

Loving Like Jesus

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[0 : 00] The children may go or stay, but going is more normal, I suppose.

! So out you go. Thank you.

Let me read your Bibles this morning to John chapter 13. Let me read the passage, and I want you to follow along in your own copy of the Scriptures, beginning there in verse 34. A new commandment I give you, that you love one another just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this, all people will know that you are my disciples if you have love one for another. Since we don't have a problem with this passage, and it's something we're pretty good at, I'm just going to pray that God helps me preach for my own soul's edification. How's that? The rest of you just listen in and see how it applies.

But let's pray together. Our Father God, this morning we are so very thankful for the blessing we have of being able to open the Scriptures and find in them words of life, truth.

We're thankful also for the fact that we who know the Lord Jesus Christ have the indwelling Spirit, and one of His ministries to us is enabling us in listening, in understanding, and applying the Scriptures. And we would ask that this morning you would do a work in our lives that is powerful to the point that the unbelieving world marks the radical difference in our lives from this day until you take us home. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

[2 : 29] So I want to ask you a question. Just kind of think with me here for a minute at the start. And I do this because I want to frame this lesson against the backdrop. The context is important. Question.

Do you think the disciples really, really loved each other a whole bunch? Nod your heads like this or go like that. Okay. I'm kind of convinced that. Okay.

Are there any Bible indications that they struggled a little bit with getting along with each other? Any Bible? I mean, after all, we're not up here to hear my opinion. We want to know what the Word says.

Right? Are there any Bible information items that kind of tell us they struggled a little bit with each other? What were they arguing about this night?

Remember? If you were to go, and don't need to, but if you were to look in Luke, in the context of the Last Supper, you'll find that they ended up in a dispute. Now, you've got to understand that this was in the context of Jesus breaking bread and sharing the cup and saying, this blood is the New Testament.

[3 : 45] This is my body, which is for you. I'm going to die for your sins. I am going to die because I love you, and I'm going to die because I love the Father. And here they are having their little intramural spat about who's going to be what.

Can I tell you, you can't be arguing about who's going to be the greatest and really be in love with anybody other than yourself? Okay.

Now, we've got the disciples in the bag. We know where their hearts were, right? Here's what I want you to do. Just think with me just a minute. I want you to make a short list.

I don't want you to cover everything, but I just want you to make a short list of some people that you honestly really don't like a whole lot. I know you have to think hard.

But some people that you actually kind of struggle with, even that are in the body of Christ, I mean, you know, they irritate you. They've offended you.

[4 : 45] I appreciate pastor's prayer. If it were not for the fact you know better as a believer, you would go ahead and get involved in bitterness and an unforgiving spirit, right?

But what happens when you have an unforgiving spirit? Does anybody know what the Bible says, the unintended consequence of that disobedient act is? Matthew 18 says this.

You get turned over to the tormentors. Some of the most miserable people I've ever met are people that will not forgive. Okay, so here we are. We're just talking about the fact, short list, some people that are really honestly a real challenge for you to love.

You got your list, right? I grew up in India. My parents were missionaries. One of the things I learned in India is that missionaries a lot of times leave the field because, do you know why?

Why? Because they can't get along with other missionaries. I have had the privilege of serving here for 30 years.

[5 : 57] Well, it will be 30 in December 30th, something like that, you know. I have seen people come and go, sadly, profoundly saddening to me.

And one of the most common denominators is they were having trouble with other people. Yesterday, a number of us were taking oatmeal to homeless people.

Do you know what the number one common denominator is over the years that I've discovered with people that are in a homeless environment? Do you know what it is? They can't get along with other people.

I talked with an individual a couple months ago, several months ago. The dad and mom are attorneys here in Columbus living under the bridge. Reading a play by Moliere.

And you need to know the name, so I'm just throwing them out there so you can hold on to them. Right, Jared? He's like, who cares? But reading a French play and reading Oedipus Rex. You know, it's like, I mean, these are important books to read.

