

Love One Another

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Preacher: James Tang

[0:00] Yeah, no, it's such a great reminder of which we're sharing this morning in the prayer. and I won't embarrass him or put him on the spot again, but Nathan really gave me a really good! word last night, just a testament to who he is as a child of God himself. He's just feeling the conviction that, why are we gathering here? I mean, we're getting some extremely exciting things happening, fun things. We're going to head to the park this afternoon to play spikeball with Cubon, and then we're going to play golf later with Vincent, and then there's a football thing with Damo. Last week we had basketball. We won. We won the game. We won the game, and our dear, dear Kenneth at the back, who sadly gave himself up for the win, tore his Achilles, and you should have seen him. You should have seen the other guy. I mean, that'll teach you for dunking, but no, it was, it's good, but wow, what a reminder that actually I got from Nathan yesterday was, isn't it so easy just to get caught up with all these things? Like, why are we here? Why are you here? And as I was just worshipping, I was like, Lord, I'm here just for you. Nothing else. Lord, I just want you. The community is great. The singing is fun. The sports are competitive, and, but man, I just want you. I just want you, and if, if we don't get you, then all of this doesn't mean anything, and so that's something that's, it's on, but I'm glad that it's not just on my heart. I need reminding sometimes, because you get so easily caught up in everything, but to hear someone like Nathan just going,

James, that's, that's on my heart. I'm like, that's it. That's it. Can we keep reminding each other of this? Because we need to. We started with the end in mind in September, going through the letters in Revelation, and it was the first one, Ephesus. You're doing great things. You're doing great, great things, but you've abandoned your love at first. Just remembering that, just remembering that.

That's, that's the main thing that's on my heart. With that in mind, we're going to read the scriptures. I'm giving Bonnie a little bit of a heart attack, because I've hijacked this, just the Apple TV here with my iPad, because I prepared some slides, everyone. You know it's going down if I've got slides, but whether we'll end up having the slides for the songs at the end, I don't know now, but we'll try. I invite people to stand, because the word of the Lord is, is powerful. It's to be revered, and so I invite you to stand now. I know that many people can't see at the back, but I'm wondering whether we can read it all together. Would that be possible? So if you're at the front, and you can see the screen, can you read loudly? I'm going to try and navigate it from here.

1 John chapter 3, verse 11 to 24. One, two, three, go. For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one, and murdered his brother. Why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil, and his brother's righteous. Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you. We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.

But if anyone has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk, but in deed and in truth. By this we shall know that we are of the truth, and reassure our heart before him. For whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything.

Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God, and whatever we ask, we receive from him, because we keep his commandments, and do what pleases him. And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his son, Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as he has commanded us. Whoever keeps his commands abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the spirit whom he has given us. This is the word of the Lord. Maybe we just remain standing as we pray. Lord, you are the reason we're here. You are the

