

Series: John

Title: As I Have Loved You

Text: Jn 13: 33-35

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Knowing the great trouble that was coming, our Lord began preparing his disciples, first, by telling them that the troubling things they would soon see would be the Son of Man being glorified and God glorified in him.

And knowing how troubled they would be when they saw him crucified, he prepares them by declaring that he is going where they cannot now come.

John 13: 33: Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.

Knowing the trouble they themselves would soon be in—the doubts they would have toward one another and even doubting the Lord and the things he had spoken—he prepares them by giving them a new commandment they would need.

John 13: 34: A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35: By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

This congregation has been known for loving one another. Each time pastors visit, they have remarked to me of the love we have had to one another. The apostles had known the same for three and a half years as the Lord walked among them.

But God always proves the faith and love he has given. When Christ our Shepherd would be smitten the sheep would be scattered. They were about to suffer many things. Their faith would be tested like gold proven in the fire. It would be approved as the genuine gift of God's grace because they would continue in faith and love by Christ's intercession and his all-sufficient grace.

It would be manifest genuine by Christ sustaining in them the faith and love he had created in them. Christ told Peter, "Satan hast desired thee that he might sift thee as wheat. But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." The same is true of God-given love. Christ proved that their faith and love was really of him by Christ sustaining it in them by his intercession and preserving grace.

"Charity never faileth"—not because his saints never fail. For a time, love appeared to have failed when Peter denied the Lord and went back to his former occupation. For a time, love appeared to have failed when Abraham and Lot parted—when Lot chose the well-watered plains of Sodom over Bethel and Abraham and the brethren that were with him. Love appeared to fail when Paul and Barnabas parted ways for a time. Likewise, it may appear to have failed with any of God's saints for a time.

2 Corinthians 3:5: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency *is* of God;

So the good news is "charity never faileth" because Christ never fails. "He shall not fail till he hath set judgment in the earth" The faith and love Christ creates in our new man never fails because Christ never fails to sustain faith and love in the heart of his disciples by his intercession and grace. The one way the faith and love in Peter and the disciples did not fail is: Christ said, "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." Using king Cyrus as a type of Christ, God said of Christ the Son of Man,

Isaiah 44:28...*He is* my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.

Philippians 1: 6: Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ:

Philippians 2:13: For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.

Hebrews 13:21: Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

John 13: 34: A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35: By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

THIS IS A NEW COMMANDMENT

New because it is given by the Lord Jesus our Head, the Captain of our salvation, the Author and Finisher of faith—*"A new commandment I give unto you."* This is the commandment of our Lord, our King—to whom we have been made willing bond-servants, who we want to please. This is the commandment of our Head who has united us with him in his body and he with us in inseparable union.

New because it is written on the heart when born again of the Spirit of God: faith and love are of God, of the Spirit, created in those born from above.

1 John 4: 7: Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. 8: He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

1 John 4: 15: Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. 16: And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him 21: And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also. 5: 1: Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.

This is love created and given by God, sustained or kept renewed by God and increased by God.

2 Timothy 1:7: For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

1 Thessalonians 3: 12: And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all *men*, even as we *do* toward you:

Our Lord teaches us to love all men—*love thy neighbor as thyself*. But our Lord is speaking here of *brotherly love*—brethren born of the same holy Spirit. All men are naturally brothers in that we are all of the same father Adam—God made us of one blood—so we are to love all men. But being born of God, each one of us is a member in particular of the body of Christ—Christ is our Head and we are the body—that means our brethren are members of our own body.

1 Corinthians 12: 26: And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. 27: Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

Christ did not love us as male or female, rich or poor, Jew or Gentile—he loved us with *brotherly love*—he loved us as God's elect—*as the Firstborn among many brethren—among his own brothers and sisters in his own house over which God made him the Head and Savior and Overseer*.

Brethren, we are each members of the same heavenly family—the family of God, the household of God. We will dwell together in heaven for eternity. Therefore, we are to:

Romans 12: 10: Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

“Brotherly love” is a spirit the exercises good will and confidence and mutual helpfulness to one another. Christ said, *“Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves.”* We are a little flock of sheep in the midst of ravening wolves. The world will criticize us, call us fanatics for the gospel, call us too straight,

uncompromising. Then turn around and call us hypocrites and sinners and unfaithful and everything else. Spurgeon said, “*There are plenty to find fault—but let it be the enemy rather than you who belong to the same family.*” But the enemy only makes the sheep huddle more closely together, to love one another stronger and deeper, trusting our great Shepherd.

1 John 3: 13: Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. 14: We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not *his* brother abideth in death.

THE NEW PATTERN

John 13: 34: A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another

This commandment is new because we have a new pattern to follow. Moses gave the law at Sinai which said,

Leviticus 19: 18: Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I *am* the LORD.