[7 : 01] And there he is, chattering at night, freezing, because he doesn't like his mom and dad. Met a guy yesterday. Has a sister in Mount Sterling.

I mean, is that very far away? Does anybody know? Is that? I'm teasing you. It's like, I would rather sleep under the bridge than sleep with my family, right? Okay. How does that happen?

You got your short list? I want you to remember my prayer.

It's for me. Lord, I want your word to make me different than I am by nature. I want to be a person who understands what it is to love like Jesus loves.

Oh, add this little piece there. Father, with the power of the Spirit of God. Well, with that, let's get into the lesson. And I want you to understand that had you asked the disciples, okay, so what is Jesus going to say just, you know, like five hours before he dies on the cross?

[8 : 12] What is he going to say? How many of you think, I mean, if you didn't know the story because you got the book, but how many of you think that, oh, yeah, yeah, I would talk about loving one another.

And so here we go with Jesus. As he goes about the Last Supper, the first thing that he does is he gets involved in a Passover lesson.

And I want you to understand that the way in which the Passover was constructed, going all the way back to the book of Exodus, and you don't need to go back there at this time, but one of the characteristics of celebrating the Passover is that it was a time of family instruction.

I'll just kind of recite the portion. In Exodus chapter 12, verse 25 and 27, it says this, And when you come into the land that the Lord will give you as he promised you, you shall keep this service.

And when your children say to you, what do you mean by, why are we doing this? You shall say to them, it is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover, for he passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt when he struck the Egyptians but spared our houses.

[9 : 30] So, in this pattern of conducting the Passover in a very typical and traditional Jewish fashion, one of the things that was wrapped up in that ceremony and that service was teaching and instruction.

And so I have no doubt that in relationship to that responsibility, Jesus, as he conducted the Passover, the Last Supper, he actively engaged himself in teaching critical lessons to his disciples.

And I've got to tell you that I am fully persuaded that the disciples didn't get it. I mean, do you think they did? No. But the benefit is that it was placed into their hearts by the teaching of the Lord Jesus recorded for us in the Scriptures and enabled in terms of the ministry of the Spirit of God, bringing back to remembrance those things which he said, for our sakes that we may grow to be more like the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so I do think there is some significance for us to stop and think here this morning of just how important this particular portion of the lesson must have been for Jesus right on the other side of Judas going out and him saying, now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in him.

He says, and by the way, I've got a new commandment for you. So what I want us to do now as we frame this issue of here's the Passover lesson and Jesus says, I've got a new commandment for you.

[11 : 20] Let's think a little bit about what is new. What are we talking about here? The newness of his command. As we take up verse 34 and kind of put your finger on it there and look, it's a new commandment.

We recognize that actually this statement of loving other people was not an entirely new idea. It wasn't something that Jesus kind of just invented on the spur of the moment or thought up because if you know the ministry of Christ, one of the things that characterized it, it was Bible rich.

What I mean by that is that every time he had a lesson, every time he had a statement, you could track it back. You could track it back to the Old Testament that was just kind of the genesis of his teaching.

He who was the Word brought the Word forward. Not new, but the Word that had already been given. And you recognize that Moses had already given, under God's instruction, the commandment in Leviticus chapter 19, verse 18.

Take a look at that passage just for a moment. Leviticus chapter 19, verse 18. Let's go back there just for a second and mark the instruction there.

[12 : 35] Leviticus chapter 19, verse 18. Leviticus chapter 19, you shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself.

Deuteronomy chapter 6 is the other one. In Deuteronomy chapter 6, verse 5, hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one, and you shall, what? Can anybody say the rest of it?

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. And you'll remember that Jesus was asked the question by a lawyer, hey, by the way, what's the greatest commandment?

Which one I really need to focus in on? And Jesus said what? Love the Lord your God and love your neighbor as yourself. So we have to ask ourselves the question, it's a practical one, so what's new about this?

