

You Need The Heavenly Servant's Love

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 07 May 2023

Preacher: J.D. Edwards

[0 : 00] I'll be reading from John chapter 13 verses 1 through 17. This is our sermon text for today. And as I read this and as you follow along, remember that this is God's inspired, inerrant, infallible, clear and sufficient word.

After I'm done reading, I'll say this is the word of the Lord. You can respond, thanks be to God. 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. During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands and that he had come from God and was going back to God, he rose from supper.

He laid aside his outer garments and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

He came to Simon Peter who said to him, Lord, do you wash my feet? Jesus answered him, What I am doing, you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand.

[1 : 31] Peter said to him, You shall never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I do not wash you, you have no share with me. Simon Peter said to him, Lord, not only my feet, but also my hands and my head.

Jesus said to him, The one who has bathed does not need to wash except for his feet, but is completely clean, and you are clean, but not every one of you.

For he knew who was to betray him. That was why he said, Not all of you are clean. When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, Do you understand what I have done to you?

You call me teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.

For I have given you an example that you should do just as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.

[2 : 48] If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. And you may be seated. Would you pray with me?

Lord, please open the eyes of our mind open the eyes of our hearts to behold Jesus. Help us to see our Lord Jesus Christ in the upper room serving those you gave him.

And help us to see Christ exalted, having cleansed all those you sent him into the world so that he would show that you are love.

press home this gospel truth on our lives and change us as a result we ask for Christ's sake. Amen. Beloved congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, you need the heavenly servant's love.

love. When you get home later on, you try to remember what was the point of the sermon today? It's that you and I, we need the heavenly servant's love.

[4 : 43] Let me read this statement and decide if you agree or disagree so your options are true, false, or need more information. You got those three options.

If I made you all stand up and vote with your feet, where would you go? Here's the statement.

Ready? I'm going to tell you who it's from in just a moment. Quote, Christianity has not been tried and found wanting.

Christianity has been found difficult and left untried. True, false, or need more information. Do you want me to read it one more time?

Christianity has not been tried and found wanting. Christianity has been found difficult and left untried. This quote is by G.K. Chesterton.

He was English parliamentarian at the time of World War I. There's a lot of interesting facts about this man. He was also a fiction writer. He was also Roman Catholic.

[5 : 46] And I think that he's writing this in a way that I would say is mostly true. It's mostly true as an apologist for, you know, arguing with the atheists of his day that what we receive, we receive by faith.

And you can say from a rational, humanistic, secular standpoint, it's difficult. But the Lord Jesus reveals himself and when you behold him, it's not difficult.

It's the most natural response is to obey and believe him and follow him. Now, the reality though is when you believe in Jesus Christ and he says, look to me, look to this example, you'll be blessed if you do as I have done.

That's how our sermon text ended. We look at any story of our Lord Jesus in the Bible and then I look at my life and it's not only difficult, it's impossible by my own strength.

We just read this in our catechism. It is impossible for me to present anything to God as a good work that's not blemished by my own remaining sin. I look to Jesus and I see my conscience convicts me and those who are not yet saved, their conscience convicts them by looking at Jesus.

[7 : 00] We are earthly, we are proud, we are selfish. You know, the term Christian means little Christ, a smaller or lesser version of Christ. And I cannot imitate Christ by my own strength, can you?

Christianity in that sense is the most difficult. It's impossible to imitate Christ by your own strength. Adam could not stand righteous before God. And we all inherited that sinful bent, that inclination of the will, that bondage of the will to sin from Adam.

So it's even harder for us than it was for Adam. I can't even love my wife or my kids like Christ would have me love them without the love of Christ loving them through me.

Is that true for you as well? We need the love of heaven's servant inside of us, don't we? That's what this scene is about, these first 17 verses.

And I want to try to develop this theme that we need the heavenly servant's love with five observations. The first one is this. From just verse 1, the heavenly servant came into the world because God is love.

[8 : 11] The heavenly servant came into the world because God is love. Look at verse 1. Before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of the world, to be, depart out of this world, to return to the Father, notice what it says next in verse 1.

Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. Sinclair Ferguson said this first verse is like a prologue to this whole second book.

The second book is about the hour of Christ. It's about the passion, the death of Christ. And what you need to remember is that this entire hour, everything that will take place, Christ did. Why?

For love. His motive is to reveal the love that God is to the world. In Luke 22, we get further insights. Luke 22 says that they then came the day of unleavened bread.

That's how John says before the feast of the Passover, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. That's how Luke told it. And Luke tells us it was Peter and John. So the author of our gospel here, Peter and John, they found a man carrying a jar of water just as Christ had instructed.

[9 : 25] They followed him there and they prepared the last supper. That's what Luke tells us. Now John and Peter, we get wonderful insights from these two who prepared this very feast, prepared the upper room in which this all takes place.

The Passover, as we've seen, is the day of independence for all of Israel. It's July 4th. It's a day of patriotism. It's a day of revolution. and taking political control.

The blood of Passover lambs has already begun flowing. We have no reason to imagine anyone else in this upper room. It seems like Christ has intentionally prepared a private place where he's going to give us some very insightful and intimate details into the Father, Son, and Spirit in this upper room.

So we can picture a quiet upper room. There's the Passover table set prepared by John and Peter. There's a jar of water and there's a towel.

There's the Lord Jesus Christ and there's the twelve disciples. The other gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, they describe this final hour of Christ, this final passion from the outside, but it's the fourth

gospel which was written much later by the apostle John that describes this last hour more from the inside.

[10:46] And that's what we get from this wonderful account. And John wants you to know that the mind of Christ was set. He knew he was going to be departing out of this world and returning to the Father.

And having loved the ones God gave him, he loved them to the very end. That's the impression John has of this whole account. love. It's God himself who shows this love.

We started this wonderful gospel in John 1.14 that the word, the word became flesh and dwelt among us. We have seen his glory, glory as of the only son from the father, full of grace and truth. And he knows he will be returning to the father very soon. His hour to depart has arrived. And that phrase, to depart out of this world, is a Jewish way of saying they're going to die.

Listen to how Paul used this same phrase in Philippians 1. Paul said, remember he said, I'm caught between two things. Paul said, my desire is to depart and be with Christ. There's that phrase.

[11:52] For that is far better. In Hebrews 12, it tells us that it was for the joy set before him. The joy. That's why Christ would endure the cross and its shame.

So that's the hour and that's the love that's now overflowing from Christ unto these disciples. The Son of God, God himself in the flesh, would be returning to the Father.

He would be returning victorious. John 1.1, in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. See, it's God himself who is love and who would love to the end.

John 10.30, we saw, I and the Father are one, Jesus says. And we'll see in chapter 17, verse 1, Jesus prays, You, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us.

To show the love of God, Jesus took on flesh. To show the love of God, Jesus would love them to the end. And to show the love of God, he would unite his own with him.

[12:58] As he prepares to return to the Father, he is returning as one who has showed God's perfect love fully, completely, to the very end. I want to drive that home, it's because God is love.

The Nicene Creed says that the Son of God, begotten of the Father, only begotten, that is, of the substance of the Father, God of God, light of light, true God of true God, begotten, not made, of one substance with the Father.

He had come into the world to show God his love. Now his hour had come to depart out of the world. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

You see how John keeps saying God is love. He loves, he came to show the love, he loved to the end. 39 times John talks about the love of God in Christ, more than any other book in the New Testament.

So church, it's because God loved the world, it's because God loved you, that he sent his only begotten son, that whosoever believes in him will not perish, but will have everlasting life in him.

[14:12] It's because God is love. John 3 16 says, without the love of heaven's servant, you perish. Without his love, you perish.

perish. It's so that you will not perish, but you will have everlasting life that Christ took on the flesh and did his work. You need his love to not perish.

God took on the flesh. He accomplished his mission because you and I need the love of heaven's servant. Second observation, this heavenly servant, God himself, is the seed of Eve.

