

General Topics :: Do we deserve to be loved?**Do we deserve to be loved? - posted by TakeUptheCross, on: 2017/12/18 10:24**

A rather strange question... but have you ever wondered: Do we deserve to be loved by other people? I know that we do not deserve the love of God and God loves us, because He Himself is Love. But... Is it right to demand or expect from others (primarily believers to love you)? Do we deserve it? I know that we are commanded to love others, parents must love their children, husbands their wives and vice versa. But I am talking primarily about love between believers.

Re: Do we deserve to be loved? - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2017/12/18 10:42

Sister,

That is an excellent question for believers to ponder. I will just add a short thought but look forward to more better responses. I feel that a lot of unforgiveness, hurt feelings etc would not happen if we found more of our acceptance with God and Jesus Christ and not with others.

Of course we should love and seek relationships with others but in the end the only person that will never hurt or fail us is Jesus Christ. Our expectation should be that all human relationships will be faulty including ourselves as not being perfect. But we should as you said seek to love others and be very open to others coming into our lives even though it can hurt.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/12/18 11:11

We are commanded to love the brethren.

So every Christian is expected to love every other Christian.

I can only control what I do and that is what I will answer for. When I get in the mindset of expecting someone else to do something or thinking I deserve something I am headed for trouble.

I must refuse to be offended.

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2017/12/18 11:31

A great question! I believe that every human being deserves to be loved (respected and valued) because every person is made in the image of God. This applies to "bad" people too.

If we believe we do not deserve to be loved, we deny the value God places on us. This is not humility, but a self-destructive belief about ourselves. In truth, it's depending on our own righteousness to measure our value.

In our fallen world, we are often mistreated and disrespected - and that is a sin against God and ourselves. If we cannot declare it a sin, then there is nothing to forgive. Forgiveness requires a judgment, and a clear belief that any failure to love is a sin. (Here's where we are far too permissive! We overlook what should be labeled as sin.)

Scripture warns us that we will be persecuted and mistreated because of our faith. It is indeed undeserved, but that is why we are called to live forgivingly - with mercy.

We cannot and must not use control or coercion or guilt trips to "make" people be "loving". But we can with all humility say: "Because I am a person of self respect (made in the image of God), I will not engage in a situation where I am treated disrespectfully and condescendingly." And then extricate ourselves if our caution is ignored.

Does that seem reasonable?

Diane

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Re: - posted by TakeUptheCross, on: 2017/12/18 11:57

@Todd - "I must refuse to be offended"

You know when offence comes in? When you had expectation on someone, and he does not meet them, while I am thinking that what I desire, is my right to receive. That is why I asked, do we DESERVE to be loved. "DESERVE" has in itself the sense of right,,I've earned that, I have to have it. For example if you work,you deserve your salary. But is it so with love? And then if I don't deserve, if I have not "earned" the love of others, why should I be offended when I kind of realize that people don't love me (or at least feel like that)? (Again I am speaking of believers)

You may well say, all Christians should love one another? But then what is the real expression of that?

The question popped up in my mind, after I read 1 Corinthians 13. In German it says "die Liebe ... läßt sich nicht erbittern" (=love ... does not let herself become bitter"), translated in KJV "charity... is not easily provoked".

And I thought, "how hard it is sometimes to love those, who do not meet all the conditions". To love without expecting anything in return?...

Re: - posted by TakeUptheCross, on: 2017/12/18 12:09

@Diane - I get your logic, but I guess nobody would usually come up and say -"You know what, I just want you to love me because I am a child of God" (speaking among believers).

And even if you said that, you cannot force anybody to love you. Then comes perhaps also the issue that what we understand as "brotherly love" is different? Perhaps for one is to ask "How are you doing?" and for other to be interested in one's spiritual welfare?

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2017/12/18 12:36

Quote:

-----That is why I asked, do we DESERVE to be loved.

"DESERVE" has in itself the sense of right,,I've earned that, I have to have it.

This is a subjective assumption, and I chose not to accept this definition.

Consider these two possible answers to the opening question:

1. Yes. Every person is deserving of love.
Criteria: made in image of God.

or

2. No. No person is deserving of love.
Criteria: their works fall short.

It all depends on how one defines "deserve" and "love" in their minds.

"Entitlement" is another matter. It's narcissism: I deserve the world to treat me as god - because that's who I am. (Genesis 3:5) Narcissists don't want true love, they want to be worshipped. Wouldn't you agree?

Re: Do we deserve to be loved? - posted by savannah, on: 2017/12/18 13:37

Jezebel's daughter Athaliah;

For the sons of Athaliah, that wicked woman, had broken into the house of God, and had also used all the dedicated things of the house of the LORD for the Baals. 2 Chronicles 24:7

That wicked woman; Hebrew, אֲחִיָּזָה ; fem. noun, derivative of אָזָה ; meaning strictly in the abstract, "the wickedness," equal to that incarnation of wickedness. Pulpit Commentary

At the time of her deposition, Athaliah was resident in the royal palace. When roused to a sense of danger by the acclamations which greeted the coronation ceremony, she made an attempt to stay the revolt by rushing into the temple court, alone; her guards, according to Josephus, having been prevented from following her (Ant., IX, vii, 3). A glance sufficed. It showed her the lad standing on a raised platform before the temple, holding the Book of the Law in his hand, and with the crown upon his brow. Rending her robe and shouting, "Treason! Treason!" she fled. Some were for cutting her down as she did so, but this was objected to as defiling the temple with human blood. She was, therefore, allowed to reach the door of the palace in flight. Here she fell, smitten by the avenging guards. Bible Encyclopedia

2 Kings 9:30-37

When Jehu came to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it. And she painted her eyes and adorned her head and looked out of the window. And as Jehu entered the gate, she said, "Oels it peace, you Zimri, murderer of your master?" And he lifted up his face to the window and said, "Who is on my side? Who?" Two or three eunuchs looked out at him. He said, "Throw her down." So they threw her down. And some of her blood spattered on the wall and on the horses, and they trampled on her. Then he went in and ate and drank. And he said, "See now to this cursed woman and bury her, for she is a king's daughter." But when they went to bury her, they found no more of her than the skull and the feet and the palms of her hands. When they came back and told him, he said, "This is the word of the LORD, which he spoke by his servant Elijah the Tishbite: 'In the territory of Jezreel the dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezebel, and the corpse of Jezebel shall be as dung on the face of the field in the territory of Jezreel, so that no one can say, This is Jezebel.'"