Fair? I mean, Jesus said, he said what? A new commandment. What is new? It helps us to understand, first of all, that the word that Jesus used for new is a Greek word that refers to something that is more impressive or superior in value, more attractive.

[13 : 57] Now, this is not to be compared with boxes of cereal, but you and I have been trolled innumerable times by advertising that tells us this is new and improved.

And the truth of the matter is the packaging is new, but the actual contents is less. How many of you figured that one out? It's like, what happened? That box of Cheerios used to be this big and now it's this big.

And it does have a fancier exterior, but hey, I was into what was inside the box, not the outside. Can't eat that. And so here's Jesus saying, this is new.

He's saying, this is something that is, that's better. And we have to stop and ask ourselves the question, where is the superiority in this matter?

The newness of this command lies actually in the benchmark that Jesus set for loving. So keep in mind the passage that we have over in Leviticus that I just recited where it said, love your neighbor as yourself.

[15 : 12] Here is Jesus saying, I want to kind of up this a little bit. I want you to love one another like I have loved you. And so the newness lies in this matter of the comparison and the connection he is making with the expectation that you and I love one another the way he loves us, not the way you love yourself.

Now let me get over on a side here just for a moment because it continues to be one of these things that just stuns me. I can remember having a conversation with an individual that had been engaged in immorality and gross behavior.

And as he was, how many of you have learned that in counseling it's always good to start out by listening longer than anything? Take time and hear what a person has to say. And this person was just going on about all the filth and vile.

And I asked him a question after he'd talked for a long time. I said, so why do you think you did that? I mean, you know, I expected a Sunday school answer. The guy said he was a believer. He's like, oh, I sinned.

Now here's what he said. He said, I guess I didn't love myself enough. I was like, what? Now one of the things that goes with being 68 is you learn just kind of like, uh-huh, yeah.

[16 : 40] Yeah, that was really good. I didn't do that. I just kind of, no, I didn't. You just have to act like, yeah, I get it. But I said, you know, your problem wasn't loving yourself.

Your problem is you're just focused entirely on yourself. You're really full of yourself. I didn't say it exactly that way. It was a little slower. But here's my point.

The church of the living God has bought into the unbeliever's mindset that the starting of all of our getting it all right is loving ourself.

Jesus wasn't saying, guys, you need to get a handle on how much you love yourself. He was saying, let's get an idea of how you ought to love other people. At least kind of bring it up in your game to the way you love yourself.

How many of you love yourselves? No, I don't want to admit it publicly, but are you good at that one? Try this. Hit your thumb with a hammer one time.

[17 : 40] Your entire psyche wraps up with saying, don't do that again. Do you follow me? It's really, you got the memo. It's like, I like my thumb.

Don't be so, you know, you got my point, right? We love ourselves. And Jesus says, hey, you know, you need to get into this a little more.

And by the way, the newness also relies or lies in this issue of the frame of reference that Jesus was pointing to was new, was superior.

So Jesus here is calling his disciples, in fact, he is calling us, to love one another like he loves us. How many are doing well at that? Come on, just say to me, I am.

I'm really good. I love people like Jesus loves me. Liar. I mean, you know. Any of you here struggle with being a little judgmental?

[18 : 45] I mean, when, you know, the first thought that you have is not sweetness and light, you know. Someone is five minutes late and you don't immediately think, oh, they may have gotten struck by a train, you know.

You're just thinking, yeah, they don't care about me. My time is really important. Or someone doesn't answer your text, you know, the full day and you think to yourself, well, if they cared more, they would keep their watch chart.

You know, they have all kinds of things that help them know when I'm texting. And when I'm texting, it's, you know, it's not God, but it's close. Jesus says, hey, you're to love one another the way He loves you.

And the truth of the matter is, is loving other people the way we love ourselves does have some inconsistency and is insensitive. How many of you have to admit there are times that you aren't very impressed with yourself?

