

Have you ever experienced a betrayal? Few things are as painful.
How about a denial? Jesus went through both at the same time. And He did not stop loving people.

Jesus knows all things that are in our hearts, and He loves us anyway.

In John 1-11 the author, the Apostle John, has been showing us who Jesus is.

He is God, Word of God, the Light of the World, the Son of God, the Messiah, the Son of Man.

He is “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.” (John 1:29)

Jesus is the one who gives living water and the one who grants eternal life.

Jesus is the one who has come from heaven and is going back to heaven.

Jesus is the one who shows us God the Father, the one who existed before Abraham.

Jesus taught with authority. He healed people and walked on the water.

Jesus is the Bread of Life, the Door of the Sheep, the Good Shepherd.

Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life, and He raised Lazarus from the grave.

Then in John 12 Jesus makes a turn toward the Cross.

He comes to Bethany and is anointed by Mary in preparation for His death.

After this He enters Jerusalem and begins speaking of His coming Crucifixion.

Now, in John 13, Jesus begins His final teaching with His disciples before His death.

In John 13-17 we read the Upper Room Discourse, Jesus teaching His disciples before Gethsemane.

This is the longest and most intimate of all Jesus’ sermons recorded in the gospels.

It begins with an object lesson and ends with the High Priestly Prayer, all of chapter 17.

The object lesson was Jesus washing His disciples’ feet.

And right away we learn Jesus’ motive in His instruction. Love. (John 13:1)

Jesus knows what is coming and He loved these disciples of His.

In John 13:1 we are reminded that “His hour had come.”

This is the “hour” that Jesus had been planning and thinking about ever since John 2:4.

In **John 7:30** His enemies wanted to arrest Him. Again in **John 8:20**.

In **John 12:23-27** Jesus is thinking about this hour that is now upon Him.

Jesus, at the beginning of chapter 13 knows that He is about 20 hours from His brutal execution.

He is having, with His disciples, His last meal. He will not sleep again.

What is on His mind as He is sharing this supper with His disciples? How much He loves them. (John 13:1)

What a contrast then are the actions of Judas at this moment. (vs. 2)

Jesus is motivated by love; Judas by selfishness, manipulation, greed, and anger. The devil is influencing him.

It is love that moves Jesus to get up from the table and take the place of a servant.

It is because Jesus has come from the Father and is going back to the Father that He does what He does.

He knows that God is in complete control and He wants His disciples to learn to love and serve one another.

So Jesus gets up, puts His robe aside, and gets a towel and basin, and washes their feet.

The disciples are speechless. They do not know what to do.

Until Peter speaks. Then it is clear that they do not really understand the lesson.

Jesus wants those who follow Him to serve one another. He wants us to serve one another.

This is because serving is an expression of love, and we are supposed to love one another.

Then Jesus says what we read in **John 13:12-20**.

Jesus is prescribing for His disciples and through them to us, an ethic. It is a way of living. Loving service. It is the Jesus way of living. And we are to live His way in this world that He has made.

But here, Jesus begins thinking of the person who is there who is not learning from Him at all.

He looks like a disciple. He is acting like a disciple. But he is not really a disciple.

After the first of a series of deep and meaningful lessons, there is one who is as far from serving out of love.

This person is thinking of his own agenda. He is not thinking about what Jesus wants. He is Judas.

And Jesus knows everything that is going on in his head and heart.

I. Jesus gives Judas over to Satan.

John 13:21-30

Just because He knew all about it beforehand, does not make it any easier. (vs. 21)

“He became troubled in spirit.” = in His innermost part, grief, foreboding, pain; and He knew every detail of it all.

What a mercy it is that, when we go through hardship and pain, we don’t know the future.

How would it be for you if the Lord told you when and how you were going to die?

How would it be to know which friends were going to turn on you and hurt you.

I imagine that I would think about little else. It would ruin life to know the day of my death.

It is enough for me to know that God knows and that I can trust Him.

Now Jesus, thinking about Judas is troubled in His spirit. This is deeply painful for Him.

