

Apply The Word

www.crosswaypa.org



Message Info

Title:

Help to Love

Speaker:

Peter Privitera

Date:

January 9, 2022

Scriptures:

1 John 3:19-24

Theme: When your heart is closed, believe and love.

Introduction: We are all familiar with the temptation to justify ourselves and to refuse to seek forgiveness. In so doing, we close off our hearts to God and to others, and we will not walk humbly and obediently before the Lord. So what are we to do when we recognize that our hearts are closed and we want that to change?

Here are 2 aspects to pursuing that change of heart:

1. Understanding the closed heart (19-20)

The heart is the governing center of man. From the heart arises all that we do. Here, John is addressing those who are exhibiting a closed heart that is (secretly) stingy toward our brothers. That heart seeks out faults in others in order to justify our failure to obey God.

John may have had Deut 15:7-9 in mind as he wrote these verses. There were to be no poor in Israel, and those who had abundance were called to show love toward their brothers by lending (w/o interest) to the needy. How much more should Christians show our love for one another?

If we realize that we have a closed heart, then we must recognize and turn to our great Savior (cf. 1 John 1:8-9; 2:1-2).

2. Keeping an open heart (21-24)

In trusting in Christ, we have passed from death to live; we have therefore escaped the judgment and condemnation of God.

Instead, we've been adopted into God's family and he relates to us as our Father. This truth produces true confidence before him.

We are also commanded to obey God and his commandments; and that includes the command to trust in Jesus and to love one another.

This is not legalism, but a fruit of the work of God in our lives by his Spirit. Real obedience is always a product of faith.

Questions:

1. Is there any self-righteous condemnation toward your brothers or sisters in your heart?

2. Do you have confidence before God?

3. How is the Lord at work in you to produce an abiding love for others?