

# Love

# 28c

**Objective** The confirmands would like to become more and more like Jesus Christ so that the fruit of the Holy Spirit becomes evident.

**Contents** Love is the standard by which we are known.

**Hint**

If this has not already been done the confirmands are to relate the experiences of faith which they recorded as homework following lesson 28a.

## 1 Lead-in

**Tell**

A scribe once came to Jesus Christ and wanted to embarrass him. Undoubtedly he was very well acquainted with the books of the Prophets and the Law. The scribe asked Jesus, "Teacher, which is the great commandment of the law?" Jesus responded, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets" (Matthew 22: 35–40).

## 2 The greatness of God's love

**Tell**

God loved humankind so much that He sent His Son to earth as Redeemer so that all who believe in Him do not have to be lost, but can attain eternal life (cf. John 3: 16). His love for us is inconceivably great. The essence of God is love! "God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him" (1 John 4: 16).

**Ask**

**How does God reveal His love?**

**Listen to answers and supplement**

- He sent His Son to the earth as the Redeemer.
- He has chosen us, has incorporated us into the new covenant through Holy Baptism with water, and has granted us the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- He speaks to us in His house, grants us His grace, always forgives our sins anew, and grants us His peace and fellowship with Himself in Holy Communion.
- He has commissioned His servants to lead us to the goal on the path of faith.



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### 3 My love for God

#### Explain

God loves us. His love “has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit” (Romans 5: 5). This love is to live in us. In the Holy Scriptures there are many commandments and laws. Among all of these the Lord Jesus referred to one as being the most important commandment: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.” We therefore want to love our heavenly Father and His Son!

#### Ask

#### **What do we do to show God that we love Him?**

#### Listen to answers and summarise

Apostle John wrote: “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments” (1 John 5: 3).

#### *The expression of our love for God ...*

We demonstrate our love for God by

- keeping His commandments,
- inquiring into His will and acting accordingly,
- putting His word from the altar into practice
- participating and helping along in His work (singing in the choir, assisting with the cleaning of the church building, inviting souls, visiting elderly brethren, and actively participating in the youth),
- remaining faithful to Him and not listening to ungodly opinions,
- bringing our offerings to Him,
- deciding for that which is good,
- professing Him, and
- loving our neighbour.

#### *... and our neighbour*

The Lord Jesus highlighted the last point above in a special manner. He said, “The second [commandment] is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself’” (Matthew 22: 39). Apostle John wrote: “If someone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?” (1 John 4: 20).

### 4 How can I show love to my neighbour?

#### Ask

#### **Who is our neighbour?**

#### Listen to answers and summarise

#### *Those to whom we can do good*

When the scribe asked, “Who is my neighbour?” the Lord Jesus told him about the Good Samaritan. The Samaritan showed mercy to the man who was left lying half dead and proved himself a true neighbour (cf. Luke 10: 30–37).





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The Lord Jesus also said, “The King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me’” (Matthew 25: 34–36). The Lord Jesus then explained that the righteous ones will ask when they had done all of this. The King would then respond, “Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me” (Matthew 25: 40). With these words the Lord Jesus showed the people who our ‘neighbour’ is, and how we can demonstrate our love for God and His Son.

## Ask

**How can I demonstrate my love for my fellow human beings?**

## Listen to answers and supplement

I can demonstrate my love for my fellow human beings by

- making them happy with a kind word,
- respecting and being there for them,
- forgiving them,
- praying for them,
- only speaking well of them,
- being patient with them, and
- not getting annoyed about their weaknesses.

We find important references concerning true love for our neighbour in 1 Corinthians 13: 4–7.

## Read aloud

“Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”

## Summarise

Those who love their neighbour demonstrate this through deeds, and so testify that they love their heavenly Father.

## Explain

An example taken from our everyday life is to show us how love can be strengthened and consolidated.

*Those who love one another will seek to have fellowship*

When two people love each other it will not be enough for them to know that each loves the other. They want to be together as often as possible to

- make each other happy, and
- show that the other one takes first place in their heart.

In this manner their love is reinforced and fortified.

It is the same in our spiritual life. Those who personally want to experience divine love and to show their love for God will come to the altar as often as possible to

- have fellowship with Him, and
- hear His word.

## Workbook exercise

The confirmands do the exercise in their workbook. Afterwards the answers are discussed.





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## The main points

**I also want to ...** ... love my neighbour as myself!

## Homework

If no further lessons in series 28 will be covered the confirmands are to again concern themselves with the confirmation vow.

## Hint

For lesson 29 the confirmands' parents are invited.

