

Maundy Thursday ~ Thursday, April 13, 2017

A New Commandment

John 13:1-17; 31-35

The disciples had their feet washed prior to an evening meal countless times before—it was a \_\_\_\_\_ shown to guests whenever they entered a house.

However, this task was usually delegated to a household \_\_\_\_\_. For the master to wash the servant's feet was an unprecedented \_\_\_\_\_ of custom. This would be Jesus' last, and perhaps, most important lesson for them—a \_\_\_\_\_ lesson about love and servanthood.

Love is a very \_\_\_\_\_ word in our modern culture—it means different things to different people.

Our world has created a kind of 'pseudo love' that consists of nothing more than \_\_\_\_\_ and feelings. However, when love is treated like something we feel, we lose the \_\_\_\_\_ of what it really is. It becomes nothing more than \_\_\_\_\_—and can be applied to whatever, whoever, whenever, wherever, and however we please—depending how we're feeling.

When we do this, we make love fickle, \_\_\_\_\_ and powerless—and it becomes nothing more than warm fuzzies and flowery talk.

Jesus give them a \_\_\_\_\_ expression of love in action.

“So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.” (John 13: 34-35)

### 3 POINTS ABOUT LOVE

**Point #1. Love is not an \_\_\_\_\_.**

“A new command I give you: Love one another.” (John 13:34)

Jesus had taught His disciples about \_\_\_\_\_ before—He taught them about their heavenly \_\_\_\_\_ love and about the importance of loving God and their \_\_\_\_\_ as themselves. He even taught them to love their \_\_\_\_\_!

This is the first time He explicitly \_\_\_\_\_ them to love one another.

I suspect Jesus gave them this new commandment because He recognized an innate \_\_\_\_\_ within them, and without \_\_\_\_\_ commanding them to love one another, there existed the real possibility that this essential element of Christian community would be \_\_\_\_\_.

We are much better at, and more apt, to deal with love as a \_\_\_\_\_ or an \_\_\_\_\_ concept, rather than as a \_\_\_\_\_. It easier for us to talk \_\_\_\_\_ love, rather than to \_\_\_\_\_ it. The problem with this is, we don't comprehend what love \_\_\_\_\_ by what it \_\_\_\_\_; rather we recognize what love \_\_\_\_\_ by what it \_\_\_\_\_.

To know about love in our heads takes only \_\_\_\_\_, but to know love in our hearts requires \_\_\_\_\_.

Sometimes it's a lot easier to \_\_\_\_\_ the talk than to walk the \_\_\_\_\_. Like the people in the churches that Paul was writing to, we have a tendency to focus on the things that \_\_\_\_\_ us, instead of the things that \_\_\_\_\_ us.

Although loving one another isn't the \_\_\_\_\_ thing to do, it's the \_\_\_\_\_ thing to do because God's kingdom is a kingdom of love—love is not an \_\_\_\_\_.

**Can the same be said about the Church today?**

**How well do you love your brothers and sisters in this church?**

**Point #2. The \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of love.**

“As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” (John 13:34)

#### • **The Source of Love**

Although not explicitly stated here, it's evident that \_\_\_\_\_ is the source of our love.

It's on the basis of Jesus' love for us, that we're \_\_\_\_\_ and enabled to love one another. All too often we fail in our efforts to love one another because we try to do it in our own \_\_\_\_\_ and it becomes this tremendous \_\_\_\_\_.

We can't \_\_\_\_\_ what we don't \_\_\_\_\_. Before we overcome \_\_\_\_\_ love, we must be overcome \_\_\_\_\_ love—we must be \_\_\_\_\_ of God's love for us.

#### • **The Measure of Love**

We're to love one another to the \_\_\_\_\_ degree as Jesus loves us.

Jesus assumed the role of a \_\_\_\_\_ and washed their feet. Love, as Jesus expressed it, was always demonstrated through \_\_\_\_\_ to others.

• **Service**

“Love has hands to help others. It has feet to hasten to the poor and needy. It has eyes to see the misery and want. It has ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of men. This is what love looks like.” (Augustine)

True Christian love is essentially an \_\_\_\_\_. It is primarily about what we \_\_\_\_\_ and not just what we \_\_\_\_\_.

“Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.” (1 Corinthians 13:1-4-7)

The call to love is a \_\_\_\_\_ calling—he uses very \_\_\_\_\_ words here to describe what true love is and leaves very little room for feeling or \_\_\_\_\_.

To love means stepping out of our \_\_\_\_\_ and entering into the life of another—it involves becoming \_\_\_\_\_; it seeks the highest \_\_\_\_\_ of the other.

“The fruit of faith is love and the fruit of love is service.” (Mother Theresa)

**What is the fruit in your life? How do you practically demonstrate your love for others? How do you serve?**

• **Sacrifice**

Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ it all—His entire \_\_\_\_\_—for those He loved.

Loving others is going to \_\_\_\_\_ us something—it may be \_\_\_\_\_, money, comfort, \_\_\_\_\_.

The kind of love that Jesus calls us to can get \_\_\_\_\_ and there is a good chance that our love for one another won't be \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.

However, we can't \_\_\_\_\_ love without offering ourselves \_\_\_\_\_.

“To sacrifice something is to make it holy by giving it away for love.” (Frederick Buechner)

**What have you sacrificed for the love of others?**

**How is that sacrifice lived out in this community?**

**Point #3. The \_\_\_\_\_ of love.**

“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:35)

The kind of love we're talking about is \_\_\_\_\_! It has a \_\_\_\_\_ of it's own.

When we choose to \_\_\_\_\_ this new commandment—when we start loving each other as we're called—the world will take \_\_\_\_\_ and be \_\_\_\_\_, not to us, but to \_\_\_\_\_.

It doesn't matter what we \_\_\_\_\_; what we preach; or what the \_\_\_\_\_ says, if we fail to live it out in our lives—if people fail to see us walking the walk—and they won't \_\_\_\_\_.

“You may be the only gospel your neighbour ever reads.” (St. Francis of Assisi)

**What gospel are you preaching in your life?**

Love is \_\_\_\_\_—it spreads—it brings \_\_\_\_\_ and life; unity and \_\_\_\_\_. Love is the central characteristic of what it means to be the \_\_\_\_\_.

“Love is the identifying mark of Christianity. In a world of hate, envy, and anger, love sticks out like a healthy thumb. When anyone walks away from an encounter with us, that person should remember our love, not our convictions.” (Anonymous)

**What would your family, friends, and neighbours say about you?**

**What would people say about this church?**

