

Values Matter Discovery Starters

We Value People

13. BE RELATIONSHIP-ORIENTED

YWAM is dedicated to being relationship-oriented in our living and working together.

We desire to be united through lives of holiness, mutual support, transparency, humility, and open communication, rather than a dependence on structures or rules.

[Lev 19:18](#); [Psa 133:1-3](#); [Pro 17:17](#); [Pro 27:10](#); [Joh 13:34-35](#);
[Joh 15:13-17](#); [Joh 17:20-23](#); [Rom 13:8-10](#); [1Jo 1:7](#); [1Jo 4:7-12](#)

Value #13 – Be Relationship-Oriented: So What's New?

Biblical Foundation:

So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples (Joh 13:34-35).

Discovery Starter:

What's new about this commandment? Prior to Jesus, the moral high ground was to love neighbor as self. Because every individual has been created by God in God's image, all people are equally valuable and we should love each accordingly. But then Jesus came. He loved like no one else had loved before. He introduced a "greater love" (Joh 15:13). Paul says, "But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners" (Rom 5:8). Jesus' loving sacrifice on our behalf has forever raised the bar. He has changed the narrative of history.

Our love for neighbor is no longer to be measured by how much we love ourselves, but by how much Jesus has loved us. Jesus is the new reference point for defining true love. We are to have the same rights-relinquishing, servant-hearted "attitude that Jesus Christ had" – and which is the glorious theme of an early Christian hymn (Php 2:5-11). Jesus' example calls us to prefer our neighbors as Christ preferred us. We're to follow this new example. Therefore, "Don't be selfish ... Don't look out only for your own interests ... Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them ... Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other" (Php 2:3-4; Rom 12:9-10).

This other-preferring, self-sacrificing love is not due to some unhealthy dysfunction. Jesus experienced no coercion. He says, "No one can take my life from me. I sacrifice it

voluntarily" (Joh 10:18). Jesus' servant-hearted love was rooted in his wholeness as a person. On his final evening with his closest friends, "Jesus ... loved his disciples ... to the very end... Jesus knew that the Father had given him authority over everything and that he had come from God and would return to God. So he got up from the table, took off his robe" and washed their feet (Joh 13:1-5), a graphic prelude to what he would do on the cross. Because he was secure in his identity, and knew where he had come from and where he was going, he could voluntarily serve with the greatest love ever displayed. Jesus is the new standard.

Keep Going:

Eight times we are given the positive command to love (*agapao*) in the New Testament. Three of these are about loving our enemies; three are about husbands loving their wives; and two are about how we are to love our brothers and sisters in the body of Christ. Consider these passages in the light of how Jesus' life has redefined the meaning of true love.

- Mat 5:44 But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you!
- Luk 6:27 But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you.
- Luk 6:35 Love your enemies! Do good to them. Lend to them without expecting to be repaid.
- Eph 5:25 For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her
- Eph 5:33 So again I say, each man must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband
- Col 3:19 Husbands, love your wives and never treat them harshly.
- 1Pe 1:22 so now you must show sincere love to each other as brothers and sisters. Love each other deeply with all your heart.
- 1Pe 2:17 Respect everyone, and love the family of believers. Fear God, and respect the king.

Take time to linger over these passages. Thank God for his immeasurable love. Ask him to show you how he sees the relationships you have – where can you go deeper in love? Ask him to show you steps you can take to grow in Christ-like love. Determine to take those steps which lead you to serve others around you and find new ways to express honor towards them. Take time to tell someone how much you value your relationship with him or her.