

Obeying the New Commandment

by Sandeep Poonen

This sermon delves into the new commandment Jesus gave to his disciples in John 13, emphasizing the importance of loving one another as Jesus loved us. It explores the depth of Jesus' love, demonstrated by washing the feet of those who would betray and desert Him, challenging listeners to examine their hearts towards those who have hurt them. The sermon highlights the need to go beyond surface-level actions to cultivate a heart of love towards others, especially in difficult relationships, mirroring Jesus' sacrificial love.

Scripture: John 13:34, John 15:9, 1 John 3:23, 1 John 4:10, Romans 5:8, Isaiah 44:3, John 7:37

Topics: "Unconditional Love", "Forgiveness in Relationships"

Description

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Transcript

It's good to be here with you. I wanted to share something that the Lord has been laying on my heart. From John chapter 13, I have been struck by the new commandment that Jesus gave to his disciples as he was leaving the earth.

John 13 verse 34, he gives us the new commandment. We know he had told the scribes and the Pharisees that all of the law and the prophets hung on to commandments. Love the Lord your God with everything you have and love your neighbor as yourself.

But to his disciples, as he's thinking of leaving, he gives a new commandment, which is a new commandment that I give to you, John 13 34, that you love one another even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. So what I've noticed first is that there are two parts to this commandment. Just like when the Pharisees and the scribes asked Jesus, what is the greatest commandment? He knew what they were asking.

They wanted one, but he refused to give them one. He gave them two. And here too, there are two commandments that he gives.

Not two commandments. One commandment, but there are two parts to it, which is love one another. But then there's another part, even as I have loved you.

So even as Jesus has loved me, that's how I'm supposed to love others. Not by any other measurement. Not by any other form of looking at how to love.

Because there are different forms in which we can think of loving. Jesus says, look at me. Not look at how I love the world.

Look at as I loved you. You are to love one another. So then the question I then ask is, how did Jesus love me? That's the question that I need to ask for myself.

And this verse in John chapter 15 verse 9 is what I want to point you to. John chapter 15 verse 9, in the same conversation with the disciples, Jesus tells me how he loved me. John chapter 15 verse 9. Just as the Father has loved me, I have also loved you.

This kind of may not be something that we immediately think about, of Jesus' love for us. We may not, we may immediately think of many ways in which Jesus loved us. And we think of Jesus' actions towards us.

But Jesus himself didn't just choose to love us. He didn't do it saying, I'm God. I'm love.

I'm fully God. I'm just going to love you. No, he came fully God and fully man.

And as far as I can tell, he gave up equality with God to where he could just love by default. I don't know if you think about the life of Jesus. And I wonder if you think of his life here on earth, whether he loved by default.

And the reason why I say that is because we can think like Jesus lived without sin by default, as if it wasn't even an issue. As if there wasn't even a temptation for Jesus. And we know that's not true.

We know that Jesus was tempted in all points. So in the same way, I realized from John chapter 15 verse 9, that even Jesus was fully God and he had infinite love. He didn't automatically love me by default.

It wasn't by default that he loved while here on earth. He loved by dependence. He loved by receiving the love of God as a father.

And that shows me Jesus, as a helpless person first thing, Lord, Father, I must first receive your love. And as I see you receiving your my your love to me, in that way, I will love other people. This is a huge encouragement to me and a huge burden that can be lifted, because I can make a false image of Jesus to where he just came so naturally for him to love.

I don't believe that that was true. Because it tells me that the way he grew to love his own disciples was not from some in inner strength that he had, but by looking at the Father's love. So he loved others by receiving the Father's love.

He found the strength to love other people by going and immersing himself and drenching himself in the Father's love over him. That is the first thing that I have to learn about this commandment, is where do I get the strength for it? Where do I go to the source of it? And Jesus tells me in the commandment, the source of it is my love for you. But if I go a little bit further, I find that the source for his love, Jesus' love, to me, was the Father's love to him, just as the Father loved me.

