

John 15:13

Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

Love gives; Lust takes: Have you ever considered that? Yet we use the word love for so many things, but the truth is that we lust after things, not love them.

Example: we say we love ice cream, but if you really loved ice cream, you would be giving something to that bowl of ice cream, but instead we take from that bowl of ice cream to fulfill your own desires. So shouldn't we say that we lust after ice cream because I am taking from it and not giving to it? But we don't say that because we know to lust is to fall into sin.

Does that sound to simple and does it sound kind of crazy. Well, let's put this more into perspective. You say you love your girlfriend or boyfriend, yet you live with him or her outside of marriage and/or have sex (fornication) with him or her. So how can you say that you love him or her? Do you sugarcoat it by saying you are giving them your love? No, you are giving them your sin and pulling them right into it as well. You are taking from them, not giving to them, because if you truly loved him or her, you would give them a relationship that was pleasing to God and not your flesh.

Some say that they love their job and they give their all for their job. Yet on the other hand they are in sin with someone. So is a job more important than a person's eternity in heaven or hell? What if you gave that person that you are in a relationship with as much passion and drive that you gave your job?

So how do we put this into perspective for us to use today? For me, I am very cautious on when I use the term "I love something or someone". Instead I will say I like or I really like chocolate ice cream. That way once the Lord brings someone into my life, and I tell her that I love her, she will know that it's true and that my feelings for her are no better than my feelings for a bowl of chocolate ice cream.

Think of our relationship with Jesus. We say we love Him, yet how often do we ask from Him instead of saying, "How can I give back to You?" And how do we give back to Jesus? Well, He told us how.

† **Matthew 25:40** *And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'*

Now it's not wrong to ask from the Lord, even Jesus said once again,

† **John 16:24** *Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.*

Jesus is showing us love in this verse, because He is not saying, “Do this for me” but rather, “Ask and I will do this for you.”

So let’s start living and loving as Jesus did, and stop asking or taking from others, but instead start doing and giving to others. Not because we have to, but because we want to.

† **Exodus 25:2** *Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring Me an offering. From everyone who gives it willingly with his heart you shall take My offering.*

† **Matthew 10:7-8 (NLT)** *Go and announce to them that the Kingdom of Heaven is near. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cure those with leprosy, and cast out demons. Give as freely as you have received!*

† **2 Corinthians 9:9 (NLT)** *As the Scriptures say, “They share freely and give generously to the poor. Their good deeds will be remembered forever.”*