Jehu and the eunuchs must not have had that revelation that Jezebel deserved to be loved. Or maybe it could be said that they loved her to death.

Judges 4:17-22

But Sisera fled away on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, for there was peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite. And Jael came out to meet Sisera and said to him, "Turn aside, my lord; turn aside to me; do not be afraid." So he turned aside to her into the tent, and she covered him with a rug. And he said to her, "Please give me a little water to drink, for I am thirsty." So she opened a skin of milk and gave him a drink and covered him. And he said to her, "Stand at the opening of the tent, and if any man comes and asks you, 'Is anyone here?' say, 'No.'" But Jael the wife of Heber took a tent peg, and took a hammer in her hand. Then she went softly to him and drove the peg into his temple until it went down into the ground while he was lying fast asleep from weariness. So he died. And behold, as Barak was pursuing Sisera, Jael went out to meet him and said to him, "Come, and I will show you the man whom you are seeking." So he went in to her tent, and there lay Sisera dead, with the tent peg in his temple.

Jael is yet another example of one lacking that revelation. Apparently she forgot that Sisera deserved to be loved. But a gain, one might say she loved him to death.

Or maybe they just had a different way of expressing their love for other human beings, knowing all the while that they had value and deserved to be loved.

Just pondering...

2 Chronicles 19:2

The prophet Jehu son of Hanani went out to meet him and said to the king, "Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the LORD? Because of this, the wrath of the LORD is on you.

Re: - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2017/12/18 13:56

Maybe a better question might be, do we deserve anything?

Re: Do we deserve to be loved? - posted by twayneb (), on: 2017/12/18 14:14

Through Christ, we have been reconciled to God. This means that we have been ushered back into the destiny and identity that He desired all along for us to have. We are now in Him. We are a new creature, born of the Spirit of God. We are to shine forth His image and His glory in this world.

This means that rather than needing love, we are in Him, He is love, and we have now, through Him, become love. So to me, perhaps the question should be rewritten. To me it is not so much about whether I deserve love from other. Because I am now in love, and because I bear His image, I should become love. I receive love from Him, so I give love to others. I don't worry about receiving love from others, I already have that from Him.

Hope that makes sense.

Re: , on: 2017/12/18 14:55

Esther asked the question, we can try and answer it but we should not try and re-write it, otherwise we are getting off topic.

Imo "love" and "deserve" don't go together.

A definition I read:

In respect of agapao as used of God, it expresses the deep and constant "love" and interest of a perfect Being towards entirely unworthy objects, producing and fostering a reverential "love" in them towards the Giver, and a practical "love" towards those who are partakers of the same, and a desire to help others to seek the Giver.

From Ray Steadman:

"There is a theme that runs all through the Bible: "As long as you justify yourself, God will never justify you."

That is why Jesus begins the Sermon on the Mount by saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit" (Matthew 5:3),

those who are bankrupt in themselves, who have come to the end. When we shut up and stop defending and justifying ourselves, God will rise to take up our cause

Lord, help me to lay aside all my flaunting schemes for self-improvement and self-defense and stand naked before You, trusting Your loving grace to give me all I need..."

In other words, I believe Love is not something we deserve and we have to be very careful that we don't do anything in God's Kingdom because we want to "earn" or "deserve" something .

Hope you get what I'm trying to say.

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2017/12/18 15:27

Quote:

Love is not something we deserve and we have to be very careful that we don't do anything in God's Kingdom because we want to "earn" or "deserve" something .

May I suggest that "earn" and "deserve" are not synonymous?

I am reminded of a court case I witnessed where the accused was guilty of murder. The crown attorney, who represented the victim, treated the man with respect and dignity, even while proving his guilt.

The accused earned the judgment, but he deserved the respectful treatment because he was a fellow human being. This lawyer distinguished between earn and deserve - and I believe that applies to us all.

We are easily tempted to treat others according to what we believe they deserve. That has been the root of horrendous evils among the people of God. ... so this is a worthy topic to consider, I'd say.

Re: worth less or worthless - posted by savannah, on: 2017/12/18 19:14

Deuteronomy 13:6-11

¶ If your brother, the son of your mother, or your son or your daughter or the wife you embrace or your friend who is as your own soul entices you secretly, saying, ¶ "Let us go and serve other gods," ¶ which neither you nor your fathers have known, some of the gods of the peoples who are around you, whether near you or far off from you, from the one end of the earth to the other, you shall not yield to him or listen to him, nor shall your eye pity him, nor shall you spare him, nor shall you conceal him. But you shall kill him. Your hand shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. You shall stone him to death with stones, because he sought to draw you away from the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. And all Israel shall hear and fear and never again do any such wickedness as this among you.

I sure am glad we've seen the light in our day.

Either they were unaware of the value of each family member, or the value of human beings have increased over the years rather than being of less worth.

Deuteronomy 13:12-15

¶ If you hear in one of your cities, which the LORD your God is giving you to dwell there, that certain worthless fellows have gone out among you and have drawn away the inhabitants of their city, saying, ¶ "Let us go and serve other gods," ¶ which you have not known, then you shall inquire and make search and ask diligently. And behold, if it be true and certain that such an abomination has been done among you, you shall surely put the inhabitants of that city to the sword, devoting it to destruction, all who are in it and its cattle, with the edge of the sword.

