

John 13:31-35

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Date: 11 February 2024

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[0:00] From the Gospel of John, chapter 13, 31 through 35. You cannot go. 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. By this, all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

Thank you, Brittany. Thank you, Megan and Brad and Josiah. It's awesome to be led into musical worship of our King, isn't it? And to be united as a body.

I pray that while you're worshipping in song, you close your eyes and reflect and hear the sound of God's children praising him through song. It is beautiful, is it not? Welcome.

My name is Jim Gancarz. I'm a member here at Shoreline. We are going to continue our study through the book of John, as Jordan told us. And we're going to look at what Christ tells us about sacrificial love.

[1:22] Not only what he tells us, but what he demonstrates. And what he leads, literally leads and exemplifies and tells us to have in our identity of what sacrificial love is. Let's open with prayer.

And let's dive in. Holy Spirit, we pray that you would come here this morning and open our hearts and our minds. Blow like the mighty wind of God across this room. And open our hearts to receive your word as it is true.

The perfect, inerrant, timeless word of God that you have given us both in word and incarnate in Christ Jesus. Father, teach us to know what sacrificial love is.

To desire that. To desire to be conformed to the likeness of you, Lord Jesus. And Lord, ultimately, would you receive glory, honor, power, and praise this morning. We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

Amen. Well, good morning. Let's recap where we are right now. Pastor Mike, last week, gave us a great look at the dinner table where Jesus was supping supping with his disciples, his friends, his close friends.

[2:29] And so he says, it opens that last passage in saying, one of you will betray me. This is right after he had just washed his disciples' feet. He says, one of you will betray me. And so the disciples get confused, right? There's a clamor that was going on there.

Who is it? Who is it? They're asking each other. And John, right? The disciple that, you know, he gets the chance to write and say, I'm the one that was loved by Jesus, by the way. The loved one gets to lean into Jesus and say, hey, Jesus, who is this?

And Jesus responds, the one I'm going to give this morsel to is the one who will betray me. And so we know he gives that to Judas. And Jesus says to him, what you're going to do, do it quickly. And Jesus gets up.

Judas gets up. It says he was, he was, Satan entered him. He receives that morsel and he goes out into the night to go set in motion the arrest and trial and execution of Jesus. Whether he knew that or not, that's what's about to happen next.

So those wheels are in motion and we are now going to look at Christ's monologue to his disciples, his people, his friends. Okay? And it's really cool. It's a neat flow that he has here.

[3:28] And we're going to look at three points of that flow as he describes sacrificial love. The first is that this sacrificial love, this is point one, is glorified in him and in God the Father. The second is that sacrificial love is exemplified in him, in his person and work of Jesus Christ.

And third, that sacrificial love is identified by those who call themselves disciples of Christ. It should be an earmark of us as brothers and sisters in Christ and followers of him that we love each other. And that is going to be what he talks about here in this passage. So let's, let's kick it off. The first part, verses 31 through 32, we see Jesus opening with this discussion, this monologue, this truth declaration that he will be glorified, God will be glorified, the Father.

And if God is glorified in him, Jesus, then God will also glorify Jesus in himself and glorify him at once. So there's five times John uses this word glorify.

So obviously, as we spoke last week, if we see something repeating, like Morsel said so many times, if we see glorified so many times, it's important. And John wants us to see here is that Christ is claiming the same thing.

[4:36] The hour is now, right? Now the Son of Man will be glorified. That's what he had said back in John 12. He said, hey, the hour is now. And also he said, the Son of Man will be glorified. But why is he saying this now then?

It may seem repetitive. It may also seem, you know, he could have said this maybe before he was washing his disciples' feet, right? He, you know, it seems like, you know, we've just shrunk Jesus. One of our guys just left.

Judas just went out. Maybe he's picking up some food for the meal. So what's going on here? Well, I think we can glean a lot from the language Christ used. And even what it says about his own heart at that time.

It says in the beginning of verse 21, last week's passage, that Christ was troubled in his spirit. Okay? So there was like a tension or a dark heaviness here at that time with his disciples as he's reclining at table and eating with his brothers.