It is the son and the triune God. The heavenly servant is the seed of Eve and the son of God himself.

Look at verse 2, 3, and 4. Why do I say that this servant from heaven, it's also important that this is the seed of Eve?

[15:20] Look at the battle that's going on in verse 2. During supper, when the devil, when Satan had already put it into the heart of Judas, Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Jesus.

This great battle has been raging on since the garden. The devil put it in Eve's heart and in Adam's heart to break the covenant with God. the devil put it in their son, Cain, in his heart to slay his brother and murder.

Satan had put it in Pharaoh's heart to kill all those who might be a threat to Satan, the seed, the promised seed in the covenant of grace. Satan put it in Haman's heart to wipe out all the Jews in the story with Esther.

You remember that? Satan had put it in Herod's heart to kill all the baby boys because the seed is coming that will crush his head. Satan had put it in Peter's heart to detour Christ from the cross.

Jesus saw Satan lurking behind even Peter and said, get behind me, Satan. There's a great battle that's been going on between the serpent, Satan, the devil, and Jesus Christ, the seed of the woman who would crush the devil's head.

[16:41] We saw last week how Jesus said, by my work I will cast down Satan. Satan is not bound for eternity in the chains of hell yet.

He still tries to cause destruction. Now God is victorious. Have you ever wondered, I'm not even going to ask you if you've had a dark thought. Every sinner has, which we all are. Have you ever wondered though, how could such a dark thought come into you? Satan wants to do that. He wants to pollute our thinking. He wants to corrupt our minds.

And he wants to accuse us against one another and against God. The devil put it in Judas' heart to betray Jesus. I was encouraged just to hear, I'll say he's one of my favorite Jedis, and it's a Scottish Reformed Baptist pastor.

It's Alistair Begg. He said, if you knew, congregation, if you knew, the darkest thoughts, something like this, if the darkest thoughts that have passed through my mind, you would not want to be in this church. And then he said, if I knew the darkest thoughts that have come into your hearts, I would not want to be in your church.

[17:52] That's what God does. He takes these disciples like Peter, like everyone in the Bible that we've seen, and there's that battle and Christ says, no, Satan, you don't get this one. This one is mine. You get out of here.

You get behind with Judas, not as Peter being the perfect sinless man, no, the opposite.

Both men standing in need of grace. So pay attention to that contrast which has begun right now. Church, I want to encourage you as well. When Satan does put it in your heart to despair and tells you of the guilt within, what does the hymn say?

Upward I look and see him there who made an end to all my sin because these sinless Savior died. My sinful soul is counted free.

For God the just is satisfied to look on him and pardon me. Look to Christ. Satan has no power over you.

[18:59] Not only was Jesus Christ the seed of Eve, he was also the son of God, God himself. Look at verse 3. Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God.

This is Trinitarian language. The Holy Spirit inspired John and showed him and gave him the words to write it exactly this way. The Father had given all things into the hands of the Son.

God the Father into the hands of God the Son on earth, who had come from God and was going back to God. His union with God is never broken, but God the Son took on a mission on the earth. It's God himself. It's God himself who entered this last hour. The three times holy God, holy, holy, holy, holy, Father, Son, and Spirit. This is important. He lost nothing taking on the flesh to walk this earth.

God lost nothing. Adonis Vidu, a Presbyterian professor at Gordon Conwell, he put it this way, all three persons of the Holy Trinity are at work in every action outside the Trinity's life.

[20:17] That's why John said God dwelt with us, God tabernacled. God himself in the flesh was really shooting us from the glory of the triune God, Father, Son, and Spirit.

He gave us Christ so we could look at the face of Christ and see the full God head. I think this is important that God put on a human nature to shield us from God's glory.

He took on flesh not subtracting anything from his essence or who God is, but he added onto it this human nature. Illustration from this same professor Vidu is that like a great magnet, if you picture a great magnet and it has that power to attract a little paperclip, the paperclip is like the flesh.

Nothing is lost of God by taking on the flesh, just like nothing is lost of a great magnet that draws a little paperclip onto it. That's what it is, that Jesus Christ in verse 3, he had everything from the Father.