Apparently there were some fellows back in the day who had no value, but were worthless fellows.

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2017/12/19 9:15

Quote:

-----Apparently there were some fellows back in the day who had no value, but were worthless fellows.

It may seem so - if we read the Mosaic law through our cultural individualistic mindset. But what if we were to read it through the lens of God's covenant purposes. The code of law was intended to preserve God's promise through his chosen people. Their calling was to reveal God's nature to a sinful world. God is holy, and his people were to reflect his holiness - that is, untainted by the marks of unbelief in surrounding cultures.

Here's a question about "value": Is a diamond worth more than a grain of sand or a glass of water? How is

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value established? By whom?

Humans aren't worth much, as far as chemical composition. What gives any human value or worth? What they do, right? Wrong.

It's been established that our value is not based on righteousness. So it's a contradiction then to suggest that this applies only to good people.

Surely, human value is established through our Creator. It's extrinsically determined, not intrinsically. That applies to every human being on the face of the earth - including the unborn.

A question: is divine judgment the opposite of love? Or is it the outworking of love?

Re: Christ is all - posted by savannah, on: 2017/12/19 10:09

Our value/worth is in Christ alone!

Outside of Christ we see the worth of all flesh. The flood is a summary example from the past. The lake of fire is the summary example in conclusion.

And, "God is love", as the testimony of Scripture proclaims. His love is for those in Christ alone. His wrath abides upon everyone who is not in Christ, and will culminate in His judgment and justice when they're cast into the lake of fire.

He alone gives worth and shows of what value one or another is. And the one has value for fuel for the fire, and the other has been made valuable by putting him in Christ and redeeming him.

The wood I threw in the fire had value to me, as it is keeping my family warm this winter. And the tree in my front yard also has value, as it gives my family shade in the summer.

The Word of God and experience itself bears these truths out unmistakably.

Psychology and the Bible are a bad mixture. Humanists and atheists like Hitchens and Dawkins are well versed psychologists.

FYI - Hitchens is no longer an atheist.

Re: - posted by TakeUptheCross, on: 2017/12/19 10:17

Did not read the last two posts, but it seems to me that they drift off from what I initially asked

@savannah - With all respect and kindness, I do not really see your post as an answer to my question(s). You may have something in mind concerning the theme "love". But I think, you have perhaps not understood what I really wanted to ask.

For the others - will answer later today.

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2017/12/19 10:22

Esther

Quote:
----- @Diane - I get your logic, but I guess nobody would usually come up and say -"You know what, I just want you to love me because I am a child of God" (speaking among believers).

My apologies! I missed your post, Esther.

I agree: People are not inclined to express their legitimate need for love (value, belonging and purpose). And for sure, Christians may feel they deserve special treatment because they are "a child of God". But then, that's a dependence

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endency on "approval and praise" wouldn't you say? Humans so easily attach "love" with false assumptions. (ex use of gender pronouns, etc) And that's when you see into this bullying behaviour "forcing us to love" them according to their own criteria. Esther, is that what you are saying here:

Quote:
----- "you cannot force anybody to love you. Then comes perhaps also the issue that what we understand as "brotherly love" is different? Perhaps for one is to ask "How are you doing?" and for other to be interested in one's spiritual welfare?"

Actually, I had alluded to the problem of victimhood, where we won't take responsibility for our own actions when we are disrespected (unloved). Removing ourselves from such situations is not force or bullying. We are respecting their right to choose. They may then see that their behaviour doesn't pay off. Or they may not. But we've given them an opportunity to mature. That's love.

Re: Q - posted by savannah, on: 2017/12/19 10:51

Esther,

I apologize for not directly answering your question.

You ask, "Is it right to demand or expect from others (primarily believers to love you)?"

As believers, we're told to owe no man anything, but to love one another. So, as a believer I owe all other believers that I've spoken of.

So, if believers do not love one another, they must give an answer to God as to why not.

As true as it is, that a believer is to love another believer, and ought to do so, when I demand and/or expect it I may be setting myself up for disappointment. Because truth be told, believers often fall short of doing so.

And only the fact that I am a believer am I deserving of other believers love for me because God says that they are to do so. In and of myself I am not deserving.

Thanks for loving me!

Re: Do we deserve to be loved? - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2017/12/19 16:55

Esther,

I did not read all the responses, but I have a question or two for you: why are you asking this question?

Second: what makes you think that God's creatures do not deserve to be loved by their creator?

Sandra

Re: - posted by TakeUptheCross, on: 2017/12/19 17:36

@Diane

Definition of deserve: "Do something or have or show qualities worthy of (a reaction which rewards or punishes as appropriate)" - Oxford Dictionaries

So, I think that it has a sense of - I have certain qualities that make me worthy of this or that... Now, I earlier said, that I know, we do not deserve the Love of God but He loves us because He is Love (not because He is motivated by something He sees in us).

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My question was generally about deserving the love of fellow-believers. And yea I know we are commanded to love each other! But actually the reason for loving other believer is the Father, because they are beloved not because they are as mature as you are, as rich (in deeds, in knowledge, with money), same nationality ... whatever.

And isn't it surprising what Jesus said? *John 13:34, 35

Have you ever thought what kind of love this must be, that the world would see Christ through it?!

Re: - posted by TakeUptheCross, on: 2017/12/19 17:59

@twayneb

It perfectly makes sense... but I think that even when God dwells in you, He does not automatically makes you for example not to be thirsty or hungry anymore. Likewise, I think that He does not make our desire to be around godly people, desire to belong to His family and talk with others about Him vanish away. (And please remember I am speaking of believers). If I receive all the love I need from God, why do I ever need other people? (I know and believe God can sustain you even in exile where there is not one believer around you, but that is perhaps not the situation for most of us).