But there's been this like restraint that's been moved in the absence of Judas. When Judas gets up, think of some of the words he had said when Judas was there. I'm not speaking to all of you.

Remember that?

[5:31] Jesus says, I speak not to all of you. He says, you are not all clean. Okay? So there's an uncleanness there too. And he even says, one of you will betray me. Okay? So these are very heavy words that Christ is using towards his disciples here.

And suddenly, with his tension left, with Judas up and leaving, Satan going to depart and putting this to action, we see now that Christ is speaking to his brothers who have now been cleaned. They have been cleansed both in their feet, but they have now been cleansed from the presence of the betrayer. And so this is a very intimate time with his close friends. And we're going to see that even in his words that he specifically uses, right?

He calls them little children. And we'll look at what that means in a sec. But also note that he uses that term, the term that Christ loves to use for himself, son of man. That the son of man will be lifted up.

That the son of man will be glorified. I know this has been talked about in the past, but it's worth repeating. This term son of man is first seen in the book of Daniel. Book of Daniel chapter 7.

[6:29] I'm going to read this short passage of it. Pick it up if you can. For me, it's bolded, so it's easy for me. But hopefully you hear it, okay? So Daniel 7, and behold, this is, I'm sorry, 13 through 14.

And behold, with the clouds of heaven, there came one like a son of man. And he came to the ancient of days, God, and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him.

His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed. This is definitely all about the glory of the son of man, is it not?

So we see this word used here in a passage associated with the glory of this son of man. The glory of God, ultimately, because it is the Lord God who has given these elements, the kingdom, the inheritance, the peoples and nations and languages.

All of this has been given by God the Father, the ancient of days, to this son of man. So why I'm saying this and hitting this hard, note that that term is definitely associated with glory, okay? And if we look at the other synoptic gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, right?

[7:36] If we look at those three, often this term son of man is used in context with some sort of suffering, okay? The son of man has no place to

lay his head, right? The son of man suffered at their hands.

Those are his opponents, his enemies. The son of man was rejected by the elders and priests, okay? So we also see that this term is often used, at least in those synoptic gospels primarily, as a term of suffering.

So identifying that this servant, the ancient of days, is also a suffering servant, right? Isaiah 43, right? But in the gospel of John, right here, right now this morning, we are seeing that it is both intertwined of the glory of God, the glory of the son of man, and the suffering that the son of man is about to endure.

So the glory of the son, he says that the glory of the son will appear, the glory of God, and then they will be intertwined in him and it will happen at once. So where do we see the glory of the son? Well, John actually opens this gospel talking about how the son is glorified because God sent him down to dwell in us.

Check this out. This is John 1, 14. And the word became flesh and dwelt among us. And we have seen his glory, the word that became flesh, glory as of the only son from the father, full of grace and truth.

[8:50] So how is this glory shown in the son? How is it not? I suppose is a better way of saying it. But if we look here, ultimately it's going to be his total victory at the cross.

His total victory over sin, over death, over Satan, that he redeems his people just like it was promised in this prophecy in Daniel 7, that all people groups would be brought before him and given to him. So he is lifted up for here for sure.

And in doing so, he's giving glory to the father because the father is the one who sent him. Right?

And so how does the father glorified in this as well? Well, the satisfaction of his justice.

Justice is one of the attributes of God, is it not? Right? That he is a just God. And Christ has satisfied the wrath of God. So there is glory to be had here too.

Look what Jesus did. He's the only perfect spotless lamb that could be sacrificed and satisfy the justice of God. Also, his mercy is on full display, right?

[9:47] Did God have to do this? We know this. If you're a believer here this morning, you know that we have been bought at such a price that we were undeserving of. Yet in doing so, the father is glorified because his master plan has been fulfilled and completed by the obedience of Jesus Christ.

So there we see the two being glorified, so to speak, separately as different persons. But there's a unity here because keep in mind, throughout the book of John, John has reminded us that Jesus said, I only do what I see my father doing.