God has not lost anything and he would be returning to God the Father, going back having accomplished his mission. The Father has given all things into his hands.

[21:30] He is Lord of all. He is God the creator supreme over all. And when you hear this description of Jesus Christ picturing him in this upper power, that's his majesty, his sovereign.

What do you picture he would do next? It's Independence Day. What would he do next for Israel, for his beloved people? Look what he does in actuality and history.

Look at verse 4. He rose from that meal. He laid aside his outer garments in verse 4. Took off his outer garments, laid them aside, set them down, and taking a towel, he tied it around his waist. Now, Luke 22 gives us a context of what was going on with the disciples. Luke tells, based on his interviews, that there was a dispute that had arose between the disciples. This is Luke 22 verse 24. What were they disputing about? They're talking about who is the greatest among them. Jesus said, the kings of this world, they lord it over. [22 : 43] over those that they're leading. Jesus says, I am among you as one who serves. The king of heaven took off his outer garments.

He took a servant's rag, and he took that rag and wrapped it around himself, on his person. I am among you as one who serves. He laid aside his outer garments so that he would wash the dirt off of the lowest part of his disciples. He's fulfilling what Isaiah prophesied. Isaiah 42, behold my servant, says God, whom I uphold, my chosen, and whom my soul delights. I have put my spirit upon him. He will bring forth justice to the nations. He will faithfully bring forth justice. How will he do this? By obeying as a servant on the cross, showing God's love to the very end, by loving his own, and serving them with the love of God himself.

[24 : 03] See, Jesus Christ, in his work and taking on the flesh and dying on the cross, he had laid aside his royal robe as the prince of heaven. He did that for love and he stepped down from his throne in heaven and he became a lowly shepherd to disciple those who would hear his voice and he did that because God is love.

This phrase here that he laid aside his outer garments, it's the same thing he said back in John 10 verse 10. A good shepherd lays down, lays aside his own life.

What did Jesus say in John 10? The good shepherd lays down his life so that he may take it up again. See, Jesus lays aside his outer garments, washes them as a servant, and he takes up his outer garments again and resumes his spot as Lord over the feast.

And then Jesus says, do you understand what I have done? They said, no. He says, you will understand. Church, do you understand what Jesus has done by washing their feet? Third observation, the love of heaven's servant is experienced before it's understood.

If you're not understanding the gospel in this picture, maybe God wants you to experience it by faith. And the understanding will grow. It'll grow from there.

[25 : 30] The love of heaven's servant is experienced before it's understood. Now, remember, what he's about to do here is wash their dirty feet. Parents, have you ever had to wash your kids' feet after they've gone and played outside?

Well, our children are cute and they don't smell too bad. But these are stinking men. These are fishermen and they're walking around the streets of Jerusalem. There's no pavement. It's going to get a little bit gross. There's no sewage. There's a lot of animals everywhere. There's no codes. And they're walking around not with rubber boots up to their knees.

They're walking around in sandals. It would be disgusting to have to touch those men's feet. In verse 5, Jesus poured water into a basin and he began to do just that.

He washed the disciples' feet and he wiped them with the towel that was around him. In verse 6, he came to Simon Peter who said to him, Lord, do you wash my feet?

[26 : 32] And Jesus answered him, what I am doing, you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand. Do you think Peter would understand? They did not understand that they needed to be cleansed by heaven's servant.

them. They would understand later that this act of, as they're reclining at the table and their feet are all outward, they're all leaning on their left arm like this with their feet on the outside.

Jesus is down low on the ground and this filth and stinky dirt that was on these men's feet, where is the towel on Christ? Where is it?

He's got it wrapped around him. Do you see the picture? He washes them with his hands. He takes their dirt on the servant's towel wrapped around his own body.

What was their dirt is now on Jesus Christ. Heaven's servant is washing them. They have to experience this. Later they'll understand, my sin was put onto the body of God himself in the person of Jesus Christ.