The Lord Jesus gives this new commandment to his people and it is “*as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.*”

How has Christ loved his people? How has Christ loved us? How has Christ loved you who are born of him?

Christ loved us by preferring our good over his own—“*he made himself of no reputation*” “*He took on him the form of a servant*” to serve God as our representative to put away our sin and create us anew in his righteousness; to purify our hearts to believe him and love him and love one another who are born through the same precious blood by the same Holy Spirit.

He loved us when we could give him nothing—we could add nothing to him—we had nothing to give and could give nothing to him—we were unworthy of his love—yet he loved us when we did not even believe him—even now when we do not believe him. Peter, as a believer, flat out did not believe Christ when the Lord told him he would deny him three times. John the Baptist sent two disciples to Christ, “And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?” (Mt 11: 3). What about Philip? “Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?” (Jn 14: 8-9) Thomas declared he would not believe. The Lord said, “Thomas, reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing” (Jn 20: 27).

How has Christ loved us? With constant pity and patience and grace. At Lazarus tomb, he witnessed their sorrow, their unbelief, their hearts were so troubled, our Lord Jesus “wept.” When his disciples said and did wrong things—when they argued over who would be the greatest—when they fell asleep in the garden—when they denied him and fled—he loved them, loved them, loved them and was gracious to them and came and restored them.

Think of this. You and I may know of one another’s past, outward sins. But he knew not only knew the outward sin, he knew every sin of their heart. John would have called down fire from heaven upon the Samaritans who rejected them. Christ said, “Ye know not what spirit you are of” (Lu 9: 55). But he also knew the sins they would commit in the next hour and tomorrow—“And having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.”

Psalm 103: 13: Like as a father pitieth *his* children, *so* the LORD pitieth them that fear him. 14: For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we *are* dust.

Brethren, there is no greater gift, short of Christ himself, than brethren: to be able to share each other’s mutual woes, to care for one another. But there will always be much to overlook and to bear; offenses will come. But remember how Christ loved us—not because we could give him something—but even when we

don't love him as we ought—even in our unworthiness. Look for the good in brethren rather than faults—that will be better for our own heart.

Philippians 4:8: Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.

Our Savior loved us so much that he sacrificed himself. He loved us to the point that he gave his own body to be broken and his own blood to be shed for you who are his.

Ephesians 5:2: And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

This is greatest love with the preeminent degree of self-sacrifice. We would have never understood this love by the law of Sinai. This is the love of Christ which constrains us to love him and our brethren. When the law found us guilty—Christ said, “Take me and let these go free. Pour out wrath on me—that my brethren might be righteous, justified, before the judgment seat of holy God.” You will bear reproach—the devil will slander you, his seed will slander you, Christ said, “I’ll bear his bondage that I might deliver them from it.” You will bear the shameful burden of their sin—he said, “I’ll bear the shame so they can have my righteousness and be accepted of God.” You will bear the full force of God’s wrath unto death—he said, “Pierce me and give them life.”

He commands us love one another “*as I have loved you.*” He condescended to our feet on the cross—from the highest height to the lowest low—and washed us clean in his own life’s blood. He gave up ALL he had for his people—heavens glory. He gave up ALL the members of his body. He gave HIS SOUL, his entire nature, as an offering for sin that he might save his people.

1 John 3: 16 Hereby perceive we the love of *God*, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren.

By his Spirit, God’s people are a loving, giving, self-sacrificing people. It amazed me how many offerings our sister churches sent us when we found this building. No fan fare—not seeking credit—they just quietly, cheerfully gave of themselves and did what they could. When brother Tom Harding’s house flooded; recently when brother Larry’s house flooded, brethren showed up in crews. One crew would leave and another showed up; no one asked—no one coerced the other. The Lord’s people individually show up because they are constrained by the love of Christ toward us so each does what they can for brethren they love. Religion has to rally everyone together. Someone came to one of the preachers and said, “I think the church should be doing such and such.” The pastor said, “Aren’t you the church? Then do it.”

NEW WAY OF KNOWING DISCIPLES

John 13: 35: By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

This commandment is new because this is the new way in which all shall know we are Christ’s disciples. This is not to make us inspect one another. But it is how your brethren will know you are born of God and it is how the outside world will know—“*if ye have love one to another.*”

1 John 3: 14: We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not *his* brother abideth in death. 15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

Illustration: “Never a ripple”

None can create this love but our *Savior who is love*. Christ is the only one who can change hatred into love and turn warring sinners into peacemakers. His love toward us is irresistible: we love him because he first loved us. And this is so, “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.” (1 Jn 5: 1) Our Lord said, “By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” Love is the eternal rule. When faith and hope are no longer needed, in glory we shall still love one another. **Amen!**