reason why we know what love is. You are love. So help us to trust in the name of your son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another today. We thank you. In your name we pray. Amen. Take a seat. Thank you. Just another word on Alpha. It's just to remind you, a few months ago, we had this very simple statement that I shared with you that I actually borrowed from Andy Stanley, a pastor in America, which is the church is a family expecting guests. It is a family expecting guests. In some ways, that's what Alpha is about, that we are a family that are also expecting guests. We want to bring people in. St. Pope Francis was the one who says, Christian family is missionary. Christian family is missionary to share the love of God to the world. That's what we should do. [5 : 28] And actually, that's what we believe, what we're trying to do here. We're trying to do church in a way, that's the second statement. We're trying to be family. Family is messy. Family is hard, but we're trying. There's different kinds of expression of church all around the world, all around this city. Some, you go in, you don't speak to a single person. You encounter the Lord because you're just in quiet meditation, and you worship, and then you leave. And that's just one beautiful way to worship God. And actually, that's beautiful. I'd love for us all to have a chance to be able to do something like that. But what we're trying to do here is we're trying to live as a family. We're trying to know each other's names. We're trying to know each other's middle names. We're trying to be in community together. That's what we're trying, and I'm glad that we're all here on this journey together. And part of that is just doing something like Alpha, where one, it's for people that you know. Everyone here knows someone who has never been into a church, who has never stepped foot into a church. Everyone has. Can we be a family that expects guests and bring these people in and have, hey, there's food, there's going to be a chat. Let's talk about these things. And then the second is just to say, if you've been coming here, now we set our midweek gatherings or our clans a couple months back, and they were set, and they've been growing and building in intimacy and in relationship. [6 : 44] If you've joined in these last few months, you've not been able to join one of these. And I'm sorry about that. But what we're trying to do now is actually with something like this, we want to invite you in so you can join this Alpha so we can build that community together. Okay? Now, you might say, but I've been a Christian for a long time. If you look at the Alpha website, actually, Alpha is just for anyone. It's just for anyone who wants to have these kinds of conversations. What we found is some of you haven't been in the church for that long, or some of you have, it's been a long time since you've been in church. Some of you went to a Christian school, and since then you've not really been in part of one. We found actually Alpha is good for you too. You've been kind of around the Christian faith, but to revisit and just go through some of those key questions. Who is Jesus? Who is God? Who is the Holy Spirit? This really puts us all on the same page whilst building community together. So those are really the two kinds of people that we're trying to hope to have because we are a family expecting guests. We are a family expecting guests. And last week I talked about that we are children of God. We are all children of God. And I asked you, what does that even mean for you? As you think about your own family experience, what does that even mean? Is it a positive one? Is it a negative one? When we talk about being children of God, we then talk about the fact that we're brothers and sisters in Christ. We are family. And then he jumps in to talk about this. And John's interesting. John, as he writes, as much as I would love to go through verse by verse by verse, John doesn't really think in a straight line. In fact, he thinks in overlapping concentric circles. And he kind of goes here, goes there, overlaps, comes back around, all around the same theme, but he kind of goes, it's sometimes a little bit hard to track. So the reason why I came up with slides today was actually I'm going to try and pull out and exposit what he's actually saying to us and the overall theme and hopefully come up with a way that we can at least understand it and then apply it. That's what we're trying to do here. [8 : 41] And it really is about the same thing, love. We talked about this a few weeks ago. And actually, I've had conversations with people that I've been encouraged by because since that message, you've been like, I've got to learn how to love my colleagues. I will learn how to love the people who are helping me in my life. I will learn how to love the people who are really hard to love. And so that's been encouraging. And John almost comes back around. And in that verse 11, he says, hey, I'm bringing it back again, which is essentially what Nathan reminded me last night. He said, you've heard this message before. It's about love. It's about love. Can you go back to that?

Can you always go back to that? Are you loving one another? And as I followed these verses that we just read together, there's four themes that really came up for me that I wanted to share with you. And the first one is this. Family is at the heart of Christianity. Family is at the heart of Christianity.

I don't know whether you've thought about this that much and what kind of church background you come from, but family is at the heart of Christianity. Because if our first and foremost identity is that we are children of God, by default, by extension, that means we're family. Family is at the heart of Christianity. But the question is, what does that mean for us? Turn to the person next to you and just say, hey, we're family. We're family.

The interesting thing here is how well are we doing that? How well are we really tapping into that? Because family, of course, is hard. Family is hard. But we associate, we link family with people that we love. What do we say when we've lost a family member? We've lost a loved one. We've lost a loved one.

[10:23] So if we're going to try and be family, then we need to try and learn to love each other. In fact, it's within the context of a family that we learn to love. It's within the context of a family that we learn to love. Billy Graham says this, nothing can bring a real sense of security into the home except true love, which can be found in family. Ephesians 2 talks about that we were dead, but God made us alive. And now we are members of the household of God. That we are literally brothers and sisters. We are family. The Irish playwright George Bernard Shaw said, a happy family, oh, actually I have this quote, a happy family is but an earlier heaven. And a happy family is but an earlier heaven. In the sense that actually, if a family does what it's supposed to do, exists in a way that it's supposed to exist, it's a glimpse of heaven. Who's had a glimpse of heaven in their family in their lifetime? Just put your hand up if you had. Praise the Lord. Just people who are actually, who you know, you're coming home from work or school and you're just in a bad mood, but that person is just going to love you regardless. When you're young, they're still going to put food on the table, even if you mistreat them. Kenneth's just laughing like,

Hillary's been very good to you, caring for you this week, right? Kenneth was saying he's becoming a better human being and higher EQ because he needs to rely on his wife to do everything. But family, a happy family is but an earlier heaven because family knows what love is. Now, whether it holds that standard all the time is a different matter.