That was his model. He overcame the devil, not by speaking the word which was, he was the word, no, he depended on the word of God. He was made like his brothers and sisters in all points.

So he overcame sin by quoting the word of God that was given to him. And he loved other people by first going to the Father and saying, Father, how do you love? How do you love me? I want to mimic, I want to copy that love. I want to channel that same love, let that same love flow that is flowing into me.

And so then I find that the life of Christ was like an automobile that was filled up with gas all the time. And that was the source of his rest. Not because he loved by default, but that he loved by dependence.

And in that he is my example. He's not somebody who's at a higher standard or a different standard and having some secret source of love that I cannot have. As the Father has loved me, I have loved you, John 15, 9. And so Jesus is telling me, you want to know how much I love you? Go to my source too.

You must know how much the Father loves you. Again, I'm thinking of the story of the prodigal son. When the prodigal son was confronted with his sin, he didn't look within himself.

He knew he was a sinner. He smelled the filth of the pigs around him. But his instinct was, my Father.

I must go to my Father. And in the story, it took him a long time to get to the Father's house, because it's a story. Jesus was telling a story.

But when the Son was a long way off, the Father ran out to meet him. In our lives, the moment we are confronted with our sins, the question is, what is our response? We can look around and blame other people. It's what Adam and Eve did.

It's that person's fault. It's this other person's fault. We can look inside and beat ourselves up.

We're no good. We're just not going to amount to any good. I was not going to be the source of salvation for the prodigal son.

The source of salvation for the prodigal son was he looked up and saw his Father. And he didn't beat himself up, even though he had plenty to beat himself up, but he didn't blame other people. I'm sure he could have found reasons to blame other people, his friends who cheated him maybe, or any other thing like that.

But the source of salvation was when he looked and he thought about his Father. And dear brothers and sisters, this is the same salvation that will come to our lives too. When we stop looking around, stop looking inside and beating ourselves up, and look at the Father consistently.

Many times in a day, we can be tempted. Many times we can be tried to look around or to look inside. And God's first message to us is, look at me.

God's first message to me is, look at me. That was the story about the prodigal son that changed my life. Because what I was always being beset by and what was always on my mind in my sins and in my trials was me and my challenges and my unfaithfulness.

But the story of the prodigal son that transformed my life, and I saw it in a picture, I'm sure you've seen pictures of the prodigal son that we've shown, where the picture was not showing the prodigal son's face, but showing the Father's face. You didn't even know what the son looked like. You didn't know if he was

weeping.

You didn't know if he had a black eye. You don't know if he had lost an eye. You don't know if he had scars on his face.

He may have had all of that because of all the loose living he had. We don't know any of that though. All we see is the Father's face.

And God was telling me through that, you can look around, you can look inside, there are plenty of black eyes, you've gotten plenty of scars that will be there for the rest of your life, there are plenty of things like that. But the question is, in this moment, what are you going to look at? Come and see my face. Despite all the black eyes, that's my fault.

Despite all the challenges that I face on this earth, that is my fault, and culture's fault, and sin's fault. Look at my face. And I found that the Christian, the new covenant Christian, the one who is born again is one who is looking at the Father's face, and seeing the joy, and the satisfaction, and the relief, and the happiness that the Father gets.

Just as the Father has loved me, I have loved you. And through all the trials that Jesus went through, He was constantly looking up. And that's my first point, is in this seeking to obey the commandment.

Just love one another as I have loved you. Well, how did Jesus love me? He loved me by first looking at the Father, and seeing the Father's love over Him. This was a beautiful communion.

The life of Jesus was primarily a beautiful communion between the Father and the Son. We have to take a step back, and see ourselves as the third party in the story of Jesus. For a moment, we have to take ourselves back, and see Father and the Son, and the beautiful life that Jesus lived.

All that the Father has given me will come to me. This is a deal between the Father and the Son. I'm just a part of the deal, but the deal is between the Father and the Son.

