

HOW TO EXPRESS LOVE IN A LAWLESS WORLD

Note to the speaker:

With warmth and feeling, help the audience to appreciate that love is the prime motive behind the actions of Jehovah and Jesus. Using practical examples, show how 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 can be applied, bringing rich blessings to those who express love

WORLD'S LAWLESSNESS DUE TO SELFISHNESS (6 min.)

Lawlessness, largely due to selfishness, foretold for our day (Mt 24:12; 2Ti 3:1-5)

Crime is like a rising tide (*rs* 237; can add current examples)

Greed, materialism, immorality, racial prejudice, national bigotry exercise powerful influence

Selfishness is “seeking or concentrating on one’s own advantage, pleasure, or well-being without regard for others”—*Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary*

Clearly, selfishness is unloving; is also self-defeating

Materialists never have enough, are not happy

Dishonest ones pay for crime with bad conscience, maybe imprisonment

Sexually immoral often pay with broken home, disease

Regardless of seeming gains, selfish lawless ones have nothing because they do not have love (1Co 13:1-3)

God’s people should express love, but what does this require?

WHAT WE LEARN FROM LOVE EXPRESSED BY GOD AND CHRIST (14 min.)

Love is the very opposite of selfishness (*it-2* 273-9)

In part, it is “unselfish loyal and benevolent concern for the good of another”—*Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary*

Bible highlights principled love; involves unselfish devotion to righteousness, active concern for lasting welfare of others

How Jehovah proves to be personification of love (1Jo 4:8)

God’s love evident in things created for our enjoyment

Food not tasteless but delicious; flowers colorful, not drab

Humans were created with ability to taste, see delightful sunsets, appreciate beauty in creation

Jehovah’s greatest manifestation of love was giving his Son for our sins (1Jo 4:10)

God really cares for us (1Pe 5:6, 7)

This is evident in that Jehovah is merciful, his love unailing (Ps 130:3; Ro 8:38, 39)

Jesus Christ too has perfect love

Loved his followers “to the end” (Joh 13:1)

Even when tired, cared for others’ spiritual needs (Joh 4:6-10)

Had pity, cured sick, raised dead (Mt 14:14; Joh 11:30-44)

Surrendered his life for his followers (Joh 10:15)

We should want to imitate God and Christ in expressing love (*w94* 10/1 13)

Should show love for God and others (Mt 22:36-39)

Love among the brothers is identifying mark of Christians (Joh 13:34, 35)

So in what specific ways can we express love?

HOW WE CAN EXPRESS LOVE IN THIS LAWLESS WORLD (20 min.)

(For additional information, please see *w93* 10/15 17-22; *w92* 7/15 28-31; *w85* 3/15 21-3; *fl* 70-80)

Paul shows us how to express love (Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

Love is long-suffering and kind

Prompts patient forbearance in unfavorable circumstances

Expressed by helpful deeds at home, toward brothers, in ministry

Love is not jealous

Are we resentful if another gets service privilege instead of us?

Do we envy those having more of this world’s goods?

Love will keep us from succumbing to resentment and envy

It does not brag, does not get puffed up

Do we boast about our accomplishments, downgrade others?

Love will help us to avoid sinful pride (Pr 21:4)

Does not behave indecently

Sexual sins are indecent, as is vulgar speech

If we love God and our neighbor, we will not ‘turn Jehovah’s undeserved kindness into an excuse for loose conduct’ (Jude 4)

Love for God and others makes us speak what is good (Eph 4:29)

Cleanliness of body and home will not be neglected if we are decent and loving

Does not look for its own interests

Concern for young, old, infirm, and others is one of the strongest motivating factors in love (1Co 10:24)

Love keeps us from being self-centered, pushing ahead of others, working only “best territory”

Does not become provoked

Elders, react lovingly if others are slow to respond to counsel, to turn in reports, are forgetful (Jas 1:19)

None of us should become offended by what others say or do

It does not keep account of the injury

Since we need forgiveness, must forgive others (Mt 6:12)

Love will prevent us from harboring grudges (Le 19:18)

It does not rejoice over unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth

We should not enjoy unclean entertainment, books, TV, movies

Instead, rejoice in and yield to influence of Bible truth

It bears [is covering] all things (“Kingdom Interlinear”)

Like watertight roof, love covers imperfections (Pr 17:9)

It helps us to refrain from talking about weaknesses of others

Believes all things

Love is not gullible but trusting, does not impute bad motives

Trusts in Jehovah God, his Word, and his organization

Hopes all things

Love is positive, cheerful, forward-looking

It moves us to pray and work for the best in any situation

Love hopes in all of Jehovah’s promises

Endures all things

Love can endure anything Satan does to test our devotion to God

Love never fails

Way of love will never end or be lacking (w93 10/15 20)

New knowledge may change what is old, hope is fulfilled, but love remains in fullness; continues to be strengthened

Always display love actively (Col 3:13, 14)

It is a strong bond that might be likened to the powerful bonding agent of the acorn barnacle (w85 3/15 21)

As clothing is held together by many stitches, so may our daily words and deeds prove that we are clothed with love (fl 80)

LOVE BRINGS REWARDS NOW AND IN THE FUTURE (5 min.)

Present blessings experienced by those who express love

Loving generosity brings happiness (Lu 6:38)

By love we attract others to Jehovah’s worship (w92 2/15 18)

If we are loving, can now have peace of mind, self-respect, better family life

Future blessings await those who express love now

God will repay us for showing love to others (Pr 19:17)

Jehovah will not forget love we show for his name (Heb 6:10)

Everlasting life is what Jehovah offers to those who continue to express love in this lawless world

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read)