How is it that John would have known that Jesus felt this way? He saw it. Jesus’ anguish was visible.

Worse, instead of compassion and empathy from His disciples, Jesus finds them all thinking about themselves.

Rather than being compassionate, they were curious!

Would it not be depressing if, when you are hurting, your best friends simply want to know it’s not their fault?

Not only this, but there is this quiet discussion at the table, hand gestures.

Peter is trying to get John to ask Jesus to tell them who it is. Why? We don’t know.

Imagine the loneliness of Jesus in this moment, and throughout the following 24 hours.

Even though the other disciples had no idea what was going on.

And why did Jesus go through with it all? Maybe this is the most important consideration.

Because He loves you. He loves me.

The reason He entered this world and went to the cross was because of this love.

For, I have a heart just like Judas, and not at all like Jesus, and because of this I deserve death and hell.

He came to take away my sin by paying my debt on the cross, so that my heart could be changed.

In this moment, Judas’ heart would remain unchanged. In fact, Jesus sent him off to do his dirty deed.

We read in verse 27, “Satan entered into him.” And out into the night he went to betray Jesus.

Don’t think for a moment that Judas did not have a choice. He did. He had made his choice.

He had his idea about what Jesus should do and Jesus wasn’t doing it, and so Judas had taken Satan’s side.

Whan, you turn away from Jesus and do your own thing you open yourself up to Satan.

Nothing could be worse for Judas.

II. Jesus gives His disciples a “new commandment.”

John 13:31-35

Now Jesus turns and teaches those who are left, the remaining 11 disciples.

Jesus tells them of the glory of God about to be revealed.

vss. 31-32 Do you notice a repeated word in these two verses?

“glorified” = to exalt and honor, praise, to make more visible, to make seem better, larger.

“Now” (vs. 31) = Jesus is looking ahead 48 hours. The moment is the moment of His suffering and sacrifice.

The last event that had to happen in order for God’s plan to work has happened. Judas has left to betray Jesus.

Jesus will die on the cross. This is the “Now.” This is the event about to take place.

“Now is the Son of Man glorified” = At the cross we see Jesus more clearly than we do anywhere else.

At the Cross we see Jesus: His purpose, atonement, His perfect obedience, His sacrificial love.

“and God is glorified in Him” = In Jesus we see God. In Jesus we see the love of God. John 1:14, 18

At the Cross God is perfectly righteous and just and perfectly gracious and merciful.

“God will also glorify Him in Himself.” = There is a reflexive nature to the glorification.

The disciples will see this immediately. At the cross.

The love of Jesus. The love of the Father. The love of the Father in Jesus.

So, then, in verse 33 Jesus turns His disciples’ attention directly to the fact that He is going to die.

Now He is thinking of them and their need to be prepared for His absence.

And what do they need? Direction. They need to know what to do. So He tells them.

vss. 34-35 Jesus gives His disciples “a new commandment.” (vs. 34-35)

It is new, not because no one had ever heard such a thing.

It is new because of the new standard. Love one another like Jesus loves you.

And this is not an isolated command; it is a great theme of the New Testament.

Many Christians are surprised by this teaching, because it is different from “love everyone.”

Now, we do need to love everyone, that is true. Love our enemies? Yes. The world? Indeed, as God does.

This is not revolutionary or even interesting. It is generally agreed upon and then generally ignored.

We live in a world where many people tell us to love everyone and then they do nothing of the sort.

This command to love has an important specificity to it. This is a command to love others who follow Jesus.

We find this command repeated throughout the New Testament. Shall we do a quick survey?

John 15:12, 17

Rom. 12:10

Gal. 5:13

Eph. 4:2-3

1 Thess. 3:12 See the order of priority?

1 Thess. 4:9

1 Thess. 5:12-13 So, yes you should love your pastor. God commands me to love you as well.

Heb. 10:24-25 Here we see some of the goals that love has... one Christian for another.

