

Love Clarified
John 13:31-38

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If you're tuning in for the first time today, we are currently being led through the Gospel of John by the teaching of our Radio Pastor, J. Mark Horst. In a few moments, he'll be here to teach us, but before he does that, let's pray.

Gracious God our Heavenly Father, we come to you in the precious name of Jesus. It is alone through Him that we have access into your holy presence. His blood, shed on the cross at Calvary, is the only sacrifice that is acceptable to you to wash away our sin.

And now, Father, as Pastor J. Mark comes to teach us from the Word, open our hearts to receive your truth. This I ask in Jesus' name, Amen.

In this relation of love, we all need to know more which calls for much more clarification. We need help to understand better the whole nature of love. In this John 13:31-38 text there is much help in understanding how Jesus clarified love.

32 *Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.*

33 *If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.*

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

35 *A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.*

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

37 *Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards.*

38 *Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake.*

39 *Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.*

My friend, with these words Jesus defined the several AREAS where love must be clarified.

The need arises in **The Area of Conflict**.

The opening words of this text are these: "Then, when he had left." The reference is to Judas who had gone to finish his negotiations with the high priest to betray Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. Satan had entered into him, and Judas became a tool of Satan.

On other occasions Jesus had cast out demons and released the one who was in bondage to that demon or demons. This time Satan took so complete control of Judas that there seemed to be something of a release after he left, because then Jesus said, "Now, the Son of man is glorified. And God will glorify Him very shortly." God will do it.

There is the area of conflict where love must be clarified. You see, it appears as though Jesus was distressed, oppressed, by the fact that Satan had taken over one of His disciples. It was not until he had gone that Jesus could say, "Now is the Son of man glorified.

Then He further said to the disciples, "I am going away, and you cannot come." There was a kind of conflict as well, between where He was going and where the disciples would be. We must somehow respect that difference, "You cannot come". But we must know what the conflict is and we must keep our love clear. Conflict is one area calling for love to be clarified.

The need is found in **The Area of Conformity**.

Jesus said, "I am giving you a new commandment. I want you to love one another as I have loved you." I am quite certain there must have been a difference. Jesus was presenting to them

a much higher level of love than they had ever experienced among themselves. He had demonstrated it, exemplified it, and symbolized it in this chapter when He washed their feet and then said to them, “What I have done to you, you ought to do to each other.”

In the light of His actions, He said to them, “A new commandment I am giving you, that you love one another as I have loved you.” He then explained the result, that such love would create a new condition. All men would then know they were His disciples because of the love that they had for one another.

I apologize, I confess before God that too many Christian people have not lived up to the ideal that Jesus gave them. It has been a scandal that professed disciples have not loved each other like Jesus had loved us. Here is the area of conformity, conforming our love to be like His love. Our love needs to be clear. It is really not possible to have this kind of love until one is truly His disciple. That is the area of conformity, to be like Him because we belong to Him.

The proof of that love is expressed in **The Area of Commitment**.

Jesus said, “You can’t go now.” Peter said, “Well, why can I not go now? Where are you going?” Jesus answered, “You can’t come now but you will come later on.” And then Peter had a tremendous aspiration. He said, “Why can’t I come now? I will lay down my life for thy sake.”

Oh, what an aspiration that was for Peter! But Jesus gave Him a sober, solemn revelation: “The cock shall not crow until you have denied me three times.” Peter had just said, “I will lay down my life for Thy sake.” Jesus responded, “You will? Here’s what you really will do, you will deny me three times.” Well, Peter had quite an aspiration, but his aspiration evaporated when Jesus told him what he would really be doing.

In the area of commitment, my friend, our love needs to be clear, absolutely clear. Our frailty often breaks out and we find that we can’t do what we would like to. That was Peter’s problem in the area of commitment.

Thus, Jesus clarified love in three areas: conflict with the enemy, conformity to the Lord, and commitment to loyalty.

I urge you, my friend, to find such love in Jesus.

We have just finished our study from John chapter 13. The titles from this chapter have been Love Symbolized, Love Exemplified, Love Petrified and today's Love Clarified. Obviously, the theme has been love. This theme more than any other is what sets the teaching of Jesus apart.

Jesus is our example, and we strive to love like Jesus. More than any other single factor His love is what sets Jesus apart, first how he taught us to love and second how he showed us love. Here we are about 2,000 years later and there are literally millions who would die for him because His love has changed their life. I hope this love has also changed your life.

Today we learned that we should love each other like He loved us. When we love each other with love like this, those who don't know Him will be drawn to Him. Sacrificial love is powerful, and all of us long for relationships where such love is practiced. Unfortunately, many times, we fail and our love is imperfect. When our love is imperfect, we can depend on His perfect love for forgiveness. As we experience His forgiveness, it motivates us. We want to show others that love to others and love like He loved us. Through our imperfections and in our brokenness His love is shines through. This is the love that is so amazing and so attractive!

There is another aspect of His love worth thinking about. This teaching was and continues to be revolutionary. It is found in Matt 5, Jesus said, *"But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you."* Imagine hearing this for the first time. How is this possible? Why would anyone do this? Jesus, are you serious? Yet this is exactly what Jesus did. He showed us clearly how to live like this. This is extreme. He did not say don't fight, instead he asks us to fight with love. Put away the guns, put away the bombs, forget the fists and harsh words. Try loving your enemy. This is what Jesus taught. Talk about revolutionary!

We hope you have enjoyed these topics on love. Let's make it our goal to become like Jesus in our love, in our love for God and in our love for each other. As you model His love, those around you will notice and want what you have. This is awesome, Love the lost into His church. God bless you as you model Jesus revolutionary teaching on love.

My friend, was this teaching helpful? If you'd like a copy, either in print or on an audio CD, just contact us and ask for it by the title. Or log onto our website

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And when you contact us, you can request our Bible Study Guide, *Hope Herald*. It follows these radio programs and will help you learn more about what we're studying from John's Gospel. So, ask for your free copy of *Hope Herald* today.

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Now, I urge you to tune in next week as Pastor J. Mark continues our study from John's Gospel. You won't want to miss it. And until then, keep looking to Jesus, He'll give you hope for today!