And I only do what my father tells me to do. He has an obedience to God the Father. A perfect obedience unto the cross, even unto death that Christ brings here. And so in that full obedience, be reminded that God is one.

God is three and God is one. And so we see that unity with Christ Jesus and with God the Father. What about that at once part? What do we think that means? In discussing this with some brothers, you could really go anywhere with this.

Well, boy, there's glorified in the moment that he is on the cross. Absolutely. Absolutely. The cross of Christ is written throughout all of scripture and everything points to that work that Jesus did on that cross.

[10:58] But perhaps it's also the entire events of the cross and his resurrection and ascension into heaven. All of the work of Christ, all of that that happened at once glorifies God the Father.

Each element of that, whether they seem separate in time or not, is an opportunity where instantly Christ glorifies God the Father. And one of my brothers was sharing with me, think about the day that Christ died.

What happened on that day? What do the gospels tell us happened on that day? Well, it says that there was the veil that kept, right, man from God, was split and torn in two, signifying that Christ has made a way that we are able to come before the Father and speak to him.

It says that there was a storm and loud crashing of lightning from heaven. This is a radical, glorious day, right? This is a crazy day unlike others. This isn't a regular day in Connecticut. This is

something that's happened that literally shake the earth and heaven.

And also, it says that even the graves, right, were opening up and the dead were coming out and prophesying. I've never seen that. It's pretty radical. Another reason to give glory to God. I don't know anyone who can raise a man from the dead but Christ Jesus.

[12:08] And also, we also see the heart recognition of a truth here with a centurion who says, surely he is the Son of God. So there is a lot to be glorified and magnified here in that action that Christ is about to do.

So Jesus just declared these truths about how he is glorified, he will be glorified, the Father will be glorified. And so that is our point here is that the sacrificial love of Jesus Christ, it demonstrates and points to him being glorified, God being glorified.

So sacrificial love leads to glorification. So after declaring these truths, Christ transitions to have a conversation and address his brothers, okay? And he uses the term here in verse 33, little children, right?

Little children, yet a little while I will be with you. That little children term, it's certainly a term of endearment, isn't it? Right? I don't know if I've ever used that in my common speech.

I don't know if you have either. Have you ever told your subordinates something? Hey, little kids, little children, right? No, but it speaks to the authority of Christ, but it really speaks to his love and his family nature here.

[13:12] You guys, we are adopted and called sons and daughters of God because of the work that Christ has done. Amen? Like we get to be part of his family. That's radical.

We are undeserving. We literally here are Gentiles, undeserving of God's grace and blessing. And yet here we are able to call him our father. So there's a closeness here when Christ talked to him.

And he says these same words that he has said to the Jews quite a few times, at least twice.

One of those is in John 7 and one of those is in John 8. And so he says here, Now, context, like with all reading of scripture, is so critical here.

Think of the context, if you recall from our study of John, how he had said these words to the Jews. Well, to the Jews he had said, I'm leaving, you will seek me, but you will not find me.

Okay? He tells them, you will not find me. In fact, you will be dead in your sins. Harsh, heavy words. You will seek me and you will die because you are not looking for me.

[14:23] You're looking to kill me in the present. But also they will not see him unless Christ allows their eyes to be opened. Right? But look at the context here to his friends. We are now in that cleansed people group of the disciples.

Right? Judas has left and he's going to tell them in the same conversation, be not troubled. Right? He's telling them, be comforted. Do not be troubled. Also, I'm going.

I'm not going to. Instead of saying, you will not see me and you will die in your sins. Instead, I'm going to make a place for you. Is what Christ says in the same conversation with his people. And you will live because of me.

So, way different context. Way different coloring that he is telling this to his disciples. But these are a parting word. He's telling them right now where I'm about to go, which is the path of the cross, the path of death.

You cannot come with me. You will seek me. You will find me, though, when I bring you all to heaven with me. And you will find me when I send my help for the Holy Spirit. So there's greatness coming. But it's amazing to see how he's saying these words in a totally different coloring and fashion than he did to the Jews.