The Father and I are one. This is a beautiful relationship in His whole life. You know the first words that we have recorded of Jesus ever? It's in Luke chapter 2. And that's when He was in the temple, and His parents had lost Him, and He comes.

It's the first recorded words of Jesus, when He was twelve years old. His parents come to Him, and Jesus had been missing for three days. And Jesus tells His parents, don't you know I'm supposed to be about my Father's business? Who did He tell this to? He told it to His physical Father.

We know it wasn't His Father, but He told it to Joseph. Joseph, who had cared for Him for twelve years, like His own son. He tells Him, looking Joseph and Mary in the eye.

Not trying to insult Joseph, obviously, but telling Him, didn't you know that I'm supposed to be about my Father's business? What does that mean to me? To me what that means is as soon as Jesus was able to speak, He had been born with the Holy Spirit. He was filled with the Holy Spirit from birth. The Holy Spirit had always been working in Him.

And from birth, I believe Jesus must have been telling Joseph and Mary, God's my Father. I know you don't even want to spell the name God. You put G-D.

You say Yahweh, you don't even want to say the name. It's Y-H-W-H, and that's all the, whatever they had in the Aramaic, or whatever the language is there. But He was telling His parents from, as long as He could remember, I have the Holy Spirit in me that's groaning Father, Daddy.

From four, five, six, seven, eight, He was telling His parents, God's my Dad. That when it came to twelve years old, and they were looking for Him and they couldn't find Him, Jesus was like, haven't I been telling you for at least eight, nine years, as long as I could speak, that God's my Father. I'm going to be about my Father.

That's what I've been telling you for maybe close to a decade. That's how I understand that even as a twelve year old, Jesus had been telling them, must have been telling them, this is my Father. I'm about my Father's business.

It was a primary relationship between the Father and the Son. And that's what kept Him. And that's what was so traumatic on the cross.

When Jesus, that deal that He had, not only for all eternity, but even every day, every month, every year of His life, it wasn't about the leopard, it wasn't about Lazarus even, His dear friend. It was about the Father and the Son. Jesus says, it's better actually that I go, because I want you to have that relationship.

I want you to have access to that special deal that I had. That's what sustained me when they tried to throw rocks at me. That's what sustained me when people criticized me and made fun of me saying, who's your father? That's what sustained me.

I didn't look at them. I didn't look inside. I looked up.

And I saw the Father's love. And dear brothers, sisters, that's what's going to sustain us. It's not a commandment, but going to the source of the commandment.

And seeing Jesus who loved us. And seeing that the source of His obedience to the commandment, that Jesus said, hey, you need to love your disciples. How did Jesus get the strength for it? Not by default, but by dependence on the Father's love for Him.

And that is the same source that is available to us. It is better that He went. It is better that He went, so that I can have a relationship with the Father.

And I can also say, as the Father has loved me, I'm going to love my brothers and sisters. So to me, that's the first source of that commandment. Dear brothers and sisters, this is the new commandment.

It's the big commandment, if you want to call it. It's the one thing that Jesus gave. Let's say you could summarize so much in that.

We need to get good at obeying that commandment. Then we have to get good at knowing God as a Father. We have to know Him.

We have to call Him Dad in our hearts. We have to hear that cry and constantly look up. Not look around.

Not look in. Look up. I must return to my Father.

I must return to my Father. In every trial that happens, whether you find yourself with the pigs, or even before the pigs, where you're feeling the tug to go towards the pigs, this is what we must do. I look up and I say, where's my Father? And He takes us and seats us in the heavenlies.

You know, we sang that song, Father of Jesus. That is love's reward. That I get a Father.

I get the Father of Jesus. That's the reward of love. And I have, I don't even have a candle to hold a favor who wrote that song.

But I believe, as it says in scripture, that we are seated in the heavenlies. And so before we lie prostrate at the throne, God says, that's not your place. Even though you don't even deserve to be in heaven, first of all.