I mean, you admit it. But the fact of the matter is that Jesus calls us to a standard of love that absolutely surpasses the best we do at loving ourselves.

[20 : 08] So when we love like Jesus loves, our love goes to a far higher, nobler, and spirit-enabled plane. I want you to hold on to that fact.

Because if you walk out of here this morning thinking to yourself, all right, I need to up my game and I have got a list of three people that I'm just going to really focus on loving more.

And you go and stop at Walmart, Meyers, CVS, I don't want to name all of them, but you know, you're going to get five cards and you're going to make a little list and you're going to put it on you and you're just going to go all hog wild to do this and you don't recognize that you can't pull it off apart from the Spirit of God, you're missing the point.

When we love like Jesus loves, we're going to step it to a spirit-enabled plane. So let's think a little bit about how Jesus actually loves us.

Now, for the sake of continuity, I'm going to stay primarily within the frame of John chapter 13. John 13 has enough information of how Jesus loved that we don't have to go beyond it.

[21 : 21] Now, I want to tell you this morning for me to propose to you that John chapter 13 kind of presses together all the important information about the love of Christ would be wrong and I couldn't do that because for one, in Ephesians chapter 3, verse 14 through 19, what does Paul say?

How many of you know it without looking? You should. For this cause I bow the knee. Well, what's he going to pray for? He's going to pray that we might be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and height and width and depth of the love of Christ.

How big is the love of Christ? How big? It is mind-blowing. But at least, for this morning's lesson, I want us to think about the love of Christ as we see framed here in John chapter 13.

So, first of all, I want you to understand that the love of Christ is settled in its unwavering commitment. It is settled in its unwavering commitment.

John chapter 13, verse 1, it says here, Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end, what?

[22 : 43] He loved them to the end. Aren't you glad that He loves you to the end? Huh? Huh? He hasn't changed His mind. I'm trying to think of the author.

Pastor Saul, can you bail me here? David Platt, I'm thinking, There's nothing you can do that will make Jesus love you more, and there's, I'm waiting for a nod from somebody.

Just nod to make me feel better. There's nothing you can do that will make Jesus love you more, and there's nothing you can do that will make Jesus love you less. That's really hard to believe, isn't it?

I mean, we are in a performance-based world. Isn't that right? Huh? I love this statement.

The love of Christ is settled in its unwavering commitment. That means that when we love like Jesus, we know up front that it's going to cost us more often than not.

[24 : 01] Courtship, I'm talking about between a young man and a woman, are usually, I call it hide-and-seek, actually. It's not full disclosure. You never want to talk about, you know, all the things that really come with marriage, but, you know, it's like, I am going to be the answer to all of your dreams.

I mean, I am the best thing going. I am going to satisfy your interests. I will love on you. It's just going to be wonderful. It would probably be wise in pastoral counseling on premarital to say, do you realize what you're signing up for?

Huh? Do you understand what's going to happen? You're going to spend the rest of your life. You're going to hand over your check.

You're going to run up and down steps for a drink of water. You're going to move furniture until you die. Yes!

She's in the nursery today. When we love like Jesus, we understand that it's going to cost us something.

[25 : 23] When we love like Jesus, we do not walk away from relationships because of the disappointments that come with them and the frailties that are involved in that.

Loving like Jesus means we don't say, pay attention because these are some things that when you're counseling other people, you can help them with. When we're loving like Jesus, we don't say, here we go.

Are you ready? Write this down so you can pick it up on helping others. I'm not getting my needs met. You ever heard of that said? I'm not getting my needs met? Or here's another one. Stinky, stinky. I didn't sign up for that.

You heard that one? I didn't sign up for that. What? Loving like Jesus? Can you imagine Jesus saying that? What? What? What? What? It settled in its unwavering commitment.

Second thing about the love of Christ, it is joyfully sacrificial to the end. As you look at John chapter 13, here is Jesus at the table in verse 3 and 4.