[15:25] So we're going to move now to verse 34. After he has said that he will be glorified, that you will seek me and you will not find me, my friends, my dear friends, my family, you will not find me.

But here he's about to give them now a command. And so this is point number two. He's about to show sacrificial love exemplified. He is the example. Let's read this together. Verse 34.

The interesting thing is, is this a new commandment?

Is this a new commandment? Well, he said it, so yes. But have we not seen this elsewhere in Scripture? We have. And in fact, they would have recognized this. His disciples would have recognized this.

That in Leviticus 19, he's actually inserting a phrase here where it says, You shall not take vengeance or bear grudge against the sons of your own people. So each other. But you shall love your neighbor as yourself.

[16:22] I am the Lord. Now he also had said this. This is in a parallel chapter. In Mark 12, he was saying to the Jews, in fact, there was a scribe who questioned, Lord, what are the greatest of the commandments?

What's the greatest commandment? And he goes, I tell you, they are to love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind and all your strength. And number two is to love your neighbor as yourself. So this commandment, Christ has certainly been teaching and preaching them.

So what's new here? What is the newness? In our translation, we get to have a colon there to kind of help us be reminded. It's right after that word, love your neighbor as yourself. I'm so sorry if that's a wrong word.

Right after, love one another. He says, Just as I have loved you, you are to love one another. So he is now saying, I am quantifying what love your neighbor looks like.

Me. It looks like me, Jesus Christ, who has not just recently washed your feet. Okay? I gave you example of the master becoming a servant and serving and loving on you, doing something that certainly would be beneath me.

[17:22] But I love you and I want you to be cleansed. But also in the future when I die and I am sacrificed as the perfect lamb for all eternity, that's how I want you to love. That's how I want you to love, guys.

Sacrificially. What a context, though. Because his brother just betrayed him. Judas just got up to leave to go start the motions of his betrayal.

And we're mere sentences or moments away from Peter's denial of him, aren't we? So he knows this. This is Christ Jesus who is omniscient because he is God. The Father and Jesus are one. He knows this. And yet in this context, he shows that amidst this betrayal, amidst this not love, he loves regardless. This is a sacrificial love that as an example overcomes and overarches and overwhelms betrayal and wrongdoing.

Why and how should we be looking at Christ then as our example for sacrificial love? How do we look at him? And when do we look at him like this then? This is an application question.

[18:27] Well, let's think of how we can apply this to our daily lives. One of them certainly is when we are amidst sinful temptation to recall what sacrificial love looked like to save me from what I'm about to possibly give in to.

See, there's a gap between thought and choice, isn't there, right? There's that gap where a decision can be made. And by the power of the Holy Spirit and by the power of his word and by the very power of Christ Jesus, we have the opportunity to say, get behind me, Satan.

Amen? We have the opportunity to lift up our shield of faith and say, no, no, no, no, no. I'm a servant of Christ Jesus. I choose not to do this, not on my own power, but by the power of the Holy Spirit who dwells in me.

If you are a believer this morning, you can say that. You can say, no, Satan. Hallelujah, guys, right? Like, we've been saved from a time and point in our lives where we were dead in our trespasses and sins and had nothing but the draw of sin and temptation to pull us down.

So in the midst of this, let's recall the example that Christ gave us of this sacrificial love. There's a really cool quote that I once heard from a pastor. His name is David Rosales. And he said, and this is for those sins that we may think are like peccadilloes, right?

[19:36] The little smith, the small things. Eh, it's a little white lie. Those little deals. This quote was really, it impacted me. I pray it's an encouragement to you. It says, Ouch.

That hits hard, doesn't it? It's like kissing the tip of the spear that was plunged into Jesus because we would therefore, as believers, knowingly choose to submit to temptation and not from sin.

So let us, therefore, have this example of sacrificial love in the forefront of our minds and even in the scriptures on the forefront of our tongue. All right, where else can we apply this in our lives? How about a reminder of the redemptive cost?