We fall short of that all the time. But the design that God had for family is that it would point us to heaven. The design for what we have here as a spiritual family is to point us to heaven. Do we have that? There's another quote here from an author who says this, it is not clear to me that the family is a microcosm of the world. To understand the world, we can study the family. Issues such as power, intimacy, autonomy, trust, and communication skills are vital parts underlying how we live in the world.

To change the world is to change the family. We're trying to figure that out. One Sunday at a time, one midweek at a time, one sports team at a time. And just if we can pierce through all those things and remind ourselves, we're doing this because we're family. Because family does things together. That's what we're trying to do here. It was my conversation with Aiden a few months ago where we were saying the true expression of Christianity is that we're a tight-knit family. That's what we're trying to do. And in order to do that, we must love one another. See, interestingly, actually, I don't have all the verses corresponding because I did these slides very late last night. Opening back up to the word to 1 John. Family is at the heart of Christianity. John knows that because we're children of God. We're brothers and sisters. But then he gives us an example, and he gives us an example of how family turned bad and what that leads to. So we know that Christianity, oh, that's what I've done here. I'm going to go back. If I go back to this, family is at the heart of Christianity. You see here when John's talking about it in 1 John chapter 3. Open up your Bibles with me here. 1 John chapter 3, verse 11 is, this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. And then verse 12, he says this, we should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. So he says, your family, your children of God, you must love one another. But let me show you an example of a family that is not good, that turned bad. When a brother turned against his own brother and murdered him and became the first murderer in mankind. He's like, don't do that. Don't do that. He is from the evil one. And that makes me think. And then he says, why? He says, but why? Why did Cain murder Abel? Because he saw that his deeds were righteous and his deeds were evil. It's a jealousy. It's comparison. And you're like, oh,

wait though. You're telling us to love one another, and then you suddenly jump to an example of murder.

[14:22] murder. You're like, okay, I may not be loving people as best as I can, but to use an example such as murder, that's pretty intense, John. That's pretty extreme. What John's trying to say here though is, actually, it starts with your thoughts. It starts with your thoughts. Cain comes from the evil one, and he had this hatred, this jealousy that built inside him, and that led to an act that led to murder, that led to death. Actually, you think that might be intense, but if you think about what Jesus says in his sermon in Matthew 5, he's saying, hey, the law says if you murder someone, you will be judged, but I'm going to raise the stakes now. It's not if you murder someone. It's what is it? Does anyone know? It's if you're angry at someone, and then you'll be judged.

So it's not the action anymore. It's the heart. And we're going to look at that a little bit more because it's like, whoa. So I either love one another or essentially I'm heading down a road that leads to murder. Quite extreme, but it really is. That is what Jesus says. And actually in James, in the book of James, it says this as well, right? When there's a desire that is conceived, it gives birth to sin. And when sin is fully grown, it leads to death. Cain is the prototype, the example from the evil one, where it's the evil one, and then Cain, and then hatred, and then death.

Now, the answer to that isn't evil, actually. Who is the answer to that? It's Jesus. Because while Cain came from the evil one, Jesus comes from God, and he shows love that leads to life, which is what this passage is really talking about. It's pitching light and darkness, life and death together, all with the concentric circle surrounding it being love. Family is at the heart of Christianity, which is why the heart is so important, which brings me to my next point, which is important, which is Christianity is a religion of the heart. Christianity is a religion of the heart. We are surrounded by, in a society where it's all about what you do, what you do, and you can be judged by what you do, whether you're a good Christian or not, comes down to how much are you serving in these different areas? How much do you read your Bible? Isn't it interesting when we say, oh, how close are you to God? What are some of the questions that we ask each other?

Jaywon, you walk with a good few people. What's some of the questions that you ask someone just to see how they're doing with God? I usually ask them what they feel like the Lord is doing to see them in their lives.

What do they feel like the Lord is doing to them? Yeah. Asking them actually, what's the Lord been speaking to them about and how the Lord is guiding and how the Lord is forming? Those are some of the questions. But actually, there's also a temptation sometimes, and actually we do this out of the best intentions to ask, hey, how are you doing with God?