1 Peter 1:22

1 Peter 4:8

1 John 3:11, 23

1 John 4:7-8 Learn the song!

1 John 4:11-12 This gets us to the next point in our text this morning.

There is, in the command given, an example of what it ought to look like.

Love one another in the same way that Jesus loves you.

We love “as Jesus loved” = twofold: because He has loved us... and in the way that He has loved us.

We love in the way that He loves us: sacrificially. **1 John 3:16-18** **1 Cor. 13:4-7**

We love because He loves us: No one naturally loves others. Everyone naturally loves themselves.

This love is passionately others focused. Not I want you. But I want your best, the best for you, not me.

So love is always demonstrated in action. A person who wants the best for himself acts upon that.

A person who wants the best for another person acts upon that!

But how are you and I supposed to live like that?

Jesus takes away our selfishness, replaces it with a new person, and gives us an example to follow.

You have to be a follower of Jesus in order to live this way.

You need to be filled with the Spirit of God in order to live this way.

You must trust in God’s sovereign ability to care for you in order to care sacrificially for others.

And guess what will happen as you learn to love this way?

You see, the command has a rationale given: Love one another so that everyone will know that you follow Jesus.

It is instructive that Jesus does not say that people will know you are His disciples by your love for them.

He says, “by your love for one another.” He is speaking of Christians loving Christians.

Francis Schaeffer calls this “the mark of a Christian.” Love for one another.

A word about love before we move on.

Sometimes people can be mean, even cruel to others and call it love. They might insist that this is “tough love.”

Indeed, there may be times when such tough love is needed.

A father might say to a son, “I love you, but you need to shape up.”

A pastor might say to a person in the congregation, “I love you, but you must obey Jesus.”

But for the most part we are not in these roles with others. Love must look like love.

Do not try to manipulate others or control others and call it love. Do not try to be God in the lives of others.

Love treats others as brothers and sisters in God’s family. Let God be God.

III. Jesus gives Peter a warning.

John 13:36-38

Has Peter been listening? It seems that his hearing is somewhat selective.

For some reason, Peter is still stuck on Jesus talking about leaving. So he asks Jesus the obvious question. (vs. 36)

Peter still has not understood. Jesus is going to die. Jesus has been planning on dying.

Here we are 2,000 years later. Jesus has died and risen and ascended to the right hand of the Father.

Jesus has gone ahead of us to open the way to heaven so that we can live there.

In Colossians 1:18 (also Revelation 1:5) Jesus is called the “firstborn from the dead.”

His plan was always that we would follow Him. Romans 8:28-29

And, so, He is called our “pioneer” our “forerunner.” Hebrews 6:17-20

He has explored where we will someday live.

Now, in this short conversation with Peter, we see an interesting display of contrast.

Jesus is showing us the Father’s love, His own love.

He is leading us into towering timeless truth. An understanding of real love.

Peter isn’t there... at all.

1. He fixates upon the least important thing that Jesus has said. “Where are you going?”

2. Peter does not even understand that! Jesus is speaking of the grave.

3. Peter wants to express loyalty, but ends up speaking nonsense. “I will lay down my life for you.”

Actually, it is Jesus who will lay down His life for Peter.

4. Jesus exposes Peter’s horrible weakness. “You will deny Me three times.”

You see, Peter is as strong-minded and weak-willed as we are.

He has great intentions and poor follow-through. And Jesus knows it.

Jesus knows you. One might find that embarrassing. I find it comforting.

You see, still Jesus loves Peter. Jesus will lay down His life for Peter. Jesus will show Peter what love is.

See, Peter had nothing to offer Jesus but weakness.

There was no chance that Peter was going to save Jesus, as much as Peter though he might.

Jesus knew all this, and loved Peter still.

And then, as if to complete the lesson, Jesus meets Peter again on this issue. **John 21:15-17**

Three times the question. Jesus is letting Peter make up for three denials. Peter is restored.

Peter’s life would be forever changed: courageous, humble, loving.

See, love is action. Jesus set the example. Peter figured it out. We can as well.

Look around. These are people God has given you to love.