This was not a cheap transaction. This was not a, put it on my PayPal. This was Jesus Christ giving his very life for us. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Thank you, Lord, for giving us the example.

It's also a renewal of our mind because if he's doing this contextually amidst betrayal of his friends, how could we not do the same? How many in here have been wronged by a close friend?

[20:40] Maybe even by a family member? Maybe by someone that you married, right? Whether it was by speech or by act, it doesn't matter. We've legit all, we have all been there, have we not?

Can we then in that moment pray that God would remind us of the grace and forgiveness that he gives us in Christ Jesus by deed? It's by action. It's not just by word, by deed.

This is a love that endures beyond betrayal of friends. It's also neat to think, you guys, about love as an attribute of God.

So if God is love, do you realize that Christ Jesus is in fact the embodiment of that attribute? Now, I was talking to a brother about this, about some of the attributes that God has, right?

Omniscience, omnipresence, invisible, love, forgiveness. And it's neat to think of how so many, if not all of these, some of them can be a little tricky, but how many of all of these have an incarnate example in Jesus?

[21:38] He is the incarnate example, the very living example of God's attributes that we get to look on and just be amazed and in awe by. So, Christ is now emphasized to his brothers.

He goes, where I'm going, you cannot come, but I want you to follow this commandment, which is to love one another as I have loved you. All right? This is an outward love that the world is going to see. And so, how does he say that the world's going to see this?

This is our third point, that it is sacrificial love identified. Now, it is, of course, identified in Christ, but this is the identity that his disciples and we ought to have.

An identity of sacrificial love. Because look what Christ says here. This is the last verse. We're coming to our homestretch. He says, by this, by what? By this love for others. Right?

All people will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another. He's telling his disciples that they will literally be recognized and known as being disciples of Jesus by the way that they love, by the way that they move and act.

[22:44] It should be exemplifying the love of Christ and therefore is an identifier, an earmark, almost like a flag that they carry into battle every day. It identifies them as, that's a Christ follower.

How do I know that? I can tell by the way he is loving his brother and sister. Specifically, because, think about the context here, specifically amongst each other. So amongst the brothers, amongst the church family, the love for one another ought to exemplify and identify to the world that we are Christ followers.

But ultimately, that love manifests outward. Right? And we're going to talk a little bit about that. But, I got a question. Have we seen this in action? Have we seen the love of the disciples in action now? Do we see, what did they do with this word? I guess is my question. Did they accept this word and say, got it, and now I'm going to go and did they turn? Well, in the immediate, we know that there is fleeing, right, of Christ.

There's a fear in that moment. But let's look, let's fast forward. Let's skip ahead further in our amazing word of God in the book of Acts. Okay? And we won't read these specifically, but a lot of these are in Acts chapter 2.

[23:49] We see that the disciples now called the apostles and the other followers of Christ. They are having fellowship. They are breaking bread with one another. They are praying with each other. They sacrifice some of their possessions to meet the needs of those that they either know or don't know.

They're literally giving away their possessions to follow Christ and be like him. They gladly worship and eat together, it says. So it's not just eating with each other. It's with joy, right? We have a joy this morning, don't we?

And they had it too. They are constantly teaching and preaching both in the public and in the private about who Jesus Christ is. I mean, we know this. If you've been here at Shoreline for a bit, you recall that we had done a whole study in the book of Acts, right?

And in that book of Acts, there is a lot of persecution of Christians, right? One great example is the brother Stephen, right? Who, who, like Christ, loved and preached unto death. He was stoned for death, but he saw Jesus. Did he not? So that's a, for me, I mean, and you guys, that's a great reminder. We get to see Christ. That this love isn't just a, a, an attribute or a word, but it has a face and that face is Jesus.

[24:58] That's beautiful. That's beautiful. It says they also constantly provided for the needs of their widows. So there's that internal family support. And then they sent relief to the brethren who were on other places.

They recognized in love that in order to advance this gospel in love like Christ, I need to support my brothers and their families who are going to distant areas to preach the word just like we do here with Pastor Randy Matthews, right?