[17:17] Are you reading your Bible? Are you praying? Are you going to church? Are you serving? And suddenly it becomes, actually, I'm trying to paint a picture. I'm trying to get a picture of how you're doing by your actions. When actually the truth is Christianity is a religion of the heart. Jesus talks about this in Matthew 15. He says, man, these people worship me with their lips. They're raising their hands and singing. Albeit the song that they're singing says that their arms wide. And so everyone raises their arms in that moment. But man, their hearts are far from me. They clean the outside of their cups, but the inside is dirty and messy. I was listening to a sermon by a pastor recently, and he was saying, he had someone who was a counselor who was in his church and so happened to counsel a lot of the people within his church. And he's, and he's one of my favorite preachers. And he's just preaching, preaching. He's John Tyson from New York. He's preaching, preaching. And one day, uh, the counselor who signed his church actually went up to him and said, Hey, look, I'm counseling a lot of people from your church.

If you would like, I can give you some insight as to some of the struggles that those people are actually going through without saying any names, just, just a picture of what, and he, and the pastor was like, Oh, that's a little bit scary, but sure. Uh, and he did it. And he said, and some of the results he got from the findings, he's like, actually there is an overwhelming amount of people in your church that are struggling with alcohol and they are alcoholics. There are many in there who are fighting every night with their spouse. And sometimes, and often it gets violent.

And there are some people in your church that are really struggling with drugs. And he, and the pastor, John Tyson was just like, man, I didn't realize that that's what's happening. That there's something that they may be sat here with me at church on a Sunday. They may be worshipping me with their hands out like this, but their hearts are far from the Lord. And that was just a sobering thought to him. Christianity is a religion of the heart. The question is, where is your heart? Where is

your heart in this? Is it in a good place? Why are you here?

Well, why do you want to be here? Sometimes I'm like, Lord, I don't love you right now, but I want to love you. But I'm not feeling doing this now, but I want to want to do this.

It's one of my favorite songs growing up. The worship songs, the Lord, I want to yearn for you. I don't even know what it means to yearn for you, but I want to yearn for you. Where is your heart? It's interesting because verse 20, John also almost realizes this. And he says this to us. He says, for whenever our heart condemns us, and our hearts always do condemn us, because our hearts are just not, our heart is deceitful above all things. And yet God is greater than our heart and he knows everything. Reminded of Jesus when he first was, came to this world. The scripture says, Jesus did not entrust himself to man because he knew the heart of man. Don't you find that incredible that he came and knows your heart and knows my heart and knows the hypocrisy that's going on, knows the pride that's going on. And he comes and yet he still wants to be with you.

[20 : 33] I think that gets lost on me so often. I went on a retreat a couple of weeks ago and I was in the book of Jonah and I didn't realize how horrible, terrible a person Jonah was. Like Jonah the jerk, literally. Of course, we hear about the big fish. He ran away because God tells him to go to these evil people and he says he doesn't like these evil people. And actually there's some good reasoning for that. There's political there as well. But he runs away and then he gets on a ship, right? Which again, the second point you remind us is actually, if you want to run away from God, the devil provides transportation and he takes him on a ship. But then, but then after that, what happens is there's a storm, but God ends up saving people anyway, saving the sailors who were pagans, the very people, kind of people that Jonah was running away from. At the very end, he goes back and he saves Nineveh because he gets eaten up by a big fish. And you think, oh, that's a, that's a happy, happy ending there. But it's not. Jonah sulks. He saves this evil nation. Well, at least gets them to repent.

He goes out of the city. He doesn't stay to do discipleship. He sits outside of the city and just looks and sulks. And do you know what he says? He's like, I want to kill myself. I'm so angry, God, that you would do this. I knew you would do this, God. I knew you were slow to anger, that you were gracious and compassion. I knew it. And now I want to die. What does God do? If I was God, if that was my kid, there'd be some stern words. But what does God do? It was sunny that day, so he appoints a plant just to cover him in shade. Elijah, in the Old Testament, the same thing. He goes and he has this big battle and he wins and then he goes and then he sulks on the outside. And what does God do? Does anyone know what God does in 1 Kings? He sends angels and he bakes him a cake. It actually says he bakes him a cake. Side note, Alani, one of our new friends here, who's an incredible, incredible baker, is actually, is it cookies, Alani? Is that what it is?