You deserve hell. Yeah, it's fine that you're seeking to be prostrated at the throne of God. But your rightful place, because you're a child of God, is on my lap.

You're seated in the heavenlies, in Christ. And Christ, it says in John 1, 18, was seated on the lap of God. And so we must first be seated on the lap of God.

Knowing God as a Dad. As an intimate Father, an intimate Dad. And it's seated there in the heavenlies.

And we sang a few songs about heaven too, earlier today. I want to ask you, what do you picture when you see heaven? If I were to ask you to draw a picture of heaven, what would you draw? If you were to ask the children, if you were to ask to draw a picture of heaven, what would it look like if you were to draw? I have a feeling probably there would be a rainbow there. Because that sounds, that looks beautiful.

I think there is a rainbow there. In fact, I've not studied all the details. I think there's a sea of glass.

There's a throne. There's angels. I've never seen a picture of heaven.

If you are, I can ask a thousand artists to draw a picture of heaven. I've never seen one picture of heaven where I see also, next to the throne, a slain lamb. Never.

I've never seen a picture of it. I've not searched extensively. But that pollutes the picture of heaven from a human standpoint.

It pollutes the picture of perfection. When you see a lamb that's bloodied. But there is no heaven if there is no bloodied lamb.

And that is where we now get closer to, as I have loved you. Now Jesus is saying, as you look up and see the father, and you're seated on the father's lap. You're seated on the throne, on the father's lap.

Because we're a child of God, even though we don't deserve it. Closest to the throne, even before all the elders, is the slain lamb. And our painting of heaven has to be modified to make sure that there's a slain lamb always front and center as we sit on the lap of God.

That's what makes us jump off the lap of God and fall prostrate. He first draws us in. It's the kindness of God that brings us in.

And we must, when we're birthed, the first thing that comes out of our hearts must be, Abba, Daddy. And as we're seated in unexplainable love, the love of God as a father, that's when we must see the slain lamb.

And we must take in the slain lamb.

1 John 4, verse 10. Again, love is the question we're asking. Love one another as I have loved you.

1 John 4, verse 10. And this is love. Not that we loved God, but that He loved.

The father loved us and sent His son to be the propitiation, to be the wrath taker, to take away all the anger of God directed to us because of our sin. Not because we're horrible people, but because of our sin that was on us. He made us in His image, but because of sin, the wrath of God had to be directed in us.

And God sent His son to be that wrath taker. And Romans 5, 8, it says, well, we were still sinners. Romans 5, 10, while we were His enemies, enemies, this is the love of God that was extended towards us, that Jesus took all of the wrath of sin against us.

And that is what we need to then take in. Seated on the lap of God, we have to take in how much God loved us, how much Jesus loved us. I believe that the prodigal son story, the story of the father and the youngest son, the story of the prodigal son and the father ends with this statement.

And the father and the son began to celebrate. That's the end of the story for the youngest son. We don't know what happens after that.

Because then the older son comes in. But that's the final statement of that story in the prodigal son. The father and the youngest son began to celebrate.

The celebration must come first. The celebration, the great joy that the father has over me comes first. But then, after the celebration is over, and we are confident that the father has accepted us in the beloved, he wants to open ourselves up to what it cost.

What it cost for him. After we had squandered everything, what it had cost the father to have the feast. Who paid for the feast? Who paid for that fatted calf to be fattened? Who paid for that robe that's on your, that you're wearing right now? Who paid for the sandals on your feet? Who paid for that ring? What authority comes with that ring? What was the cost for that? And God wants us to have those conversations with him on his lap.

He invites us in. He gets us to celebrate. That's day one of the prodigal son coming home.

But we're fools if we remain in day one. We're pampered, immature children and we're sure to leave again if we don't get to day two, where we wake up the next morning and the celebration is evident. There's a clear sign that there was a celebration.

