John 13-18-38

A new kind of love

**Preamble**:

**Prayer**: please join me in prayer…

**Sermon introduction**:

1967 was known as “the summer of love.” That summer, hippies from across the nation gathered at the Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco to celebrate “love.”

That same year, John Lennon, and Paul McCartney of the Beatles, wrote a song called “I you need is love.” The chorus goes like this-

All you need is love, All you need is love, All you need is love, love, Love is all you need

Love, love, love—Love, love, love—Love, love, love

All you need is love, All you need is love, All you need is love, love, Love is all you need

Many people, including the Beatles, rightly believe that love will solve most problems. But what is love?

Is love being nice to people?

Is love a feeling or an emotion?

Is love the same thing as tolerance?

Is love more than sexual attraction?

Many people are confused about love these days.

Before “love” can solve any problems, love must be defined. This brings us to our passage. Jesus describes a new type of love for his disciples. But he does more than describe love, *he commands that all his disciples model this love for the world*. Which means that…

*If you are his disciple, he commands that you model this love for the world*!

This story about a new type of love unfolds in three scenes. Before we look at those three scenes, let me remind us of where this story takes place.

It is Thursday night; Jesus is the upper room with his disciples. He just washed and dried all their feet. They are all relaxing together. This is Jesus last chance to teach his disciples before he dies. Unfortunately, one of those disciples will betray him. Which brings us back to the three scenes of this story. What are the three scenes?

***Judas rejects love***

***Jesus requires love***

***Peter renounces love***

**First, Judas rejects love**

*What can we learn from Judas’s rejection of Jesus (love incarnate)?*

**Judas’s rejection of Jesus fulfills God’s plan**!

**John 13:18–21 (ESV) — 18** I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen.

That is… I know whom I have chosen to be my disciples.

But the Scripture will be fulfilled, ‘He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.’

This is a reference to Psalm 41:9. In **Psalm 41:19**, David writes, “Even my close friend, someone I trusted, one who shared my bread, has turned against me.” This verse was written by king David, after a close friend betrayed him. This verse has a deeper fulfillment in Christ, the true king, who was betrayed by Judas.

**19** I am telling you this now, before it takes place, that when it does take place you may believe that I am he. **20** Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever receives the one I send receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me.” **21** After saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit, and testified, “Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.”

There is so much we could say about these verses, but I want to focus in on verse 19.

**19** I am telling you this now, before it takes place, that when it does take place you may believe that I am he.

Jesus knows that Judas will soon betray him. He has repeatedly warned his disciples that one of them will betray him (vv. 2,10-11; 6:70-71; 12:4).

Why does he tell the disciples about this impending betrayal now? Because he knows how much Judas’ duplicity and betrayal might shake their faith. They may even be tempted to think that Judas had outwitted him.

They needed to be assured that this betrayal was the outworking of God’s plan and fully under the sovereign sway of almighty God. Furthermore, he tells them about this future event to remind them that he is God. He knows all things, even future things.

Jesus is not a powerless pawn in the struggle between Israel and Rome. He is the Son of God who is marching to the cross in complete control of every circumstance.

*Judas rejection of Jesus fulfils god’s plan.*

**Illustration:**

A course taught by Dr. Lincoln at GCTS changed the course of Tim Keller’s life, literally. But Dr. Lincoln was not supposed to be at the seminary that year. He was supposed to miss the entire academic year due to Visa issues. So, the dean of the school asked students to pray that Dr. Lincoln would be able to cut through the red tape to get his visa.

Keller writes,

“At the last minute somebody cut through the red tape. He (Dr. Lincoln) came, and I fell under his influence. Do you know why the red tape was cut? The dean of my seminary was on his knees praying about how we were going to get this guy over here when Mike Ford, Gerald Ford’s son, walked in and asked him what he was praying for. Mike Ford was a student at the seminary at that time. Do you know why Mike Ford was able to cut the red tape? Because his father was the president. Do you know why his father was the president? Because Nixon had resigned. Do you know why Nixon resigned? Because of the Watergate scandal. Do you know why there was a Watergate scandal? Because one day a guard noticed in the Watergate building a particular door ajar that should have been closed.” (Hansen, 74)

Tim Keller’s life was changed by a professor because a door was left open in the Watergate building. Was this a coincidence? Of course not. God controls every single detail of world history, and he is always working his plan.

**Application:**

God is able to work all things for God, even the rejection of his own son! Wow…

God controls every detail of history, which means that God controls every detail of your life.

God is working all those details for your good, even the hard details (Rom. 8:28).

