

**A New Commandment - Love**

Jesus has just shared the Passover meal with His disciples and washed their feet. It is a Thursday evening, and in a few hours, He will be arrested before His crucifixion on Friday. Jesus is giving His last teachings and instructions, which continue through His prayer for them in John 17. Yesterday, we saw how it all started with giving the example of service through foot washing. Today, Jesus is going to take that a step further and challenge them to love. Not love like “I love Chipotle burritos”, but love that is willing to lay down one’s life.

A few reflection questions before we look at God’s Word:

- 1) Who really loves you? How do you know?
  
- 2) Who do you really love? How do you show it to them?
  
- 3) Do you believe God loves you? How do you know? How practically have you experienced the Love of God?

Before you read God’s Word, take a minute to pray, asking Him to help you better understand His love for you, and how we should love others. If you started the first day we released these devotionals, today should be Easter, the celebration of God’s ultimate demonstration of love for us. He is Risen!

**John 13:21-30**<sup>21</sup>After saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit, and testified, “Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.”<sup>22</sup>The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he spoke. <sup>23</sup>One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved\*, was reclining at the table at Jesus’ side, <sup>24</sup>so Simon Peter motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking. <sup>25</sup>So that disciple, leaning back against Jesus, said to him, “Lord, who is it?” <sup>26</sup>Jesus answered, “It is he to whom I will give this morsel of bread when I have dipped it.” So when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. <sup>27</sup>Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, “What you are going to do, do quickly.” <sup>28</sup>Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him. <sup>29</sup>Some thought that, because Judas had the moneybag, Jesus was telling him, “Buy what we need for the feast,” or that he should give something to the poor. <sup>30</sup>So, after receiving the morsel of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.

\*Note: This is how John, the disciple and author of the Gospel of John, refers to himself throughout the Gospel. He never mentions his own name.

4) Explain what each person is doing in this passage:

- Simon Peter –
- John, the one whom Jesus loved –
- Judas –
- Jesus –

5) From verse 21, how would you feel if you have spent 3 years with the same group nonstop and you hear a betrayer is among you? What would be going through your head?

6) From verse 24, why don't you think Peter asks Jesus himself? Why get John to do it? What might Peter be afraid of?

7) From verse 27, how is Jesus' relationship with Judas different from what we see in books and movies about how betrayers are treated? What does this show about Jesus' love for Judas?

**John 13:31-35** <sup>31</sup>When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. <sup>32</sup>If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once. <sup>33</sup>Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, and just as I said to the Jews, so now I also say to you, 'Where I am going you cannot come.'<sup>34</sup>A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. <sup>35</sup>By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

- 8) Reread verse 33. Again, if you have spent 3 years nonstop with Jesus, how would you feel hearing that where Jesus is going, you can't come?
  
- 9) How does the fact that Jesus is leaving them apply to the command Jesus gives them in verses 34 and 35?
  
- 10) From verse 34, what is Jesus' definition of love? How has Jesus loved us? How is this love different from our world's definition of love?
  
- 11) From verse 35, what should be the result if believers love each other? How have you seen this true in your own life?

John also wrote the letter we call 1 John. In it, he further explains and expounds on what Jesus taught about love. He writes, *"<sup>7</sup>Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup>Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. <sup>9</sup>In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. <sup>10</sup>In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. <sup>11</sup>Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup>No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us."* (1 John 4:7-12)

- 12) Based on these verses, why should we love one another? Give at least 3 reasons.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 13) Based on these verses (especially verse 11), what do we receive when we love each other?

**John 13:36-38** <sup>36</sup>Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, where are you going?” Jesus answered him, “Where I am going you cannot follow me now, but you will follow afterward.” <sup>37</sup>Peter said to him, “Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.” <sup>38</sup>Jesus answered, “Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times.”

- 14) You know the story that Peter will deny Jesus 3 times within a matter of hours. What does this say about Peter’s ability to love Jesus on his own strength?

The reality is, on our own, we have no chance and ability to love others in the way God desires. Our flesh is selfish and love is selfless. However, as believers in Jesus Christ, we have His Spirit and life in us (look back at 1 John 4:12). His love and life in us empowers us to love others. Close out your time today reflecting on the following questions. Pray He would give you insights.

- 15) Do you believe you are experiencing and living out the love of God? If not, what do you think is holding you back from experiencing God’s love?

- 16) How are you doing at loving your family (I know you are around them more right now)? What are some practical ways you could selflessly love your family this week?

- 17) How are you doing at loving other Christians? Even though you may not see them as frequently right now, what are ways you could reach out in love?