And God wants us to ask the question, who paid for all of this? What paid for such love to happen? God doesn't want us to hold back from celebrating with him. God wants us to celebrate with him. But we must then ask the question, who killed that lamb that's slain right here? What is that slain lamb doing in such a beautiful picture of perfection in heaven? We have to ask that question.

Love one another even as I have loved you. And as we see the father's love, secure in his love, knowing that that is the source of our identity, we sit there and understand, God, what did you, who killed that lamb? Why is sin messed up? Why did heaven's original picture get messed up by what looks like a slain lamb? And we find out that there's a greater beauty in heaven because of the slain lamb. This is not a human beauty.

We have to take that in. And we have to see that this is the price that Christ had to pay for us. As the father loved me, so I loved you.

This is what I did. I took the full penalty of your sins. If I understand things correctly, God is the highest being of all.

If I understand things right, the angels are more powerful, not more important, more powerful. And humans are less powerful than angels. That's what I understand, I believe, from Hebrews.

It says that you made man less than the angels. So you've got God, angels in terms of power, and then man. And it says that Jesus became a man.

So he took the form of somebody that's less powerful than the angels. And we know now in heaven, he's still a man. Seated on the throne of God is the form of something less powerful than even the angels.

And I think the angels can't understand it. It says there in 1 Peter, angels long to look into this mystery. And I thought about it this way since I can't understand it.

I think of God, man, and ant. And what would you think if you were invited to the White House and you saw sitting in the Oval Office an ant? What would you think of that? What's going on here? Who is this ant? Wouldn't ask you the question, what is this ant doing in the White House? This is the place for the White House. This is where men sit.

It gives me a little picture of what is in heaven when Jesus became a man. He became somebody so little that even the angels cannot understand it. Long to look into this mystery of God who became so little.

Then finally, the third part of that command is, John chapter 13 is, love one another, even as I have loved you. And we can't diminish the power of love. We can't diminish that part of the verse.

We can't diminish that part of the commandment. I thought about this as related to the two commandments. I want to ask you honestly, think about this.

If somebody had come to you and you didn't know the answer of Jesus, and somebody had come to you and said, what is the greatest of all the commandments in the Law and the Prophets? Would you have picked the two of them to be equal? Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself. Let's say you knew those two commandments. The question I ask myself is, would I have equated the two? Because I'll tell you, in my human desire to follow Jesus, I'd say, you can't equate anything with loving the Lord with everything you've got.

That's got to be the greatest commandment, bar none. But then I see, I don't understand the wisdom of Jesus. But Jesus said, no, there's a second like unto it.

Love your neighbor as yourself is equal to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. Similarly, I can tend to think that loving Jesus and experiencing the love of Jesus over me, there's nothing that comes close to that. And we can think about devotion to Jesus as being so unique and by itself, but Jesus doesn't put it that way.

Jesus says, love one another even as, just as much as, I have loved you. Jesus equates the two. And I have to recognize the importance of Jesus equating the two.

And we see that in 1 John 2. John meditated on this for years. And when he was in his old age, he says, this is the commandment that you've gotten, that you've got to love one another as well. And he equates the two to, you can see that in 1 John 3 and 1 John 4, when you have time.

This is the commandment and he doesn't separate the two. He says, you've got to love one another as well as love 1 John 3.23. I can quickly show that to you. 1 John 3.23. He repeats it a couple of times I think in 1 John 4 as well.

But 1 John 3.23. This is his commandment. That we believe in the name of his son Jesus Christ and love one another. John 2 equates the two.

He had heard it when he was here in the last supper. And John chapter 13, if you want to turn there, this is where that commandment is given. He starts off, and I just want to read the first four verses of how Jesus shows us how we ought to love one another.

In John chapter 13 verse 1, it says that he knew that his hour had come where he would depart out of this world. John 13.1, and return to the Father. And having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

During the supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray him, Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands and that he had come forth from God and was going back to God, got up from supper, laid aside his garments and taking a towel, he girded himself. Here's Jesus showing his disciples that he loved his disciples to the very end. So we ought to picture the scene here.