[27 : 44] We need a righteousness that can pass God's scrutiny. We just read this. We cannot produce the righteousness we need. Our catechism we just read, a righteousness we need is one that is entirely perfect.

It must in every way measure up to the divine law. Even the very best we do in this life is imperfect and it is stained with sin. sin. But you can experience the love of God.

You can experience Christ washing you. And when you experience that, when you see he took my dirt on his person, your walk changes.

Doesn't it? What do you do with clean feet? You just took a shower and you got to go for somewhere to walk around. You want to keep these feet clean. I just got done washing my feet. You want to watch your walk and keep those feet clean once you've just been cleaned, right? Now, he says you will understand this. Let's start with John, the apostle John. Do you think John understood this?

[28 : 52] Let me read to you what John, as an elder, an old man to a church writing to them as his little children. Listen to what John taught the church in 1 John 1, 7 through 10. John said, if we walk, there it is, you're walking with these clean feet.

If we walk in the light as he, Jesus Christ, is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, God's son, cleanses us from all sin.

Do you think John got it? Did he understand? If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

God's sins and love. Have you experienced the washing of Jesus? Have you experienced his love as God's heavenly servant? If you have been cleansed by the blood of Jesus, then we take care. We take care with the help of the Holy Spirit as best we can, not to keep getting dirty over and over again. You remember that you were cleaned out of love by heaven's servant himself.

[29 : 56] The fourth observation is that God must apply inwardly the work of heaven's servant in order for you to be truly cleansed.

You might be thinking, I understand this maybe partially, but I want to understand more. And even what I don't understand, I do want to experience. How do I experience this type of cleansing? What Jesus says, you may notice the disciples part in experiencing this, it's to let Jesus wash them. Let him take their dirt and put it on him. It's to be cleansed by him.

It's not go out and try to be super clean on your own. No, let him wash you. How does God do this? He does this by inwardly applying to you, your inner being, your inner man, the finished work of Jesus Christ, heaven's servant.

The Holy Spirit does it inside of you. God's servant. God's servant. This is the contrast between Peter and Judas. Look at verse 8. Peter said to Jesus, you shall never wash my feet.

[31 : 06] Jesus answered him, if I do not wash you, you have no share with me. Simon Peter said to him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

And Jesus said to him, the one who has bathed does not need to wash except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you, I mean, picture being Peter sitting there, the servant just washed your feet, Jesus Christ, and he says, and you are clean.

Peter is the one who has just been working, setting up this Passover. Maybe he smells like smoke from roasting the lamb and he's probably, I don't know if they had deodorant back then. So Peter is saying, I could use a whole bath because I know I'm dirty.

And Jesus says, yes, you need to be cleaned. But Peter, it's not your outside, it's your inside. It's your inner man that needs to be clean. And Peter, you've confessed, you Lord have the words of life.

You are my Lord and my God. And Jesus says, my spirit through that faith, through that belief, my spirit has made you clean, Peter. And you are clean.

[32 : 17] You're clean not by water or by an outward act. It's nothing that we do that causes us to be born again.

The Holy Spirit regenerates your soul. God says, I breathe life into you, just like I breathe life into Adam. You're now part of the new creation.

My spirit moves with power. My word goes forth and it creates life into a dead soul. You are clean by faith in the work that I will do for you on the cross.

And church, you believe this good news. If Christ has breathed his work of cleansing into your heart by the power of his spirit, he says those same words to you.

You are completely clean. clean. You are clean. Believe this good news.

[33 : 18] The righteousness of God himself in the flesh, Jesus Christ, is yours. In Orthodox Catechism, this is from what we read last week, even though my conscience accuses me of having grievously sinned against all of God's commandments and of having never kept any of them, and even though I am still inclined toward all evil, nevertheless without my deserving it at all, out of sheer grace, God grants and credits to me the perfect satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ, as if I had never sinned or been a sinner, as if I had been as perfectly obedient as Christ was obedient for me.

All I need to do is accept this gift of God with a believing heart. Isn't that good news? Well, that's Peter, but there's a contrast at the end of verse 10.