Are you getting what I am trying to say?

Re: - posted by TakeUptheCross, on: 2017/12/19 18:29

@ginnyrose

1) I asked this because I was thinking on 1 Cor. 13 and how am I to act, if I do not "feel loved" by other believers. And as I wrote in an answer to Todd, what grasped my attention was "charity... is not easily provoked" (in German: love... does not let herself become bitter"). As I felt that I am very close to do just that. Kind of shut myself off, even if I am going to church on Sunday. After service asking one or two "How are you doing?" And then vanish away for the next 6 days. Several people told me that even in church you cannot trust everybody, and cannot share your spiritual (and even earthly) trials and problems with everybody. I agree. I understand. But does that mean that I should not share anything with anybody?! We come back to how do we define "brotherly love". Can you really love someone you do not know?

So, I was thinking "Fine. If it is not right for me to expect love, there is no reason to be offended" or "Even if they perhaps have no clue that I feel like that, I won't be offended, cause charity is not easily provoked"

Hope you get what I am saying.

2) I know that we are loved by our Creator! And I believe He loves us, because He is Love, not because we are good enough (or have earned) to be loved.

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2017/12/19 20:41

Many great points! Iâ€™m grabbing onto two:

Esther said:

Quote:

----- My question was generally about deserving the love of fellow-believers.

Is this not less about my "deserve-ability" and more about the obligation of fellow-believers? It is our duty to encourage others to mature in love. That involves holding them accountable in how they treat us.

Quote:

----- If it is not right for me to expect love, there is no reason to be offended"

Very true, Sandra! But it's escape, as in Buddhist thought: If I don't expect anything, I will never experience the pain of lost hope. To desire and expect love is a risk - because you can get hurt. But to let hope die or to avoid hoping

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, is to shut yourself away from others and from God. Instead you escape into fatalism, addictions, shame, etc. Those who are shame-bound have trouble seeing themselves as worthy of love, and so they let people treat them badly with no consequence. That just enables the victim/perpetrator cycle.

Sandra, wouldn't you say that 1 Cor. 13 establishes the way to love even when we do not "feel loved"? As Christians we can endure shattered hope -- by reaching out to our Lord who alone can love us fully.

Esther, Does that bring us closer to your original question? What if you worded it like this: "Is the Christian free to desire love?" and then we would have to distinguish true love from false loves and how we can love authentically

So much to cover here!

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2017/12/20 8:08

Quote:
----- It perfectly makes sense... but I think that even when God dwells in you, He does not automatically makes you for example not to be thirsty or hungry anymore. Likewise, I think that He does not make our desire to be around godly people, desire to belong to His family and talk with others about Him vanish away. (And please remember I am speaking of believers). If I receive all the love I need from God, why do I ever need other people? (I know and believe God can sustain you even in exile where there is not one believer around you, but that is perhaps not the situation for most of us).

Are you getting what I am trying to say?

I do get what you are trying to say. I believe that we have often not understood what really happened to us when we were born again. We were made new creatures. All things were made new. We are now in Him. The old man is dead and the new man is alive. Christ now lives in us and we draw our life from Him. As a result, we must realize that we do not have to have the same emotions and drives that we once had. These were corrupted by sin just as the rest of our life was. But we now have access to God in such a way that our entire way of thinking and feeling is changed. This is the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2) It is not a pipe dream, it is a reality to be entered into.

I understand that it is a process. This is why we are to renew our minds. We are not to be condemned when we fall short. That has been taken care of through Christ. We are to repent (change our way of thinking about it), get up, and continue to leave the past behind as we press on toward Him.

Quote:
----- If I receive all the love I need from God, why do I ever need other people?

I am realizing that the needs, drives, and emotions that we all thought were so normal before we were born again are not normal for a believer. God loved us and desired us. God did not need us. If we are born again and now bear the image of the one who created us, our own drives and emotions should become conformed to His. I should never need other people. That is self-seeking. It puts the other person in a position of being a tool to satisfy a longing in me. I should desire fellowship with other people and have a yearning to love them sacrificially for their benefit. How freeing it is to enjoy fellowship with my brothers and sisters and have no cloud of expectation hanging over their heads.

That is the heart of God after all. When I am in the place of understanding and experiencing the love of the Father in intimacy, I do not feel like I deserve anything from anyone. Instead, I realize that I am put here to fulfill my place in loving that other person as Jesus loved. I cannot be hurt by that person anymore. I have absolutely no expectation of them. Instead, I find the love and compassion of the Father, through me, being extended toward them.

Hope that all makes sense.

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Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2017/12/20 8:20

Esther: Your reply to Ginny is right on, I believe.

Quote:
----- So, I was thinking "Fine. If it is not right for me to expect love, there is no reason to be offended" or "Even if they perhaps have no clue that I feel like that, I won't be offended, cause charity is not easily provoked"

There is no reason to be offended. Imagine Jesus being offended. That is hard to imagine. We know He would never have been offended. Instead, He would have looked on the person behaving inappropriately and wept with compassion over the state of their own heart. I believe that God can put that same heart (mind in the KJV) in us as was in Him.

As to our own hurts, He desires us to bring those to His feet and surrender them to Him. In their place, He puts joy and peace. Praise God, we can become like Him. This metamorphosis comes out of a place of intimacy with Him where He becomes our all in all.

About 4 months ago, I needed desperately to have God speak to my heart about some matters. I had an entire afternoon to spend with Him, and I was determined to get into His presence and not to leave until the answer came. As I prayed, the Holy Spirit told me to go to the book of Ephesians. I began to read in chapter 1. Every few verses, God would stop me and say, "Do you see what you just read? That is how much I love you." He had me read the first three chapters from the perspective of His love. When I reached the end of chapter 3, the revelation went so deep into my heart that I was jumping up and down in my kitchen, tears streaming down my face, yelling, "He loves me!" over and over again at the top of my lungs. I have not been the same since. I can hardly think about Him without tears. I wake up in the mornings, and very often my first thought is, "Wow! God loves me!"