[26 : 43] Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hand, that He was come from God and was going back to God, He knew exactly what was going to happen. And as He was there at the table with His disciples, that He loved unconditionally and with an unwavering love, He knew that His life was going to be sacrificed for them and it was joyful in doing so.

I think about the passage in Hebrews where it says this, There are times when we're going to sacrifice our rights.

We're going to sacrifice our preferences. I remember a dear saint came to me once and said, Pastor, I've been led to believe that you prefer hymns over some of these more contemporary songs.

And I said, Yes, I do. And this dear saint said, Well, then why don't we sing more of them? And I said, Well, let me tell you, when we have dinner at the Kenoyer Home, I never fix a meal that is reflective of just my personal preferences.

I fix a meal to the preferences of the children that God has blessed me with. I grew up in India and I can eat it as hot as you can make it.

[28 : 22] In fact, I like it that way. I prefer it that way. And any of you here that on occasion have decided to go spoon for spoon, you understand that I can stay with you.

But here's the deal. Love gives away some of those preferences because of people that you genuinely love. I got to tell you, my mom knocks me out of the park.

She's with Jesus now. But I remember when she began that process of adapting to more contemporary music. It was like nails on the chalkboard.

Do you follow what I'm saying? There was a learning curve. There really was for Marlia. But she loved Jesus and she loved others. And when it came time to do her funeral, one of the songs was one of the more contemporary ones that we sing here as a congregation.

And when we had that service, you guys knocked it out of the park. I remember your dad. Same thing. You cannot love like Jesus without being willing to give away your preferences.

[29 : 37] By the way, if you're going to love like Jesus, you're also going to have to learn a whole lot about forgiving. Will you write that down? We are hardwired for justice.

Isn't that right? Huh? Justice? Merchant of Venice, some of us play Shylock to the extreme. It's like, I want my pound of flesh and it's going to be your heart.

You can't be faithful in loving like Jesus and not be well-practiced at forgiving other people.

Well, there's a third thing that I want you to see here. It is a sanctifying love. You find there, as Jesus goes about washing his disciples' feet, you'll remember that Peter was all about, you're not washing mine.

And Jesus says, oh yeah, I am, or you don't have anything to do with me. And it really comes down to that. This business of washing the feet is kind of a word picture, an image of this business of progressive sanctification, dealing with the grit and the crud of daily living.

[30 : 48] And Jesus is into that. And that means if you're going to love like Jesus, that you are conscious and deliberate in going about building other people up.

Are you listening? Dad, so what's your plan for helping your boy learn how to be a godly leader in his home before he walks out the door at 18 or so and is on his own?

Are you going to nurture godliness? We do a much better job of teaching our children how to work than how to walk godly. There's nothing wrong with teaching your children how to work.

That's important. But, it's more important to teach your children what it is to walk uprightly before the Lord. What does it say in Micah?

Love mercy, do justice, walk humbly with your God. Get those down. And here we look at the sanctifying ministry of Christ. His interest was in the ministry to the disciples.

[32 : 07] There's a fourth point that I want you to recognize if you're going to love like Christ. Christ's love was spirit-enabled in its power. Now, I don't want to overemphasize this to the point of diminishing the entirety of the divine nature of Jesus, but at the same time, Jesus, the Son of Man, was dependent on the Spirit for His earthly ministry.

I love the summary statement that you find over in Acts chapter 10, verse 38. And let's turn there, lest you think I just kind of come off the top of my head with this, but Acts chapter 10, verse 38.

If you're going to love like Jesus, you're going to have to rely upon the Holy Spirit. Remember the list of three people that you struggle with loving? You have them.

I know you. Most of you. Some of you. Okay, you got your list. You can't do it without the Holy Spirit. Acts chapter 10, verse 38.

Let me read it to you. How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, and He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. How was God with Him? In the Holy Spirit's presence, enabling His ministry.