That's, that's one example of this. Now I was thinking about love recently because my son Dave wanted to watch his now favorite movie, The Lion King.

Great movie, right? Good movie. It's the, it's the story of Hamlet told by anthropomorphic lions. So there you go. All right? So it's a great, great story and we're watching it and my son Dave asks, he goes, hey, why, why did Mufasa die, dad?

Like why did, why did Scar push him, push him down the cliff? And I'm like, you know, you're, you're right, man. Why, why would he do that? I mean, they're brothers. Mufasa and Scar are brothers, right?

[25:57] They're family. And his, his word here, this is one of those out of the mouths of babes moments, right? His, his response was, he's in the backseat in the car. He goes, brothers are supposed to love each other. Brothers are supposed to love everyone.

And I remember being like, you, oh, sorry, all right, that's my bad, that's my bad. You, you, you have such a better understanding of what the love of Christ looks like amongst family and, and each other than I do, bro.

Like, thanks buddy. Like, that was such a cool reminder. You're right, brothers are supposed to love each other and brothers are supposed to love everyone and that is what Christ's saying here, isn't it? So how about today as our, as our body, as our church here at Shoreline, how do we apply this to our lives?

How do we take this sacrificial identity, sacrificial love identity and act upon it and, and apply it to our lives? How can we leave here today even and, and apply this? Well, I would consider this quote by John Calvin, okay, as an, as an encouragement, okay?

He said, whoever then desires to be a true disciple of Christ, so if you, if you want to be a true disciple, I really like this, and to be acknowledged by God, let him form and direct his whole life to love the brethren and let him pursue this object with diligence.

[27:08] So, along with Christ, Calvin is reminding us, if you want to be a real disciple of Christ, you got to show love and that's to your brothers and to your family and to your body that you are a part of and I think we can see this, it's going to funnel down to a bit of a, to personal from, from corporate but we do this at least at three levels, don't we?

At the corporate level, here we are gathered this morning to worship God through the preaching of his word, through the singing of songs and hymns just like scripture calls us to, to the breaking of bread which you'll partake in soon, to the fellowship, gosh, you know, we're getting on to 10 a.m. this time, right Mike? But, but what happens is it can be a little bit longer because there's so much beautiful fellowship happening, isn't there? There's asking, how are you doing, how can I be praying for you? I hear those conversations, I know you do too.

This is a beautiful body and that also then can go down to the next layer which here in this body looks like community groups, right? Smaller circles based on region or, or, or, well, that's pretty much it, it's mostly region but ultimately our love for Christ is gathering together as a community group where there is discipleship present, present, right?

Lifting each other up and carrying each other along, bearing each other's burdens too, right? There is literally the breaking of bread, enjoying of even the common graces. I can think of times where we're like, hey, we're all gonna get together and play pickleball.

[28:27] How is that Christ exalting? You know how it's Christ exalting? Because we love each other, man, and we care about each other's lives and it's not just hitting a ball back and forth, it's a, I wanna know more about you, I wanna be a deeper friend to you more than even a brother.

I wanna be family, family that cares about each other eternally like Christ does. That's what a community group ought to look like. And so if you're not a part of one, I pray this would be an encouragement, exhortation, whatever, check them out.

Get plugged in, man. I know that's the Christianese word, but get plugged in because that is where you truly will be growing as brothers and sisters in Christ. You're gonna hear and realize, I'm not the only one who perhaps maybe struggles with panic attacks and anxiety.

I'm not the only one who struggles financially. I'm not the only one who has been fighting incessantly with my spouse or my children. Nah, man, you've got brothers and sisters here right now going through those same struggles who want to help bury those burdens in the name of Christ Jesus.

Not in their own power, in the name and power of Jesus Christ. And so let's even take that one more smaller step down. So we've gone from the corporate to our community groups to discipleship and accountability with your brother and sister.

[29:32] Do you love your brother? Do you love your sister? Then grow in accountability. Grow in sanctification together. The idea that we are being formed and shaped like clay in the hand of the potter to be more like Christ Jesus.