I have found that this kind of love ushers us into intimacy. We are so confident of His love that we open up every crevice of our heart to Him. In fact, I found in Ephesians 3 that we cannot ever expect to be filled with His fullness until we begin to understand and have a true revelation of how much He loves us.

With this revelation comes a yearning to know Him more. We draw near to Him because we now know and trust His heart toward us. As we draw near to Him, He draws near to us and we experience a deeper level of relationship and intimacy with Him than we ever have before. Strength upon strength. Glory to Glory. Deeper into His divine nature. Deeper into who He is. It changes everything.

John 13:34-35, on: 2017/12/20 9:43

"New commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

Re: - posted by TakeUptheCross, on: 2017/12/21 12:20

@twayneb

I do get what you are saying but there is something I still do not understand.

Quote:
-----I should never need other people. That is self-seeking. It puts the other person in a position of being a tool to satisfy a longing in me
.

But if all believers should never "need" other people, why do we go to church? Why do we need gifts? Why are we to serve one another, if there is no one who would receive the service? And I say again I am speaking only of believers. Jesus told the disciples: "ye also ought to wash one another's feet." (i.e. not the feet of unbelievers, but believers). So in this context, I do not understand ...

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"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:" - hHebrews 10:24

Re: - posted by TakeUptheCross, on: 2017/12/21 12:56

@roadsign

I think you got closer with your last question. Only to add again, that we speak of brotherly love among believers. Do not think that anybody has treated me bad, and I am playing the victim. That is not the case.

Re: Do we deserve to be loved? - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2017/12/21 20:54

Deserving to be loved?

12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

Jesus left out our "deservings" in his command to love one another because our relation to him is not based upon deservings its based upon his will to do so.

We all have a common need in the depth of our being, which is, "a need to be loved". This need is so a part of our human make up there really is very little that compares to such a need.

With that great a need, someone asks "do we deserve to be loved"? to me the problem becomes clear, when we incorporate "deserving" into who gets our love it is evident the love issue now is no longer about the "deserving" person, its now about the giver of a love that must be deserved. This is a clever shift of focus and confuses the issue.

For a Christian, I believe this is foreign to our Lords command, foreign to the Spirit that dwells in us and in the end antithetical to everything Jesus is about.

Our relation to people is based upon our relation to Christ, therefore we love our enemies

43 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

Jesus is teaching us a new way to view people, one that has eliminated "deserving".

I realize Savannah quoted old testament texts where judgment was pronounced upon wicked people. Love seems to be absent...according to that covenant the love and fear of God included such harsh judgment upon individuals when you were in the right place and right situation to apply it.

Our covenant through Jesus has replaced killing the pagan woman with praying for and preaching to that pagan woman. In short the expression of the love of God to the undeserving.

In many of us, there is an enigma that we face "I don't deserve love", yet we desperately need love. Jesus answers this with "what you need is found in me". He answers our needs without calling up what we deserve, this is grace and love and they both meet us in Jesus.

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2017/12/22 18:43

Quote:
----- But if all believers should never "need" other people, why do we go to church? Why do we need gifts? Why are we to serve one another, if there is no one who would receive the service? And I say again I am speaking only of believers. Jesus told the disciples: "ye also ought to wash one another's feet." (i.e. not the feet of unbelievers, but believers). So in this context, I do not understand

Maybe it is the word "need" that is the reason for the understanding. If I need your approval, your praise, your attention, an expression of your love to me, etc., to fulfill something in my life, then my identity comes from you. I think in the secular world they label this codependency. But if my identity is in Christ, then I will not need you to fulfill me.

This is different than needing to spend time with my brothers and sisters for mutual edification. Is it important, in actuality vital or life giving, to have fellowship with other believers? Absolutely.

But if we all come into the service worn out, worn down, not having our identity in Christ, not having spent intimate time with Him, not having built ourselves up in His presence throughout the time when we are not together with our brothers and sisters, then we will have nothing to supply to them. But God wants us to supply one to another as we are anointed b

y Him. (Eph. 4).

My love "needs" should be supplied in Him. If that is the case, then I will be excited about getting to come together to love on my brothers and sisters, and this is an important part of mutual edification.

Does that clarify?

Re: - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2017/12/22 22:35

Travis said:

But if we all come into the service worn out, worn down, not having our identity in Christ, not having spent intimate time with Him, not having built ourselves up in His presence throughout the time when we are not together with our brothers and sisters, then we will have nothing to supply to them. But God wants us to supply one to another as we are anointed by Him. (Eph. 4).

Around 1986 I preached a Sunday morning service where this very thought was brought out. The issue being a lack of power in worship and a lack of edification from one another. Jesus meets our needs through one another, and he meets them even when we do not recognize we have them.

I have found this little piece of truth very significant in helping a congregation understand their life in Christ is appreciably increased when the whole week is looked upon as preparation for what can be done Sunday.

There, of course, is one tremendous difficulty, that being the service structure; the agenda and focus shifts from Pastor and worship leader meeting out what is to be received to Pastor and Worship leader making room for body-ministry. It's so rare now where I live, its tantamount to Urim and Thummin.

But all of this is off track.

God made us needy, our lives are one continuous need for dependence upon him in every area of life. The need for love is to be met by Jesus through the Church by the Spirit manifesting himself in various ways.