The contrast is Judas. Notice what Jesus says. After having said, you are clean, he says, but not every one of you. Verse 11, for he knew who was to betray him.

That was why he said, not all of you are clean. See, even though he washed Judas' feet on the outside, Judas had a hard heart, an unrepenting heart, which made him unclean.

So even there in that upper room, as the glory of God is shining through this heavenly servant, giving them a picture lesson of his glorious work on the cross, in this bright, glorious light of the room, the dark shadow of Satan lurks over Judas with a hard heart of unbelief.

[35 : 11] John Gill commented that among the purest of churches, there are unclean persons. There are chaff among the wheat, goats among the sheep. So may this be a caution to all of us.

We are so close. Judas was so close to Christ. He had heard the teaching. He had the gospel presented as clearly, as could be. And yet he was unclean because his heart was not owned by God himself.

And if you have understood the gospel, if you're understanding more and desiring more, take heed the words of a Puritan, John Flavel. He said, the greatest difficulty after conversion is to keep the heart with God, to keep trusting God, to keep repenting and trusting that Christ is the one who washes you and presents you righteous in Christ alone.

It's God who must apply inwardly the work of heaven's servant in order for you to be truly cleansed. Ask him to do that, maybe for the first time, and ask him to do it again and again and again.

my fifth observation is that the heavenly servant's love is an act for us and it's also in Christ's own words, it is also an example for us who belong to him.

[36 : 38] But my caution is that we need the heavenly servant's love even to follow his example. We need his love, not just a one-time washing, we need his love to be the force that energizes us and that carries us as we seek to follow this example he's laid down for us.

Look at verse 13, Jesus said, you call me teacher and Lord and you are right for so I am. If I then, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.

Remember, they were arguing about who is the greatest. He says, this is how my kingdom will be defined. verse 15, for I have given you an example that you also should do just as I have done to you.

Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master nor a messenger greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

He says, the messenger the messenger is not greater than the master. The word messenger here is a sent one, a one who has been sent, and it's the word for apostle.

[38 : 03] So for his disciples, he says, you are my apostles, you are my sent ones. Now remember, Jesus has taken on the role of being a servant, being obedient to his father.

All the servant passages of Isaiah, Christ fulfills as the sent one of God. Remember, for love, God sent his only begotten one. Jesus was the sent one. Now he says, I was sent by the father on this mission, and in the same way I was sent, disciples, I am sending you into the world.

Luke 22 sheds more light on this. Luke 22 verse 26, you shall not be like the world, but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he that is chief, as he that serves.

I am among you as he that serves. Now listen to this part of the covenant that Christ was covenanted a kingdom from the father, and he turns around and covenants this to the apostles in the church.

Luke 22 verse 28 says, you have continued with me through trials, verse 29, and I appoint, I covenant unto you a kingdom, as my father has appointed or covenanted a kingdom unto me, that you may eat and drink at my table, and rule in my kingdom.

[39 : 28] So it's Independence Day, they have thoughts of a revolution, of taking over political power, of toppling over the Roman Empire, and Jesus says, I have a kingdom, my kingdom is a kingdom of heaven, and it turns the values of the world upside down.

In the kingdom of heaven, my people will be like me. They will make themselves lowly, and they will serve. They will exhibit the glorious character and compassion of God to this world and to one another.

That's my kingdom. You want to have a part of my kingdom, I give it to you. I covenant my kingdom with you. Just as the Father sent me, I send you into the world. Do as I have done.

Do you belong to my kingdom? It will be evident. It will be evident whether you do or whether you're outside of my kingdom. If Christ is your king too, church, if you are so filled with his love and he rules over you as your lord, as your king, it will be his energy that sustains you.

You will desire to serve him. You will desire to serve those he has given you. your energy to serve will not be something you've manufactured.

[40 : 45] It will be energy from heaven itself, implanted within you. It will be a joy. You will be ruled by a law, but it will be the law of Christ.

The perfect God who is love puts his life and his law inside your heart and your mind if you belong to his kingdom. Remember that quote I started with?