They are delicious. They are delicious. They're going to be at the back, so please do go get them. God bakes Elijah a cake whilst he's sulking. If that doesn't tell you what God's grace is, I don't know, like, I don't know where you are. Sometimes I'm a sulker. Sometimes I'm in a bit of a self-pity kind of mode, but yet God is just gracious to Elijah. He's gracious to Jonah. He's gracious to the people of Nineveh. He's gracious to us. He knows our hearts and yet he still comes.

Christianity is a religion of the heart and God is greater than even our hearts. It is grace. It is free. It is amazing. Do we realize that? Christianity is a religion of the heart. Of course, after that, the heart has to be expressed through action. This is the part that I think we all struggle with.

[23 : 29] Actually, no, no. We really struggle with the heart, but we also struggle with the actions here because what he says here is this. Cain was the example of evil, hatred, and death, but Jesus was the example of the godly one who loves that leads to life. And out of his love for us, and where does it say, it says in verse 16, by this we know love, that he laid down his life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. Jesus laying down his life for us was the very thing, was the very thing that leads life to us. The world's kind of love, the things that I kind of love are just things that actually I want to satisfy me, but the way that Jesus loves, he gives himself for us and he expresses it through action. This tells me that actually when we say we love each other or when we try to love each other, we must do it through action. We must. Have a think now, and I may ask people, when was the last time you either felt love from someone through action or whether you actually were able to express love through action? Have a think. When was the last time you either received or gave out love through action, through giving? Maybe someone gave something to you, maybe gave them their time or whatever it might be, or maybe it's anything. Does anyone, can anyone think of something like that? Kelly, you're smiling, so I'm going to go for you.

Oh, on Thursday night, I got off work and I was by myself and I wanted to have dinner with someone because I felt like I didn't want to be by myself. So I called Jojo and I just went to a place and enjoyed family dinner. And that was a lot of love. In case you didn't hear, Kelly, Thursday after work, was tired and kind of alone and didn't want to have dinner by herself, so she calls Jojo and Jojo, where's Jojo? Jojo there just welcomes you into her home and gives you time and gives you food, and that's love. That's huge. That's an example of it. Any more? Back row, what have we got? Sam? Valentine's Day, my wife buying cheese. Wow. Are you a cheese expert?

No, I just like one kind. What is it? It's called Manjago Carada. She doesn't know what it is, so she thought she was getting that, and she doesn't know if she got it.

But you received and felt the love. You received and felt the love. Are we a group of people? Can you look in, I'm not going to ask any more from here, so you can relax a little bit.

[26:12] Has someone in this group shown you love? I hope so. And if they're not, I'm so sorry. We're imperfect people, and we're trying. But we want to keep trying.

We want to keep trying. And the love that we're talking about isn't just, hey, I love you, bro, and that's it. It's the love that Kenneth's group had for him when they went to visit him this week and just hung out.

It has to give. It has to cost you something. That's what we've always said, right? If you love something, it has to cost you something. If it doesn't cost you anything, then you don't really love it. So we have to think about how can we outdo one another in love.

And Amy Carmichael says this, you can always give without loving, but you can never love without giving. You can never love without giving. So when you think about the people that you love, when you're thinking about the people that you're trying to love, and there are people, trust me, we all have these kind of people who are like, man, Jesus commands me to love you because you are my enemy.

But I'm going to figure it out, and I'm going to love you somehow, some way. And it's going to be giving a part of me to you because Jesus gave his life for me. Christianity is a religion of the heart, but heart has to be expressed through action.

[27:26] Even, even, Jesus almost knew this when he said this, when he said love your enemies, even when we don't feel like it. That's why it's a command. Because if we did it naturally, then he wouldn't have to command us to do it. But because it is so against our nature, the kind of love, the biblical kind of love, the agape kind of love, he has to remind us time and time again the message from the beginning.

C.S. Lewis says this one, I like this one. Do not waste time bothering whether you love your neighbor. Act as if you did. Act as if you did. There's kind of, it's kind of like fake it until you make it in some ways.

But it's kind of like, look, I'm just going to, the act of love is not a feeling. It's not an emotion. It's just going to, it's going to start off with an act. Can you think now of someone who you're called to love? Hard or easy, actually. It doesn't always have to be the hardest person in the world. It can be your pastor. And you can figure out a way to love your pastor. Especially if you work at Lululemon and you know he likes Lululemon and there's just something there.