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2017/12/23 9:44

Marvin: I am not sure that God made us needy. I think neediness is a result of the fall. I believe God made us dependent upon Him and interdependent upon each other. If He created us to bear His image, if we are to be partakers of the divine nature, if we are to be Christlike, then that would imply that God is needy. He desires our love, our worship, and our good. He does not need us to fulfill something in Him. He desires us so that He might fulfill us in His love and presence. It is the same with us. My needs are met in Him. Because of this, I can now love others like He loved me...unconditionally, without reservation or qualification.

Re: - posted by TakeUptheCross, on: 2017/12/23 17:27

@twayneb

Hmm... I think, I understand. Let me put it that way: the wrong way of "needing" is as if you are an ICU patient, whose vitality is supported by machines. If the machines stop, the patient would not have enough strength to live without that and he passes away.

The right way of "needing" fellowship is to have your source in Christ and be able to stand alone. But nevertheless when we gather and exhort each other because it is the will of God and His way of building up his Church.

"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." - 1 Peter 2:5

Even if I cannot explain it so well, I think, I get the spiritual meaning (and hopefully others who read too). I think, God wants me to learn something about loving other believers... but I am not sure that I have learned my lesson yet.

General Topics :: Do we deserve to be loved?

Re: - posted by TakeUptheCross, on: 2017/12/23 18:06

@Marvin

When I used deserve, I had in mind the "You owe me..." attitude; the attitude of "the elder brother". And I do not really want that to get into my heart - because the consequence is bitterness and offence, and separation.

To put it simple, my expectation of love from other believers (in a local church), is not based on my "deserving", or me being perfect, "having attained". But my expectation is based on the fact that, we as a family, having One Father are to love each other.

But even so... I think, I have to focus more on doing God's will, come what may. Disappointment comes when others don't live up to your 'appointment'. Is that important? Or shall we rather pray that other believers come to what God wants them to be and to do?

A song, we sung on Friday:

I worship the power of Love
that was revealed in Jesus
I surrender to the force
whereby, I worm, was loved
I want instead of thinking of myself
to lose myself in the sea of love.

(Ich bete an die Macht der Liebe,
die sich in Jesus offenbart;
ich geb mich hin dem freien Triebe,
wodurch ich Wurm geliebet ward;
ich will, anstatt an mich zu denken,
ins Meer der Liebe mich versenken.)

And perhaps that should be my attitude.

God bless you all!

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2017/12/23 21:35

Esther,

You asked an deep question: " How am I to respond when I do not feel loved by my fellow sisters/brothers in church?"

One could ask more questions like why does love appear to be lacking: is there sin in the brotherhood? like jealousy, covetousness? criticism? Fault-finding? Pride? Sin will erect barriers between people. Look at the list of sins as quoted in different places in the WORD. If you notice they are committed out of lack of love for others. So, do I deserve to be loved?

I would say "Yes" because we expect the brotherhood to be saints who are filled with the love of God and when this is lacking you have no brotherhood, just a social club that exists for personal pleasure, convenience. If it is lacking, how do I respond? Good question.

Now, there are people who just do not seem to care for whatever reason. Knowing this is the case one must be careful to not misjudge another. One can make an effort to learn to know them, do some act of unexpected kindness and see what happens.

In my case, I worked at a crises pregnancy center for 15 years. There were times I would get so upset with my clients - they loved to sin and had no motivation to repent....YIKES! I would get upset. Then, I had to ask the LORD for an infusion of love for these people and He always answered my prayer. Always.

My thoughts....does it make sense?

Sandra

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2017/12/23 21:37

Travis,

After Jesus resurrected he asked Peter, "lovest thou me?" He asked him three times...

Got a comment on this?

Sandra

Re: - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2017/12/23 22:11

Hi Travis:

I believe God is a necessary being, we are contingent.

Being contingent by the very nature of being created we are dependent upon a vast number of physical elements necessary to our physical life. Now specifically related to our humanity, we were originally created dependent upon God for his wisdom, his provision, his help-mates, his created world etc.

Our very humanity places us in direct need for God's sustaining and providing providences. Deep in our human nature (now that we have fallen) our human needs seek to find alternative methods for fulfillment.

The human heart needed God, because man as man without God lived not better than beasts and when left to himself God's judgment was to destroy the world by flood.

I think you can see the foundation of my assertion, our "need" is intrinsic to our humanity and now because we are fallen our needs mixed with sinful human nature seeks an autonomous method to access the thing it needs.

The sinful man needs love...so he exploits the needs of a woman to satisfy a love that is primarily selfish.

The sinful man needs food...so he exploits the labors of others for his excess that is primarily selfish.

Those two examples are juxtaposed to God's original design, where man lives according to the word of God. This word prioritizes the function of natural desires, directs them into God-glorifying actions where our needs serve to highlight the love, beauty, joy, and greatness of a God who subjected the word unto himself so that he might be all in all.

Our whole world functions according to human need.

When we become Christians, our human needs are not in the slightest mitigated, they are re-directed and realigned with divine purposes.

God's intent has not changed because his original design in making man dependent upon him openly declares man's needs are God-designed. The need for sex, the need for food, the need for love, the need for joy, the need for intimacy with his fellow man are intended for fulfillment through Christ.

Specifically, when a godly man such as yourself finds joy, love, acceptance, and intimacy with his Lord Jesus this relationship is initiated by God because of love. He knows how much you need him, you are finding out how much you need him. Yet, the body of Christ is not designed as merely stand-alone recipients of grace. We are designed to link up with others, by grace and by design we are gifted, motivated, empowered and find joy through the members of Jesus corporate body. We are designed to need each other.

So, I hope by this explanation you can see where my assertions are formulated.

Marriage is the intended analogous representative of Jesus and his people with all that marriage entails by means of two becoming one. So we are in Christ, and Christ in us and we bond together by that same Spirit.

General Topics :: Do we deserve to be loved?

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2017/12/24 8:30

Esther: Yes. That is what I am talking about. My life, everything necessary for spiritual vitality, is found in Him. I do not need your love. I desire to love you because of the love of Christ that is in me. Yet I draw great strength from your love as we fellowship in Christ.