What hardships are you facing right now? (list)

*Judas’s rejection of Jesus fulfilled God’s plan! In addition….*

**Judas’s rejection of Jesus troubled Christ’s soul**!

**John 13:21–29 (ESV) — 21** After saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit, and testified, “Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.” **22** The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he spoke.

The disciples had no clue whom Jesus was talking about. Which means that Judas’s outward behavior conformed so closely to the other disciples that no one suspected him of treachery.

**23** One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved, was reclining at table at Jesus’ side,

This is a reference to John. He did not want to use his own name while telling the story.

**24** so Simon Peter motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking.

Peter motioned/gestured to John, “John, ask Jesus who it is?”

**25** So that disciple, leaning back against Jesus, said to him, “Lord, who is it?” **26** Jesus answered, “It is he to whom I will give this morsel of bread when I have dipped it.” So when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot.

The host of the feast (in this context Jesus) would dip a particularly tasty bit of bread into a common bowl and pull it out and pass it to a guest as a special mark of honor or friendship. Jesus performed a final gesture of love for Judas right before the betrayal. Amazing!!!

**27** Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, “What you are going to do, do quickly.” **28** Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him. **29** Some thought that, because Judas had the moneybag, Jesus was telling him, “Buy what we need for the feast,” or that he should give something to the poor. **30** So, after receiving the morsel of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.

Back to verse 21

**21** After saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit, and testified, “Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.”

Jesus was greatly troubled in his spirit by this betrayal, even though he knew it was coming, and he knew it was part of God’s plan. He had feelings. He loved Judas. They just spent three years together. When Judas betrayed him, it stung.

Rejection or betrayal stings.

**Application**:

Maybe you have been betrayed or rejected?

Betrayal happens when someone intentionally uses a relationship of trust or intimacy to hurt you, steal from you, or wound you in some way. Maybe you have been…

Betrayed by a parent?

Rejected by a group of friends?

Betrayed by a coworker/business partner who embezzles money.

Rejected by a child.

A sibling?

A close friend?

Or a boss?

Or worst of all, betrayed by a spouse who cheated on you?

Jesus knows what it is like to betrayed, therefore he can help you.

**Hebrews 2:18 (ESV) — 18** For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

When you are rejected or betrayed go to Jesus for comfort and solace…

George Matheson was engaged to be married when he went blind. Rather than face life married to a blind person, his fiancé called off the engagement. Brokenhearted, Matheson found solace only in Jesus Christ. Out of this tragic experience he penned the words for a beautiful hymn.

O love that will not let me go

I rest my weary soul in thee;

I give thee back the life I owe,

That in thine ocean depths its flow

May richer, fuller be.

*Judas rejects love. So, what does real love look like? This brings us to the second point.*

*First, Judas rejects love.*

**Second, Jesus requires love.**

**What kind of love does Jesus require? A new type of love**!

**John 13:31–34 (ESV) — 31** When he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. **32** If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once.

Jesus is referring to the glory that he will receive through the cross and the resurrection.

**33** Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, and just as I said to the Jews, so now I also say to you, ‘Where I am going you cannot come.’ **34** 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.

How is it new? Doesn’t God tell us to love each other multiple times in the OT (Lev. 19:18). Yes!

***So how is it new? It is new because it is a sacrificial love***!

Jesus says to the disciples, “you are to love on another just as I have loved you.” How has Christ loved the disciples?

He just washed their feet (vs. 1-17).

But even more importantly, he is about to wash their souls by dying on the cross in their place. The cross is the ultimate display of sacrificial love.

**Illustration:**

After the U.S.S. *Pueblo* was captured by the North Koreans, the eighty-two surviving crew members were thrown into a brutal captivity. In one instance thirteen of the men were required to sit in a rigid manner around a table for hours.

After several hours the door was violently flung open, and a North Korean guard brutally beat the man in the first chair with the butt of his rifle. The next day, as each man sat at his assigned place, again the door was thrown open and the man in the first chair was brutally beaten. On the third day it happened again to the same man.

Knowing the man could not survive, another young sailor took his place. When the door was flung open the guard automatically beat the new victim senseless. For weeks, each day a new man stepped forward to sit in that horrible chair, knowing full well what would happen. At last, the guards gave up in exasperation. (M. Green illustration book)

These brave soldiers demonstrated sacrificial love. Yet, how much greater is Christ’s love for us? We deserved to be on the cross. Yet Christ, motivated by love, took our place and our punishment.

**Application:**

Christ calls us to love others with the same type of sacrificial love.

What does it look like to love the saints this way? BTW… loving the saints is the primary context. More on that in a moment.