I want you to think back on that quote now that we've seen what Christ has taught in these verses. G.K. Chesterton, Christianity has not been tried and found wanting. Christianity has been found difficult and left untried.

It's difficult if you try to do it on your own strength. It's impossible. But you need the heavenly servant's love to even obey what he calls you to do.

And if you belong to his kingdom, you have his power and his energy working in you. Jesus knew that the father had given all things into his hand. The father had promised him, the son, a people and a kingdom upon the condition of his work as heaven's servant.

[41 : 54] And he promised this to reveal God is love. So when you think of your salvation, you think of God's glorious foreknowledge and predestination and how he's elected a people and given that people to his son, think of one word.

Think of God's love. It's love. John Fesco said, it was Trinitarian love. Trinitarian love overflowed at the father's command.

It was Trinitarian love that overflows in the son's obedience. It was Trinitarian love in the spirit's outpouring to redeem fallen sinners.

It's far from a piece of cold business of moving numbers from one side of a ledger to the other.

Fesco wrote, the father sends the son in love.

The son obeys the father in love. And the spirit applies the son's work in love. God loves you. And Jesus, his hour had come to depart out of this world and having loved his own who were in the world.

[43 : 04] He loved them to the end. For love, the father sent his only begotten son. The son would not come up short in his mission.

It would be that same love that sent him that would sustain him to the very last day. If you feel like you're running low on love, it's the same love that will sustain you to the end.

I need more of God's love in my heart. For love, Christ would be lifted up. It was for love that he set his face like flint to the cross.

It was for love that the son, Jesus, served his own and washed their feet. For love, he took your sin, if you're a believer, onto himself.

For love, he bore your sin and mine on the tree. God's love, it's by God's love that he rules over his church today.

[44 : 06] It's because God is love overflowing that he fills the hearts and souls of his own people with God's love. So when it's hard, when you're running with the tank on empty, it's hard to love your family to the end.

Ask for more of God's love to sustain you to show God's love to your family. When it's hard to love your spouse with Christ's love to the end, ask for more of his love so you can love your spouse or your loved one with Christ's love to the very end.

If you have kids and it's hard to love your kids in the moment, ask for more of God's love to fill you that it will overflow it's Christ, it's not you, onto your kids, your children to the very end.

If it's hard for you to love even this small little church family with Christ's love, ask for more of God's love to fill you that it will overflow onto one another within this church family to the very end. One more, okay? If it's hard for you to love this pastor, church officers, or a fellow Christian who has deeply hurt you, ask for God's love, love, that the love of Christ would fill you to serve those he loves until the very end.

[45 : 29] We need that. Well, we saw that John learned Christ's lesson. I want to finish off with Peter. Did Peter understand this lesson eventually? Listen to his words, Peter's words to the church in 1 Peter 4.9.

He instructs the church, show hospitality to one another without grumbling. So that means it's hard because the tendency will be to grumble.

But if it's Christ's love in you, not only will you do it, you'll do it without grumbling. Peter wrote, as each has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied graces. Now listen to this, serve as one who serves by the strength that God supplies. Do you think Peter understood the lesson?

church, serve one another, but serve with the strength that God himself supplies. Why? Peter writes, in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

[46 : 34] It should be obvious to you, to me, and to one another, and to the world, that this is a special people, not because they are special, but because it's God's strength overflowing in them.

The way they're showing the love of Christ is otherworldly, there's no explanation for it, and that way God is glorified. God gets all the glory, never man, through Jesus Christ, to whom belong all glory and dominion forever and ever.

You and I, we need the love of the heavenly servant. If you're clean, if you've been cleaned and washed by Jesus, then walk, walk with him in his light, and serve with the love of Christ himself overflowing in all that you do.

Let's pray. From Ephesians chapter 1. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.

In love, he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the beloved.

[48 : 03] In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace. grace. So we ask, Lord, for your glory.

In love, clean us again. In love, teach us to serve. Amen. Amen. Take a moment and pray.