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2017/12/24 8:41

Quote:

----- Those two examples are juxtaposed to God's original design, where man lives according to the word of God.

Marvin: Exactly what I was saying about neediness being a result of the fall. But the rebirth is about restoring us to our original, intended identity. We can be restored to our original design and identity. I am a new man. The old man died with Christ. I have been reborn. I no longer have to walk in the corruption of sin in my emotions. So I am no longer need toward my brothers and sisters. I find all of my life in Him. I find my joy, my fulfillment, my peace, my happiness, my courage, my identity in Him. My needs have been met in Him. Now I am free to love you with the love of God. So I make you stronger and stronger as we walk in relationship. We can both now supply what God has anointed us to supply to the body and the body has no lack, no need.

Do we deserve to be loved?, on: 2017/12/25 16:23

we love others, the brethren, because, He, Jesus Christ first loved us...

Apostle Peter said to us to fervently love one another from the heart in his letter in (1 Peter 1:22)...

Re: Do we deserve to be loved? - posted by narrowpath, on: 2017/12/26 16:27

Jesus gave himself in love to a world that rejected Him.

We can expect the same treatment. We are to love our brothers, and they are required to love us, too, but we cannot demand it.

Love gives and does not expect.

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2017/12/26 19:09

Travis,

Since words have limitations, I've added some thoughts (IN CAPS) to your post. Let me know if I'm tracking with your thoughts at all.

Many apologies for the CAPS, but no other formatting is available by which I can distinguish my own inserts.

Here's my expansion of your quote, Travis:

When I am in the place of understanding and experiencing the love of the Father in intimacy, I do not feel like I deserve anything from anyone. Instead, I realize that I am put here to fulfill my place in loving that other person as Jesus loved. I cannot be hurt by that person anymore. I have absolutely no expectation of them.

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2017/12/26 19:15

I believe this quote by Travis is key to this entire discussion. The idea is that Christ's love does not replace the work of "one anothering" in the Body. Christ's love is intended to flow through people. Thank you Marvin:

Quote:

----- Jesus meets our needs through one another, and he meets them even when we do not recognize we have them.

The need for love is to be met by Jesus through the Church by the Spirit manifesting himself in various ways.

Re: - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2017/12/27 0:51

Esther said...

But even so... I think, I have to focus more on doing God's will, come what may. Disappointment comes when others don't live up to your 'appointment'. Is that important? Or shall we rather pray that other believers come to what God wants them to be and to do?

If you will allow me, I will attempt to elaborate a little.

The more we have invested in the lives of others the more interplay we have with each other in regards to love. When we "love" those acquaintances at Church, we find it easy (most of the time) to love them. This is because they are a safe distance from what we care about.

They are a safe distance from our families, our own philosophies, our money, our egos, our fears, our sins and failures, our past.

We are safe from them because they don't know enough to be dangerous to us in any meaningful way.

But, when we love them up close and we find out.

our money is not safe, our past is up for scrutiny, our philosophies are put to the test, our family is inconvenienced, our fears exposed.

How does this work with "need". It works this way.

We are so safe from mere acquaintances to have them is in most cases equal to not having them, to receive their praise is in many cases equal to no praises, their disdain in many cases equal to no disdain at all. In all their love or hatred there is nothing that 'sticks' to us because there is no investment which is equal to saying "I've placed no weight or importance upon their judgments for or against me".

But, when I love them according to knowledge, and they love me according to knowledge, now they can love me knowing my past, knowing my ego, knowing my failures and current weaknesses. They can love me and their love registers as a 'real' love because they love the 'real' me, fleas and all. Same with their reproofs and correctives, now they can love me with help, guidance, corrections, warnings. I can get love from both positive and negative feedback.

Here is the really great thing about God's love done in this way. What I have "needed" in my life is "love" given to me being what I am, where I am and with all the failures, weaknesses and strengths and powers I truly have. My need exposed me to the love of God given to me by others...not abstractly in word, but in reality by deed. Being loved by others according to the Spirit and Word of God demonstrates the love of God in truth. This demonstration in truth grounds us so that we might give this same love to others 'in truth'.

Our Spiritual strength or weakness as judged by ourselves according to our own current state of affairs, emotions, circumstances is no true litmus test whatsoever as to our true 'neediness' for the love of others.

The Spiritual man who is growing in grace exposes himself to the "needs" of others so that he might edify and encourage them. This same man exposes himself for others to give to him what they have.

Jesus didn't just meet needs, he made himself available for others to meet his needs.

This mutual 'neediness' is a design of God whereby we come into contact with the love of God 'in truth'.

Will failures come? I think we all know the answer to that, but failures from ourselves and from others are designed to point us both in one direction. Jesus. He alone empowers the giver to those in need, and those in need find his signature of love written upon the deeds of even the weakest and clumsiest of his people.

Our own human neediness is nothing to be ashamed of, what we have needed to repent of has always been where and how we sought for those needs to be met, and from whom and what circumstances we refused to be helped because it actually exposed our true need of Jesus and others.

Re: - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2017/12/27 1:26

Travis said.

"have been met in Him. Now I am free to love you with the love of God. So I make you stronger and stronger as we walk in relationship. We can both now supply what God has anointed us to supply to the body and the body has no lack, no need."

In my last post, I elaborated to Esther about exposing ourselves to being loved and to 'feeling' and meeting the needs of others.

But I also wrote of the failures that occur along the way. Some failures are of such a nature that the person who submitted themselves to another was really betrayed, or they were slandered, they were mercilessly exploited or harmed irreparably.

The danger of actually following Jesus according to the word of God puts all of us who are obeying Christ in the sights of Satan to use his slaves to harm us. Or, he instigates God's own to betray their fidelity to Christ and serve their sinful nature which results in our deliberate harm.

