

We cannot love God and others without His help



Yeshua: 34"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." John 13:34-35

Love One Another

As we slowly make our way verse by verse through the Upper Room Discourse (John 13-17) we find ourselves near the end of John 13. In this section Yeshua declares that the love that the Believers have for each other would be the sign to the world that we are His disciples. I remember as a young man resonating with this teaching for the first time in reading an article by Francis Schaeffer about it. It was an "aha moment" for me. So that's what we need to focus on -

we just need to love one another.

Fast forward 35 years later to a devotional time a couple of weeks ago. You would think that in all that time I would be a "love expert" by now, but there I was reading through 1 Corinthians 13 and feeling great conviction. I was arrested by verse 4: "Love suffers long (other translations have 'is patient') and is kind." I realized that left to myself I didn't have much patience and was not consistently kind. In fact, in all honesty I had to admit that I defaulted to being a selfish, impatient, and irritable person. This was discouraging to me as I reflected on this reality. I felt the sting of my honest personal assessment and my knee-jerk reaction was to move toward greater personal commitments and self discipline to try to be more patient, loving, and kind. And while there is certainly a place for commitments and self-discipline, I realized that I couldn't live up to God's standards without Him. Only by a consistent, daily connection and abiding with Yeshua do I have any chance of walking out this life of faith. Sanctification is a real thing, and I need His consistent daily help to walk as I should. I realized afresh that my awareness of my spiritual poverty was actually a good thing as the starting point of the kingdom journey (Matthew 5:3) provided that I took this poverty to Yeshua and refused my own amount of self-righteous striving.

I am truly grateful for this recalibrating time, and have moved forward since then with fresh resolve to connect with Yeshua and to receive His patience, humility, and kindness flowing through me. I realize afresh that I'm on a daily, life-long journey of walking in greater love. This Sabbath we will look more closely at this passage together, and see if we can discover new encouragement to more fully walk in His ways.