

Love In Action

We have all heard it said, “**Actions speak louder than words.**” In a lesson given earlier this year, we considered what God says in *1st John 3:18*, “*My children, our love should not be only words and talk. No! Our love must be true love.*” What is true love you ask? The verse goes on to say, “*Our love must be true love. We should show our love by things we do.*” The NKJV words it like this, “[L]et us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.” It is this simple, yet challenging truth that we have sought to understand more fully this year. God calls us to love in action.

The intent of this lesson is not to bring forth some new insight; but rather, seek to reflect on some of the things we have learned anew this year. God desires us to be **actively involved**. He has given (provided) each of us with gifts or abilities (*Romans 12:6*) and teaches us that we need to be using them as part of His body, the church (*Ephesians 4:16*). In so doing, we help His church to mature and grow. He desires us to **actively renew** relationships. Our relationships with one another are important to God (*Matthew 5:23-24*) and His redemptive work toward each of us should cause us to cherish them also and empower us to forgive those around us when needed (*Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13*). He also wants to help us learn how to **actively love our enemies** (*Matthew 5:44*) serving them with kindness, something they would not expect (*Romans 12:17-21*). He wants us to yearn for His word: to **actively learn** His ways (*2nd Timothy 2:15; 1st Peter 3:15*), for ignorance only leads to destruction (*Hosea 4:6*). Of course, the gathering of knowledge means little if that knowledge doesn't lead to transformation. God wants us to be **actively maturing** (*2nd Peter 1:5-7*) so we can become more effective and productive for Him and His church.

It is my hope that this year has been insightful and uplifting to all of us as well as challenging. As I reflect on many of the things we have covered thus far, along with our continued study of the one another verses on Sunday morning. Next year draw our attention to the reason for all this; that is, the sacrifice of Christ. In those moments when we look to the cross and see what He did for each of us, then and only then can we begin to grasp what love in action is truly like. May He who holds life in His hand give us a renewed desire to live for Him and love as He has called us to love.

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