

The Aim of Our Charge

“Ready! Fire! Aim!”

Wait! What? Something is wrong with this picture. We must aim first if we desire to hit our target. So what target are we aiming for?

Paul says, “The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith” (**I Timothy 1:5**, ESV). Too many Christians are busy with too many activities without first aiming at the target. Everything we do and teach is supposed to be focused on this target: love that proceeds from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith.

In **Matthew 22:37-39**, Jesus says, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (ESV). We are to aim for the 100% devotion with heart, soul, and mind to loving God. And, second, we are to aim for loving our neighbor as we naturally love ourselves.

I John 5:2-3 describes this love for us. “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments aren’t burdensome” (ESV). The love we are aiming for is not a warm fuzzy. It is not a better felt than told experience. It is an action. It is an obedience. It is a surrender to God Himself and His direction in our lives toward Him and toward others.

With this in mind, we understand that the sin-freeing truth of Christ is of utmost importance to our love. In fact, **II Thessalonians 2:10** demonstrates that we must love this truth, and through that love we will be saved. We must love truth more than popularity, fame, pleasure, fun, prestige, or finances. We must love truth above all things. If we don’t love the truth, we don’t love God or God’s people or God’s creation. If we don’t love truth above all things, we’ll find that the only thing we love is ourselves.

Finally, this love must be the motivation behind all we do. **I Corinthians 13:1-3** teaches we can do all kinds of amazing things like talk in the tongues of men and angels, understand all mysteries, have all knowledge, enjoy all faith, give away all we have, and even be martyred by being burned at the stake. However, if love was not behind and above all this, it was all useless. God isn’t looking to see what we accomplished. He is looking to see how we loved. Our actions must be motivated by the freedom of love, not by guilt, manipulation, or coercion. Further, we must strive to help others act based on love, not guilt, manipulation, or coercion. That is tough because those other motivators are so much easier to teach and promote.

This brings us full circle to the aim of our charge, the goal of our instruction. Our goal, our aim is not to force, manipulate, coerce others into action—whether baptism, Bible study, assembly attendance, prayer, etc. Rather, we are to aim for love from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith. We are to instruct ourselves and others to love truth, thus loving God and others.

What goal are you aiming for?