16. Love is living according to God's commandments. (2 John 6)
17. Love is not envious, puffed up or easily provoked. (1 Cor. 13:4-5)
18. Love means consistently treating other people the way you would like them to treat you, with respect, courtesy and consideration. (1 John 4:20; Matt. 7:12)
19. Love is a good listener and tolerant of other's differences. (John 15:12-13)
20. The law of love is the royal law of the New Covenant. It is the supreme and highest law. (James 2:8)
21. Love does not hold grudges. (1 Cor. 13:5)

Allow God's Word and the Holy Spirit to do a fresh work in your heart, in your life and in your relationships. As you apply this teaching ask yourself, **am I love ruled?**

## Concluding thoughts on love!

Hate, strife and fear bring the worst out of people.

**Love** brings the best out of people.

Love is a spiritual substance in your reborn spirit and when you release **love** out of your heart, it influences, touches, and changes people around you. People around you respond positively to you and they begin to **love** you.

### The Golden Rule

Love is consistently treating other people the way you would like them to treat you by showing them courtesy and consideration. Be a good listener, give a smile and make allowances for people who are different from you. Don't judge them if they don't measure up to your standards.

My prayer for you today is that the Holy Spirit will make this study a reality in every part of your life. If you are full of bitterness, then don't stay bitter get better! If you are in the grip of unforgiveness, then don't try to get even, get set free. Remember the same God who loves you will help you to love others.

-by Elenor Robertson

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## Review Questions - Lesson 1

1. In Christianity, what kind of spirit must be behind serving one another? p.2

2. Which chapter in 1 Corinthians prepares us in using the gifts of the spirit? p.3

Is it chapter 12 13 14? (Circle one)

3. List 3 ways love is displayed in 1 Corinthians? p.4

4. What area in our lives could be the hardest but most rewarding when it comes to showing love? p.5

5. Which love did God through Jesus display? p.6

Eros Phileo Agape (Circle one)

6. TRUE or FALSE p.7

When you walk in step with the holy Spirit, you walk in love.

7. Finish the sentence:

Love is consistently treating other people the way you would like them to treat

**Remember:**