

Keep Me Near the Cross

What Being a Christian is All About

What Being a Christian is All About

- ❑ 28 Then one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, "Which is the first commandment of all?"
- ❑ 29 Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one.
- ❑ 30 *And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.*' This is the first commandment.
- ❑ 31 And the second, like it, is this: *'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'* There is no other commandment greater than these."

Mark 12:28-31; NKJV

What Being a Christian is All About

- According to Jesus, being a Christian is about two things:
 1. Loving the LORD.
 2. Loving your neighbor.

Loving GOD

- ❑ Agape transcends what we are naturally “attracted to” or what we emotionally “fall into.”
- ❑ “Agape has to do with the mind: it is not simply an emotion which rises unbidden in our hearts; it is a principle by which we deliberately live. Agape has to do supremely with the will.” (William Barclay)
- ❑ Agape is not an uncontrolled reaction of the heart, but a concentrated exercise of the will.

Loving Neighbor

- ❑ Agape is a caring love which becomes involved with the needs of others.
- ❑ Agape is a sacrificial love.
- ❑ Agape does not depend upon the one being loved having to earn such love.
- ❑ Agape is not an exclusive love, expressed only to a select few, but an all-embracing love, shown toward all.
- ❑ Agape seeks the best for others.

Loving GOD & Commandments

- *“If you love me...”* (John 14:15)
- *“...not burdensome...”* (1 John 5:3)
- GOD is *behind* every commandment (James 2:10).
- **Saved to serve!** (Ephesians 2:1-10)

Loving GOD & My Neighbor

- *“Love does no harm to a neighbor...”*
(Romans 13:8-10)
- *“...through love serve one another.”*
(Galatians 5:13-14)

Loving GOD & My Neighbor

How am I doing?

(1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

“Agape is...”

- ❑ The words used to describe love in our English versions are *adjectives* but, in the Greek, they are *verbs*.
- ❑ Adjectives are terms of *description*, but verbs are terms of *action*.
- ❑ *Agape is active, not passive.*

Loving GOD & My Neighbor

How am I doing?

(1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

“Christ in _____”

(Galatians 2:20)

What Being A Christian is All About

“Christianity began in Palestine as a *relationship*,
moved to Greece and became an *idea*,
went to Rome and became an *institution*,
and then came to America and became an *enterprise*.”

Richard Halverson

We need to get back to the relationship!

“By this all will know...”

**“...you love one another,
as I have loved you,
that you also love one another.”**

(John 13:34-35; NKJV)