

Conversation Starter

FOR the week of January 6 to 12, 2008

This Week's Theme: Connecting With The Source Of Love

Reading #1: John 13:34-35
Reading #2: John 15:9-13
Reading #3: 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a & 13
Reading #4: 1 John 4:7

These words of Jesus contain an action item for all Christians: *A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. (John 13:34 from **Reading #1.**)* Later on in this same book of the Bible, Jesus reaffirms this action item when He is recorded as saying: *My command is this: love each other as I have loved you. (John 15:12 from **Reading #2.**)*

1. So, then, what does Jesus mean when He says to "love one another" or "love each other"? (After this question has been discussed, then go to **Reading #3** which provides a biblical definition of "love".)

Notice that feelings are not mentioned in this biblical definition of love. Our North American society has watered down the meaning of the word **love** by using this word in ways for which it was never originally intended. For example, there are those who put conditions on the word love such as *I love you* because we have things in common; *I love you* because you look attractive to me; *I love you* because I feel good around you; *I love you* because you have a great personality. This isn't what the Bible means when the word *love* is used. And then there are those who use the word **love** to describe something they really, really, really "like" such as "I love pizza" "I love horses" "I love travelling". And what about those people who only see **love** as a feeling -- a "fuzzy, warm, *I like being around you*" feeling? When Jesus commanded us to *love one another*, what is the source of this love? The apostle John provides us with the answer in **Reading #4: Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. (1 John 4:7a)** Therefore, each and every day spend time connecting with the Source of love.

2. In addition to what has already been mentioned, what other ways has North American society "watered down" the meaning of the word **love** as found in **Reading #3**?
3. Why is learning to love essential in being able to bring Jesus to your neighbours, friends and co-workers?
4. How do you "learn" to love?
5. What are some practical ways for you to love others?
6. What are some practical ways for your fellowship group to love others?
7. What are some practical ways for our church family to love others?
8. Why is it sometimes difficult to love certain people?