Here' Travis's wisdom (Christ's wisdom) should be followed carefully here. Though I submit to my brothers and sisters, I am looking for the source of their power and like-fruit of Christ evident from their deeds. When I recognize bad fruit or a soulish, carnal power/motive I discern it, guard my spirit against it and receive from them what is (if anything) truly spiritual.

The purer the agent is in motive and acts the more trustworthy they are to love me and help me according to the will and word of God. Be discerning, be watchful, be trusting in Christ for what is going on.

Without restating much of what Travis wrote earlier, he is spot on regarding 'who is really meeting his need's.

There should be a certain "loose grip" we have in expecting 'the love of God undefiled' toward us. Give them the same room and the same patience you would want for yourself knowing your own weaknesses.

To walk in the Spirit cannot be formulaic, there is no one formula that avoids all the spiritual darts that will be hurled at you. Keep your spiritual armor on, yes it sounds almost contradictory "let others love you, yet keep the helmet of salvation on at their dinner table".

know that it is Jesus that is meeting your need even when those who God appointed to serve you, serve you to the dogs

To be a blameless and harmless son of God, one must submit to God in this way, so that God can demonstrate his love and his kindness through you in situations and with people where no one would actually volunteer to go there or be with them.

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2017/12/27 8:47

Marvin, your words here are insightful:

Quote:

----- This mutual 'neediness' is a design of God whereby we come into contact with the love of God 'in truth'.

Keep your spiritual armor on, yes it sounds almost contradictory "let others love you, yet keep the helmet of salvation on at their dinner table".

I was once reminded that the "spiritual armour of God" is not an outer defense like natural armour. It's something within us, through the gifts of grace. It's intrinsic to our character. It doesn't shield our vulnerability. Instead it frees us to dismantle our self-protective walls of defense which we have used to hide our true selves (and shield us from the back-and-forth flow of love).

It seems like we're heading towards this question:

General Topics :: Do we deserve to be loved?

Can true love ever be demanded or coerced?

I think of those interest/identity groups today who are demanding certain rightsâ€” ex preferred pronouns. These folk are trying to get love (a legitimate need) in ways that will not work. No one gets true love by coercing people into certain behaviours. Forced â€œloveâ€” never removes hatred, resentment, or fear. It just reinforces the protective walls of defense. This inevitably degenerates into conflict, brutalities and totalitarianism. And that's just what we're seeing in our own lands.

Thatâ€™s the tragic predicament of our current society. It's the outcome of rejecting the ultimate source of love.

Itâ€™s the predicted outcome of rejecting God. (Romans 1:21 ff)

Re: - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2017/12/27 15:20

Hi Diane:

Your question...Can true love ever be demanded or coerced?

Answered eloquently.

But love is commanded.

God has stated in the imperative.. "Love God; love one another" God can and does command us to love.

Scripture is clear on this...nevertheless Diane is quite correct. There is no contradiction.

God who commands also empowers for the command. God who requires an obedience toward him in loving him back and loving others in the way we are loved does not hinge or support itself by means of human effort and will. When God commands us to love, our love being demanded is all the while indwelling in us by the Spirit of God indwelling. For the Spirit of Christ sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts Rom 5. The love expressed through us is not coerced by God, ours is a synergism between the power of the Spirit and an available man/woman.

This raises another assertion and question. " I don't have the love of God! Where can I get it? The answer of course is in Jesus who reconciles us unto himself thereby making us his children...and now indwelling us by the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God has all the love we need in order to obey God to love him and love one another.

Bringing this full circle...when those people who are supposed to love their neighbor do so for all the wrong reasons and for all the wrong motives act not in the power of the Spirit with the motives the Spirit gives...Dianes succinct conclusion is truly inevitable.

"I think of those interest/identity groups today who are demanding certain rightsâ€” ex preferred pronouns. These folk are trying to get love (a legitimate need) in ways that will not work. No one gets true love by coercing people into certain behaviors'. Forced â€œloveâ€” never removes hatred, resentment, or fear. It just reinforces the protective walls of defense. This inevitably degenerates into conflict, brutalities and totalitarianism. And that's just what we're seeing in our own lands.

Thatâ€™s the tragic predicament of our current society. It's the outcome of rejecting the ultimate source of love."

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2017/12/28 9:44

Quote:

You have nailed what I am trying to say with one exception, and that is here. I am not required to hold anyone accountable for how they love or do not love me. When I am in Christ, His love works through me toward others, regardless of whether they love me or do not love me.

General Topics :: Do we deserve to be loved?

There is a place where I am to hold my brothers and sisters accountable. None of us live to ourselves, and we are to spur our brothers on to love and to good works. But the motive of this exhortation is key. If I feel slighted, hurt, and unloved, then my correction would come from that place and would be totally carnal. It would not work the righteousness of God. I cannot exhort in love out of a heart that hurts from lack of love.

Jesus wants to eliminate that hurt. He wants us to press into relationship with Him so that He is our joy, our peace, our security, and our love. I know to our own carnal minds this sounds impossible, but God has called us to get out of our carnal minds and to have the mind of Christ. Through intimacy with Him we can come to the place where we are no longer needy of the love of another man. We are in His love, and as a result all of our human needs are met in Him. This leaves us free to love unconditionally with His love.

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2017/12/28 9:48

Quote:
----- I believe this quote by Travis is key to this entire discussion. The idea is that Christ's love does not replace the work of "one anothering" in the Body. Christ's love is intended to flow through people. Thank you Marvin:

Quote:
Jesus meets our needs through one another, and he meets them even when we do not recognize we have them.

The need for love is to be met by Jesus through the Church by the Spirit manifesting himself in various ways.

Diane

Diane: Not sure, but I think you are attributing a quote to me that is not mine.