So if you're not, I would encourage you, I pray that you have someone in your life that perhaps, I mean, there's a model that's I think used by Tim Keller, maybe it was, about that. Look in your life to have three types of people.

A Paul who is feeding into you and leading you and guiding you as a mentor and as an older brother or sister in Christ. Have a Timothy, someone that you're doing the same thing in. Someone that you are imparting your wisdom, your testimony.

You're maybe studying scripture together. And then the third one is a Barnabas. Someone who is encouraging you and saying, yeah brother, how was your quiet time this morning, man? How's scripture memory going? And keep you accountable.

This is twofold though. You ought to be doing the same to someone else as well. But those are some specific ways that we could be demonstrating this love here directly at Shoreline. But I want to remind you and know this, that sacrificial love is going to have to endure when you're wronged.

[30:37] So when you are wronged, which can happen, I remember a pastor joking saying like, well the church is built up of sheep, man, but sheep can bite. That's right. We're all sinners. We're all finite fallible sinners who fall short of the glory of God and can hurt each other even when we don't mean to, right?

So keep that in mind. If you truly want to be a disciple of Christ like Calvin's encouraging us, know that you're going to have to swallow pride, overcome wounding and hurts, and instead cast them at the cross, at the feet of Jesus Christ and say, no man, I'm okay.

Maybe we talk about that, but I'm not going to allow that to put a wedge between our relationship and ultimately between me and Christ. I'm not going to let that happen. Not in my power, and who's? The power of the Holy Spirit. Right?

So this outward love that Christ has now set, he's taken it from glorifying him to him saying, I give you a new commandment, I'm the example of that love, to now that example is going to be identified in you.

This outward love, this outward manifestation of God's love for the people has literally been his plan for all along, has it not? If we look through the Old Testament, we see that the purpose of Israel was to be a blessing to the nations.

[31:48] And it's not until we go and read the words of the prophets do we realize that God's plan through all of this was that he was going to send one who would ultimately and truly do that, the suffering servant, the son of man, Christ Jesus.

Man's purpose, according to Isaiah, is for the glory of God. And if we look in parallel with that in the prophets of like Micah and Zechariah, it's also to demonstrate love and mercy.

Right? I think of Micah, do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God. I cannot do that if I am not loving my brother. I cannot do that if I am not walking, if I'm not walking humbly with my God, how can I love another?

Because I am haughty and I am my own God. So these are just practical reminders of how this identity in Christ, which is the earmark, is love, be careful and mindful of what that will have to truly look like.

So, this is a call to us this morning. How can we love one another more? I gave some examples of how we do that actively, but how can you go deeper this morning?

[32:52] Because this is a radical concept that Christ gives. To love someone so much that it would be you're willing to die for them. Right? We're reminded in Ephesians 2 that there is a unity of mind and a unity of body amongst the believers.

So we ought to be seeking that, seeking unity, not for unity's sake, but for the glory of Christ and for the betterment of each other and the glory of God. But we're also called to put on love.

So let's consider this verse. I'm going to read this from Colossians 3, 12 through 14. Paul says, Put on then as God's chosen ones holy and beloved compassionate hearts.

Wow. That's what we're told to put on right there in terms of a heart is have a compassionate heart. Kindness, humility, meekness, patience. These are the fruit of the Spirit, are they not? Bearing with one another and if one of you has a complaint against another, forgiving each other as the Lord has forgiven you.

So you must also forgive. And above all these, put on love which binds everything together in perfect harmony. I have not done this. I don't know if you have.

[34:00] Think of love as a garment to put on. Today's a big sports game, isn't it? I've heard there's some game today, right? Some cool bowl, ultra bowl, super bowl. All right.

How do the teams identify? How do you know who's on what team? Their jersey, right? You know from their jersey, oh, it's green and yellow. Go, pack, go. So that's, sorry Mike, I had to do it, man. No, I did not have to do that.

