

Mar 19, 2017



# Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks  
Baptist Church**  
Grand Prairie, Texas

**Lesson Leaders:**

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**Class Leaders:**

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**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:**

Broken people are made whole by God's love

**PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:**

I know I'm not perfect, Lord, so help me not to be hypocritical and pretend I have it all together. Open my heart to others in acceptance and love so that they might know Jesus's concern for them.

**SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:**

*But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us*  
**(Rom 5:8 NKJV)**

*(from "Our Daily Bread", Nov 30, 2017)*

**Series: The Love of God**

**UNIT: Nature of God's Love**

**NEXT WEEK**

**God's Merciful Love**

**(Joel 2:12-13, 18-19, 28-32)**

## Manifesting God's Love John 15:1-17

**Aim and Application of the Lesson**

The lesson reinforces the truth that God always is **Manifesting God's Love** for us through Jesus. The **study's aim** is to understand that God's love for us should motivate us to love others. The **study's application** is to demonstrate God's sacrificial love to others through loving others ourselves.

*(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)*

**Lesson Introduction and Background**

"I am third." I first became aware of this short sentence at one of the camps where I worked. The phrase was etched into the woodwork above the fireplace mantelpiece. It was in a prominent position where anyone could easily notice it. I had read this sentence several times in passing through the lodge. Finally, about two months after I had begun working there, I asked my boss about it. "Simple," Maria responded. "God is first, others are second, and I am third. This is how we remember our priorities." In this week's lesson, we find our Saviour speaking what would be among His last words to the Eleven before He was arrested and crucified. Facing death, Jesus had important words to share. These last instructions are the things He wanted them to really get. So what did He talk about? Jesus talked about love. And He did not talk about just love in general, either. He gave them guidelines for the standard of love He wanted from His disciples. What was He asking of them? He told them that He expected them to love one another exactly as He had loved them. Wait a minute! This is a very high standard when we remember how far Christ went to prove His love for us. After all, He died a grisly death on a cross, and this He did while we were His enemies (cf. Rom. 5:8). Christ tells us, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). When He said this, He was not inwardly hoping that it would never happen. He knew that He would, in fact, give up His life for His followers, and it would happen soon. He was committed to following through on it. You may be thinking, "That level of love is only for saints. It is not for the ordinary person." Paul reminds us that every believer is considered a saint (cf. Eph. 2:19). We are later told that no one can say he loves God and yet have no love for the brethren (1 John 4:21). Christ's command is clear: "These things I command you, that ye love one another" (John 15:17). This is no warm, fuzzy feeling. This is the type of love that led Stephen to pray while being stoned, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts 7:60). The love that Christ expects of us is that which gives even until the last breath that we have in us. That is what "I am third" really stands for. It means that we place God where He belongs in our lives. If we are obedient servants, we then put others' interests above our own, no matter the cost. We do not place ourselves above anyone else. If we were honest, we would say that there are other believers we might be sorely tempted not to put ourselves in harm's way for. But that goes against what Jesus is telling us to do. We might never face that situation, but are we willing to do it if asked to? We cannot pick and choose to whom we will show God's love.

*(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)*

## NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

### Love by Being Connected to the Vine (John 15:1-11)

#### *Connected to the Vine for continuous pruning (1-3)*

God prunes by sanctifying us (1 Thess 5:23)

God prunes by redeeming and purifying us (Titus 2:13-14)

God prunes by disciplining us (Heb 12:10)

God prunes by rebuking us (Rev 3:19)

God prunes by grafting us into His vine (Rom 11:17-22)

God prunes by making us a new creation (Eph 4:22-24)

#### *Connected to the Vine to bear fruit (4-8)*

The fruit God expects includes the manifestations of the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22-23)

The fruit God expects includes righteousness (Phil 1:9-11)

The fruit God expects includes good works (Col 1:10)

The fruit God expects grows and matures (Matt 13:31-33)

The fruit God expects must be productive (Luke 13:6-9)

The fruit God expects comes from His Divine power (2 Peter 1:3-8)

#### *Connected to the Vine through abiding in love (9-11)*

Abiding in love by being rooted and established in God's love (Eph 3:16-19)

Abiding in love through righteousness (Ps 36:10)

Abiding in love through the full extent of Jesus' love (John 13:1)

Abiding in love through obedience (John 14:21)

Abiding in love through the mercy of God (Jude 1:21)

### Love by Being Connected to One Another (John 15:12-17)

#### *Connected to one another through love (12-13)*

Loving one another because it is the commandment of Jesus (John 13:34-35)

Loving one another through being imitators of God (Eph 5:1-2)

Loving one another through Jesus making love increase (1 Thess 3:12)

Loving one another because it is taught by God to do so (1 Thess 4:9)

Loving one another through obedience to the truth of God's word (1 Peter 1:22)

Loving one another to cover sins (1 Peter 4:8)

#### *Connected to one another through friendship (14-15)*

Friendship with God first (James 2:23)

Friendship that comforts during grief (Gen 38:12)

Friendship that loves at all times (Prov 17:17)

Friendship that never forsakes (Prov 27:10)

Friendship that provides earnest counsel (Prov 27:9)

Friendship that provides strength (Eccl 4:9-12)

#### *Connected to one another through choice (16-17)*

Choice of whom to emulate (Prov 3:31)

Choice of leaders (Acts 15:22)

Choice of Church workers (Acts 6:3)

Choice of marriage partners (2 Cor 6:14)

Choice of friends (Prov 22:24)

Choice of worldly associates (James 4:4)

Choice of whom to approve (1 Cor 16:3)

Chosen out of the world (John 15:19)