Then, you know, there's something you can think of. Like, let the Holy Spirit lead you, Francis. How can you give?

[28:36] And how can you show love? Which leads me to the last point, though. It says here, and it's such an easy verse to remember. Verse 18. Chapter 3, verse 18.

Little children, let us not love in word or talk, but in deed and in truth. Why do you love? Why do you love?

It's because you know the truth. It's because you know, verse 16, that Christ laid down his life for you. And it says here towards the end, verse 23. And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his son, Jesus Christ, and love one another.

It's two things. You love because you love one another, and you do it because you believe in the name of Jesus Christ, of what he did for you. Our action has to be grounded, grounded in that truth. That is the right reason. There's a quote by Pastor D'Amudi that says this, The world does not understand theology or dogma, but it understands love and sympathy. What we're trying to do is share the message that every person is loved and is a child of God.

[29:40] That's what we're trying to do. And we'd love to show the verses about that. Love to quote to them the whole book of John to tell them that. But the world does not understand it. It will not

receive it.

It often chooses the other way. It doesn't understand theology or dogma, but it will understand love and sympathy. What's something that we can do as you go back out into your field, whether it's working in the hospital, or whether it's going back to university, or it's going back into the finance sector?

What do you need to do to have your heart expressed through action, and for that action to be based on the truth? To point people back to the fact that I'm doing this because of what Jesus did for me.

I think about the Good Samaritan. Jesus tells this parable, and I was back in this recently, and there's one thing that I was just completely overwhelmed by, and just I didn't see before.

Do you know when the Good Samaritan takes this guy to the inn, and then he says, Hey, look after him for me. I've got to go. But whatever the cost, I'll cover at the end.

[30:42] Do you remember that bit? I would not do that. I would not say yes. I hate saying yes. I love trying to give myself as much as I can within the boundaries that I agree in my own head, and how much I will give to this.

Have we had this? I will love you to one extent. But can you imagine, and actually, in that day and age, and to be fair, in this day and age, if you tell a hotel owner or an innkeeper, hey, look after this guy, whatever cost at the end, I'll pay.

And actually, the corruption he was opening himself up to, that bill that he was going to come back to, could have been an enormous bill that will maybe not even be fair. And yet he just said that, and he just did that.

The love that has no boundaries. The love that has no limits. The Samaritan Jesus was saying, gave himself without any limits, without any hesitation, without any reluctance. He was completely selfless.

Completely trusting in the fact that you may try and cheat me, but I have a God who's got my back. That my account is always going to be full. My cup will always overflow. He prepares a table for me in the presence of my enemies.

[31:52] I'm not scared of anything that you will do, because I know that God has my back. And he's just called me to do one thing. To love you in the best way that I can. To give myself up to you without any restrictions and any limitations.

Because of what he did for me. Do we have that kind of love? I think the love that we have, that we try to have, is very different. If our actions can be based on this truth, that actually, the Son of God himself traveled the ultimate distance and paid the ultimate cost, to die for us, when we didn't even ask for it, when we didn't even ask for it, when we don't even deserve it, that truth alone should compel us to act in a way where we can be people that can give ourselves up for him to others as well.

Jesus traveled the ultimate distance for you and I. Can we figure out a way to love one another? It starts with this. The family needs to learn how to love each other first.

And then the family expects guests. And so when people come in here, can we show that love as well? I don't know what it looks like. Maybe it's simply just, you see, John here goes from love one another.

If not, you'll be murdering, which is extreme. And then he says, Christ died for you. And then he says, hey, actually, if you see someone who has needs, and you're not moved to compassion, then you're not loving.

[33:27] And does God even abide in you? And actually, he actually brings it back down. You don't need to put your life down necessarily. You don't need to jump in front of a bus for someone necessarily.

But the key here is, are you aware of people's needs? And does that move you? When someone says, oh, I'm really missing this, is your response that, oh, maybe I can provide that.

Maybe I can give you that. Oh, you're hungry? Maybe I can give you food. Maybe your AirPods have died and I've got a pair. I'll give you the AirPods. Maybe you need some shoes and I've got some shoes.

I can give you, like whatever it might be. He's saying about the small things and the big thing as well. There's a micro and there's a macro level here. We're going to finish with a song to respond, but I wanted us to finish with, again, a short discussion time about this.