John chapter 13.1-4 gives me a little bit of that picture. It says in verse 2 that the devil has already entered Judas. And he has already entered Judas.

So that's Judas, one of the twelve sitting there. The devil himself, I don't know if we've ever met anybody with the devil himself inside of them. But here's a man with the devil himself inside of him.

You've got these other eleven disciples who are arguing about who's going to be the greatest after he leaves, after Jesus dies. He also knows that all these disciples are going to deny him and desert him. None of these guys are going to stick with him in an hour or two, maybe.

And this is after Jesus has spent three and a half years laboring in these disciples. This is the scene around the table, looking at it from Jesus' perspective. Looking at it from Jesus' perspective, he's been investing in them, loving them, teaching them for three and a half years and what he has in front of them is one man who's got the devil himself in front of him and the rest of them a little bit better, but not much.

They're all going to desert him. And it's in this backdrop that Jesus says, I'm loving them to the very end. These are the people that he loved to the very end, including Judas, who had the devil inside of him, who was going to betray him in a few minutes or hours.

I think in most people's looking at this passage, we tend to look at the act that Jesus did. We tend to say, you know how dirty a job it was to wash these people's feet and the disciples, their feet were so messy and dirty from walking in the roads and so Jesus took this basin and did this most menial or base of tasks. I don't think so.

It was definitely base, it was definitely menial, it wasn't Jesus' job to do it. He did a very humble thing. But I'll tell you, I have done more base tasks than that and humans have done much more base tasks than that.

Helping lepers, helping sick patients who can't control themselves, their bodily functions anymore. Cleaning them up day after day after day, month after month. Some of you yourselves may have done it.

Many nurses, people have done these again out of love for family members. Washing a person's feet with water isn't that menial compared to something else, some other things that we may have done. For aged family members, for sick people, who we chose to volunteer and help with different things like that.

And so I don't feel the focus needs to be on the act as much as the focus needs to be on who Jesus was doing it to. And Jesus was doing this to people who are going to betray Him. And a lot of even corporate people will come in and say, hey look here's an example of servant leadership.

This is not, servant leadership in the corporate sense is still loving themselves. They still love themselves. They're still getting paid a lot more money than the people there.

Servant leading. They're still making millions. So we can say servant leadership.

That's not servant leadership. They're gaining by flattering them and giving them nice perks to do. That's corporate servant leadership.

This is not, this is a completely different kind of, I don't even want to call it servant leadership. This is kind of humble love. He was washing the feet of the man who was going to betray Him.

In the corporate world, it's like giving a big bonus to the guy who's selling all your secrets to the competitor. Which, that's not servant leadership. No corporate person will accept that.

But that's what Jesus was doing. He loved them to the very end. He was washing the feet of the man who was going to backstab Him.

And He was washing the feet of all these other disciples who were all going to desert Him in a few hours. Jesus was practicing what He had always, He was demonstrating what He had always practiced, but was preaching when He said, love your enemies. Do good.

And these are the people He loved to the very end. My nature cannot fathom that instinct. Think about the people who have hurt you the most.

And the question is, that's when we see Jesus's command of love. That doesn't mean we have to grab basins and we'll go wash their feet. It doesn't mean that we have to pack care packages for them.

But God's looking at the soil in my heart and saying, what is the description of your heart towards that person? Is it a dry, parched land? Or is it rivers of love? That's what Jesus was doing. He was washing even though the rivers of love may say, stay away from them, because they just hurt you. Even though the rivers of love may say, you probably don't want to keep in touch with them.

That may be still the case. But God's asking me, and God's asking us, love one another doesn't mean you have to do this or do that. That is why we've never, it's never been about you have to grab the basin and wash other people's feet.

That's insignificant. My question is, first, who are the people you should be washing their feet to, is the question. And so the Lord has been directing me to the people who have hurt me.