[33 : 29] Jesus had the Spirit without measure. No restraint, no restriction. Here is the encouraging piece to us.

Listen, if you're sitting here and thinking that you actually need to walk out of here and kind of pick up your energy just a little bit and be a little more loving towards maybe two or three people on the list occasionally, that's not the purpose and vision that Jesus had in this lesson to His disciples.

You cannot love effectively like Jesus calls us to love apart from a persistent dependence on the Holy Spirit.

I love Galatians chapter 5, verse 16. I was reciting it to myself over and over again this morning. How many of you know it? Walk.

Help me out here. How many of you? Just raise your hand. Just nod at me like you know it. You know the verse. Stop just for a second. Everybody know it. If you don't know the verse, it may be because you haven't thought it necessary to know it.

[34 : 49] Right? Illustration. I bet you I could call on Dr. Radcliffe or Dr. Malumba and they could give me a fairly reasonable explanation of what it is to have tachycardia.

Could you do that? Bang. If I said to them I've had PVCs, they could answer all the details.

Do you know why they know those things? Because it's, hello, it's important to their well-being and mine. Are you listening? Galatians chapter 5 verse 16, walk by the Spirit and you will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

And if you don't have that verse on the short list, maybe you're just so adept at this you don't need the Holy Spirit's help.

Okay? A little snarky. Forgive me for that. I mean that. I would plead with you. You can't love the way Jesus wants you to love unless you have the enabling of the Holy Spirit.

[36 : 09] So when we love like Jesus, we're going to do it in a manner that is beyond our natural bent. We're going to go beyond what it is to love ourselves. And we're only going to be able to do it through the power of the Spirit.

So let me push this to this point. His expectation is that you love like Him backed up by the power of the Spirit of God.

You need to get that in your mind. His expectation is that you love like Him backed up by the power of the Spirit of God. And it would be extremely frustrating and unfair to call us to love like Him apart from the enabling of the Spirit of God.

Does that make sense? Do you understand the logic of what I said? It would be unfair to say here's what you ought to be doing and not recognize or encourage you to understand here's where the empowerment comes from.

Take a look just for a second. You're there in John or you were in Acts but I want you to go to Romans chapter 8 verse 4 and 5. Romans chapter 8 verse 4 and 5.

[37 : 16] Let me go ahead and read verse 3. For God has done what the law weakened by the flesh could not do by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin He condemned sin in the flesh in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Do you understand what that's saying? I don't have to be the way I am. If you don't think that's pretty good news let me say it again.

I don't have to be like I am. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on things of the flesh. You wonder why you're thinking the way you are? There's the word. But those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.

Now, what is it like to set your mind on the things of the Spirit? It means that when those things of the flesh go zinging by you say no, no, no that's not no, no not that one.

You got me? Going back to the passage in John if the idea of loving with an unwavering commitment with a sacrificial joy with a planned effort to bless the ones you love seems incredibly hard and very frankly impractical then you must confess either that you do not know the Lord Jesus Christ and the expectations of His word are just beyond your imagination or you are a believer who is not appreciating the blessing of living much of the Christian life with the power of the indwelling Spirit.

[39 : 14] You know what Jesus said to His disciples? He said, listen it's a good thing that I'm going because guess what? You get the Spirit. It's good for you.

You need the Spirit. That brings me to one more incredible truth and I'll close with it. Go back to the passage in John and just be struck by what it says there in John chapter 13 verse 35.

By this all people will know that you're my disciples if you have love for one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples because you have love for one another.

Now it's not the only way that the unbelieving world knows that we're His disciples and the unbelieving world is used to looking for signals as to what your faith or your religion is.

I mean hey if you're an Amish person guess how you can pick out an Amish person if you're up around Millersburg. How do you do it? How many buttons? I mean hey what is a zipper?

[40 : 23] Not to be had by a good Amish man. Okay. Hats. I mean do you follow what I'm saying? I was up in I went to Lehman's. How many of you know Lehman's? I had to go.