Because I think we need to share with others, is there anything right now, even as I'm speaking, that the Holy Spirit is saying, okay, there is someone that I need to love. There's someone that I need to go to work tomorrow and I need to go out of my way to do something.

[34 : 29] I need to go and get them a coffee. I've never done that before, but I'm going to do that. I'm going to go out of my way because it's the Jesus way. And the Jesus way is the way of love. And I'm going to do it. It's going to cost me. But I'm going to do it because it's what Christ did for me.

No, actually, no, it's not what Christ did for me. Christ didn't get me a coffee. Christ laid down his life for me, was completely humiliated for me. So I'm going to at least buy you a coffee. Can we have a think?

Is there anything? And of course, if there isn't, you can say, look, there isn't. But I'm praying that God will show me, show me how I can love someone. But right now, maybe nothing comes to mind. But I think some of us, we do have something.

And actually, the first thing is one being aware of it and then articulating it out and just saying it out. And then please, if someone tells you something, can we be active listeners together as a family and remember what they said to you?

Well, remember their name first and then remember what they said to you. And next week, when you see them again, you can ask them, oh, were you able to do it? I'd love to know. I'd love to hear. I'd love to pray. Can we do that?

[35 : 30] We'll do that for two minutes. And then I'll invite Alex back up to lead us in the song. And we'll wrap it up there. So good? Two minutes. Go. Can we do this? Can we hold each other accountable, especially if you are a part of a midweek or a clan or a group?

Leaders especially listening. Can we ask people, when was the last time we showed an act of love to someone? Can we ask that?

Can we be part of a group that will do that where actually we actually hold each other accountable and say, look, how can you be loving your people better? What have you done?

And let's be practical. And we're not trying to be legalistic. We are saved by grace through faith and not by works. But faith without works is what?

Dead. And we want to be a community. We want to be a gathering. We want to be a family that is filled with life. That's the nature of a family. That it is messy, but it is lovely. And it grows.

[36 : 33] And it grows. That's how a family works. Can we be that? Can we be those vessels of love and actually act it out? And maybe next week, provided that my wife does not give birth by then, but next week I may stand here and just ask for examples of how we've received love from one another.

Then maybe let's just start with that. Because there's people here who you're here for the first time. You don't know other people. I'd love for you to feel loved. And so let's hold each other to that. That's important. Let us be known by love. Yes, we want sound theology. Yes, we want spirit-filled worship. Yes, we want kind of fun community.

But we want to be known by our love. And it's not just a worldly kind of love. It's when someone walks in here, you're like, you know what?

I think these people might actually be willing to give up their time, their money, their possessions, maybe even their lives for one another.

[37 : 44] Because someone gave their lives life for us. Let us be that kind of family. If we are cursed, then may we bless.

If we are hurt, would we forgive. If we are hated, then would we love. Would we choose the Jesus way. If we're helpless, if we are surrounded by people who are helpless, let us defend them.

There are people in our lives who are burdened. May we share their weight. If they are hopeless, let us point them to the hope that is Jesus. Let us be grounded in truth in our actions.

Let our hearts be expressed through action. Let our religion be one that starts from the heart. And may that heart be nurtured and cultivated in the context of family.

Let us pray. How deep the Father's love for us that we should be called children of God. And so we are. So let us act as such.

[38 : 56] Jesus, we thank you. That we don't have to do this by our own strength. You are greater than even our hearts.

And it is no longer we who live, but you who live in us. And show us how to love. Show us who to love. And may we be known as a family that loves.

Thank you, Lord. Thank you, Lord. It's in your name. Your precious, sweet, beautiful, loving name we pray.

Amen. Please take a seat. Let's ease out of our time together now. And we'll maintain this kind of quiet vibe.

Maybe with Kelly doing her thing. And hey, don't just listen to this and leave. I hope you don't.

Because actually how you love is going to be so impactful to the people that you love.

[40:03] Like don't underestimate that. I've had people say, actually, just even being smiled at just changed their day. And now we know why we need to do it. Let's not forget.

Okay? So let's close out with a bit of just quiet contemplation. And when you're ready to move on, then join us for lunch. Join us for spike ball, for golf, for football, and whatever it is.

And we'll see you next week. Thank you.