Paul describes this new kind of love in 1 Cor. 13.

**1 Corinthians 13:4–7 (ESV) — 4** Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant **5** or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; **6** it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. **7** Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love looks like always giving others the benefit of the doubt.

Love always assumes the best intentions and best motives of people.

Love is not suspicious of others. It rarely things, “Why did they say that?” “Why did they do that?”

Christian love refuses to jump to conclusions. It doesn’t judge motives. It is kind.

Christian sacrifices by freely giving money to others in need (someone just gave a $30-35k check to our benevolence fund).

Christian love sacrifices time and freedom to hang out with people that no one else wants to hang out with.

Christian love sacrifices a Sunday morning by volunteering to serve in the nursery, the greeting team, or on the production team.

We are called to love the saints sacrificially. Which raises the question, how well do you know the saints? Apart from a community group or d-group it is challenging, although not impossible, to get to know the saints well enough to love this sacrificially.

*What type of love does Jesus require? A new type of love.*

**What happens when the saints adopt this love? The world notices**!

**John 13:35 (ESV) — 35** By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

He says to the disciples, “if you love one another (your fellow disciples/Christians) this way, the world will know that you belong to me.”

Love is the distinguishing mark of a Christian (v. 35; cf. 1 John 2:7–11; 3:10–12; 4:7–10, 20, 21). Love is what identifies Christians.

**Illustration:**

When you see a big brown truck with yellow letters pull up to your house. And then the person who jumps out of the truck is wearing a brown uniform while carrying a package. You probably know that they work for UPS. Why? They have all the marks of UPS.

When you see a car driving down the road that is painted Green, blue, and white. And then you see a massive Seahawk logo painted on the back window. And then you see a license plate that says, “12th man.” You know that the person is a Seahawks fan. Why? They have all the marks.

What marks a Christian? A certain dress? No. A certain hair do? No. A cross necklace? Not necessarily. A fish tattoo, a fish bumper sticker, a mug that says, “I heart Jesus.” No, no, and no. The primary mark of the Christian is sacrificial love for one another.

**Application:**

I love apologetics.

I love reading apologetics books.

I think there are many reasons to believe Christian truth claims.

Yet, the greatest apologetic is not an argument, a book, or a lecture series. The greatest apologetic for the Christian faith is love. Love for each other.

Churches try all kinds of crazy programs to win the lost. But the tried-and-true methods are love, prayer, and boldness (and more love).

But here is the thing—people are not going to see your love for each other unless you invite them into your lives. Consider hosting a party for your both your Christian and non-Christian friends.

*Unfortunately, Christians don’t always excel in love. Which brings us to final scene.*

*Judas rejects love*

*Jesus requires love*

**Third, Peter renounces love**

**Peter is about to renounce Christ** (who is love incarnate).

**John 13:36–38 (ESV) — 36** Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, where are you going?” Jesus answered him, “Where I am going you cannot follow me now, but you will follow afterward.” **37** Peter said to him, “Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.”

Peter is undoubtedly sincere, but he does not know his own weaknesses and fears. He places way too much confidence in himself, like many of us do.

**38** Jesus answered, “Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times.

Jesus tells Peter that in a short time, Peter will renounce or reject him. This must have shocked Peter. And this must have wounded Christ.

We must not be too quick to judge Peter. Under the right circumstances, many of us, would be very tempted to reject Christ as well.

*Although Peter will renounce Christ.*

**Christ, motivated by love, will never renounce Peter.**

How do we know? After Peter rejects Jesus, Jesus forgives and then reinstates Peter at the end of the gospel of John.

**John 21:17–19 (ESV) — 17** He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” and he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep. **18** Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go.” **19** (This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, “Follow me.”

Christ forgave Peter.

Christ reinstated Peter into the preaching ministry.

*And*… Christ would empower Peter to proclaim the gospel fearlessly…

How? In John 13:37, Jesus says to Peter, “but you will follow afterword.” After what? After the cross and resurrection Jesus will pour out the Spirit on the disciples, giving them power to follow Jesus no matter what it cost.

We see this power in Peter’s life in the early chapters of Acts, where he preaches to thousands fearlessly. And church history tells us that Peter was gladly martyred for Jesus.

That same power is available to us. We don’t have to cower in fear, living on this side of the cross, we have access to the same Holy Spirit.

**Application:**

Here is the good news, although our love may grow cold for Jesus. We may even renounce him for a season, if we truly belong to him, he will never ever stop loving us. He will never stop loving you.

This extravagant and sacrificial love displayed on the cross, helps us love others. Let’s pray…