Okay. And sure enough there was buggy parking. I didn't park there but you know you can tell the Amish. How many of you can pick out a Muslim? How many of you can pick out a Muslim today?

What's a giveaway of a Muslim woman? What? Are we this culturally a headscarf?

I mean I was at Home Depot the other day and there's a guy there named Mohammed. I'm a frequent flyer at Home Depot. They know me and I'm talking to the guy and I noticed that he had actually left where he was working normally and he was walking around with a young lady and an older woman and I could tell by the way they were talking that they were related and so I said to Mohammed I said I want to tell your mother that you are a fine young man and I held out my hand.

Mohammed said oh she won't touch that. Tim Kenoyer should know better it's like I'm sorry Muslim women do not what?

[41 : 41] What? What? What? They don't touch the hands of men I mean die and go to wherever you know but can you pick out Muslims? Yes. How many of you can pick out Sikhs? Do you know what a Sikh is?

Sikhs. How many of you have seen Sikhs with turbans? They never cut their hair never cut their hair in all of life. It does fall out occasionally but a Sikh also wears a steel bangle around his wrist if he's a good one.

So Jesus says you don't have to wear a steel bangle you don't have to have a dot you know what a tikka is right here between the eyebrow if you're a Hindu our neighbor put out a website called connect the dots it's a little bit like e-harmony for Hindus okay took you a while I know it's a little slow on the uptake you know but connect the dots duh so how do you pick out Christians huh no red dots no lots of hair you know you we are to be marked by our deep love for one another our deep love for one another and I thought very quickly just what was the early church so good at that there's a lot of history about how the early church took care of each other and you can work through the book of Acts you can work through books on church history for one they cared for one another in times of need remember in the early church in the book of!

Acts church but there were people who got the idea that hey why work and what did Paul say if you don't work you don't eat so we see the pendulum going back and forth but they were willing to help each other the early church rescued abandoned babies to the point that a lot of people came to Christ through the ministry of the early church and rescuing abandoned babies they took care of the sick that's really interesting isn't it if norovirus had happened in the lobby of the new testament church how do you think the church would have acted I won't go there email me they protected one another's reputation okay so when someone comes to you and has something to say you can say hey how did it go when you practice

Matthew 18 step one to go real well they protected one another's reputation they spoke well of one another and they served one another I'll tell you one of the things that has been a consistent testimony of this ministry has been the way we take care of each other when people are sick and when people need to move and over and over again when we are John where are you when you left your neighborhood everybody I gotta hire two men in a truck and they're not very happy and all these people parked up and down the streets carrying boxes and you know having a great time so we are to be marked by the joy of spirit enabled obedience and we are to be marked in such a fashion that the unbelieving world looks at the way we care for one another and says wow they must be following Jesus so let's close in a practical way

[45 : 25] I would venture to say that the truth of the matter is is that every one of us here have more to do at learning to love like Jesus loved isn't that right and if you're kind of giving yourself a pat on the back go back to that list of three people you're really struggling with Jesus doesn't have people like that on his list for the reasons you have them there and you go to the Lord and say Lord I want the enabling of the Spirit of God to love like you do I want to love others like Jesus loves me let's close in prayer God to Father God this morning as we attend to the word of God we recognize that it speaks with authority in our lives and its purpose is to help us see the

Lord Jesus Christ Lord of glory Savior of the world the one who came to die for our sins and rise again that we might be his children that we might be examples and witnesses to his glory and Lord the purpose of preaching is to put us on the spot of saying yes or no to God and this morning the word of God convicts us that we who know Christ blood bought need to work at loving one another as we ought to we don't want to have a short list we want to be like Jesus and so quietly and deliberately this morning we ask for your spirit to convict us and that from this day forward we are growing in our love in a conscious and deliberate fashion and we'll give you the glory we ask in

Jesus name amen let's stand together as we sing and to