Or the people at work who I don't get along with easily. And no, God's not asking me now to grab a basin and wash their feet, or to wash their cars, or to give them gift certificates, nothing like that. God's asking me to look at my heart and saying, is there a dry, parched land? Or is there rivers of living water? And maybe it's neither, but which one is it closer to? Is it a trickle of water every now and then, of love, but then dry? And God says, I want to transform your heart.

What you do to them is completely different. He never washed the feet of the Pharisees, but He died for them. He had a heart full of rivers of love.

He rebuked them, He called them vipers, but His heart was full of love towards them. He demonstrated that He died for them too. And I want to love everybody, but especially the disciples of God with that love.

And it's not at all about what I do with my actions. God's asking me to look at my heart. In a particular instant, maybe grabbing the wash basin.

God's always looking in my heart and saying, what are you doing? And I tie it back again to the story of the prodigal son. Again, I'm using my imagination. The end of the story in the prodigal son, Luke chapter 15, is the father and his younger son begin to celebrate.

Then the celebration is going on, then the father leaves the house and goes outside to talk to the older son. And that's where Jesus ends the story. And we don't know whether the elder son came in.

I don't get the sense that the elder son came in. I hope he didn't. I'm not sure he did.

But I've asked myself, who am I in the story? If I'm the younger one in the story and I've enjoyed the celebration, what is my responsibility to the elder brother? Me, as the younger brother, what is my responsibility on day two, on day three? After the celebration is over, and I look on the next day and I talk to my father and he tells me, here's who paid for it. And I see the slain lamb. That's what paid for the celebration.

I fall at his feet, I fall prostrate and then I go out to love my elder brother back into the house. And I'd love the continuation of the story to be how the younger brother went out and was able to be a representative of the father's love to the elder brother. That's the commandment.

Love one another as I have loved you. They don't know who my love is yet. They don't know me as a father.

They haven't seen the slain lamb like you have. But you have. You go love them as I have loved you.

You go out and reach the elder brothers and the middle brothers and whatever brothers there are and the sisters out there that are struggling in all many different areas. They have not seen the love of God as a father. They've been so messed up with their own definitions of human love that they've seen from their parents or their marriages or whatever else.

And they're broken because of that. And their workplace is a mess and everything is a mess. God's saying, I'm giving you a commandment.

Love one another. And I feel like God's commandment is especially in the context of Jesus washing the disciple's feet, the people who are going to betray him and the people who are going to desert him. I apply that to say God's commandment to love one another is especially directed for me to those to whom it is very difficult.

Maybe because of past hurts, because of present issues, maybe because of biases, maybe because of prejudices, whatever it is. God's probing there and saying it's those areas, those are the people that need to ask yourself, what's the basin for those people? What's the towel? What's the water that needs, what's the feet that needs to be washed in their lives? Not just generic go and do social justice. Let's just go and do all kinds of good to other kind of people.

This is where God's asking me, I can take your dry parched land and make it rivers of living water. Jesus said, John 7, verse 37, on the last day of the feast. This is after the celebration is over.

After you've had seven days, I believe that feast was a seven day feast of just thanking God for his goodness. That's like the prodigal son feast. Just thanking God for his goodness.

On the last day of such a feast, Jesus then stands up and cries out with a loud voice, but do you have a parched land towards other people? Is your land dry towards somebody in your life? And you're looking for rivers of living water to come out towards them? Come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, that I'm that kind of God, out of his innermost being will flow rivers of living water. I pray that God will make us faithful, obedient, obeyers of the commandment, of the new commandment, that we may believe in the Son, Jesus Christ.

Believe what he did. That he came to take us to the Father. That he gave up everything for us and was willing to be separated from the Father so that he could take away the anger of God against sin.

We can draw near. We can sit on the Father's lap. We can see the slain lamb.

But then God takes us out and says, go, so send I you. As the Father sent me, I'm sending you now too, to love others just as I have loved you. May God help us.

Thank you.

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