But the point is, you identify by their jersey color, by their colors. There's some sort of form of identity in sports and in other ways, right? What if our jersey was love? What if our jersey in life, in the workplace, it may sound corny, but in a truthful way, Paul is calling us to put on love, be identified by, hey man, I admire your love this morning, man.

Because the world is watching. The world is seeing how we as a body are exercising and demonstrating love to each other. They are, aren't they? Can you maybe perhaps think of times where an unbelieving person has either seen by your witness or a witness of someone else and that has brought them to a place that only the Lord God could bring them?

Right? Maybe that's to a place of salvation. Praise God. That is like the most beautiful thing we could rejoice in. But perhaps another is even having a slight, the door has been cracked open to, I'd like to know more about who's this Jesus you're talking about?

[35:13] Right? Who's this Holy Spirit? Man, you seem to have this joy and this fire. Where's that coming from? And you get that opportunity to share. It comes from the love of Jesus Christ. It is founded in Christ Jesus.

Let me tell you, let me tell you. So put on that love. All right? Church, this is the closing thought and challenge. Let's go deeper. Let's go deeper. Let's not be accepting of where we're at right now this morning.

Okay? And you may be in a wonderful, beautiful place because God has put you there. Let's go even deeper. Are we putting on that sacrificial love as a garment? Are we waking up in the morning in addition to our socks and shirt and shoes?

Are we putting on the love that is sacrificial and identified in Christ? Are we loving our brother and sister this morning in spite of being wronged? I pray with love that this brings conviction to each and every one of us.

If we're in a place where we have a wrong between ourselves and our brother, may we be convicted by that Lord and lead us into forgiveness and in love. I like that reminder in that

Colossians.

[36:12] Have you forgiven just as Christ has forgiven you? Just like that debtor was forgiven his debts and then didn't forgive the one who owed him debts? We don't want to be that guy. Father, we do not want to be like that.

Teach us to love our enemy and to love our brother and sister. Finally, have we looked upon this sacrificial example of love and asked God, search me, know me, try me, cleanse me, Lord, and even renew my mind to be conformed to yours, Lord, not my own.

Is that your prayer this morning, guys? I hope it is. I hope this morning go home, go into your circles and realize there are areas that I can be loving more. I can be giving more. I can be sharing more. I can be praying more. That's a big one. Our church has emphasized a whole message in the beginning of this year on prayer. Let's do that. Get on those knees, right? And God, can you put people on our hearts that we can be serving?

Can we be in some way, shape, or form washing their feet? You know what that looks like or God will show you and demonstrate to you what those may look like. But be in prayer and asking for that because he certainly will bring it.

[37:16] He's a God who hears our prayers and answers them in his perfect will. So let's conclude this morning. I'm going to pray for us and my final prayer here is see that progressive flow in these verses.

All pointing to Jesus Christ. One is that we would stand in awe in the glory of his sacrificial love. His love. Not ours. His love. That we would look to Christ as our example of that love and then we would put on those garments of love and be identified to the world as little Christ, as disciples of the perfect God.

Let's pray. Praise you, Jesus. This morning, Lord, we have looked at five short verses, God, but yet there's so much to be unpacked there.

Thank you that you have been glorified. You will be glorified. But Father, may you continue to be glorified in our lives. Would the earmark of Shoreline Community Bible Church be that of love for one another?

A love that is rooted in the example of Jesus Christ and the person and the work of Jesus Christ. Father, cleanse our hearts. Convict us. Convict us of our sin, God.

[38:34] That we may be swift to bow our knee in confession. And swift in our desire to forgive one another just as you have forgiven us. To not let wrongdoings keep us separated from our brothers and sisters and ultimately from you.

And Lord Jesus, I pray if there's anyone here this morning who has not come to a saving faith in you, Lord Jesus Christ, would they feel comfortable to come up here and meet with myself, Pastor Mike, one of the elders here, a deacon, anyone who is a professing believer and get to know the greatest news they could ever be told.

Jesus, thank you for modeling that for us, for loving us as an obedient sheep brought to the slaughter and for being a sacrifice for many. May your name be glorified.

We pray this in the name of Christ Jesus. Amen.