



John 13:35 (NIV)

"By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another."

In this chapter of John, we find Jesus in one of the most intimate and powerful moments of His ministry. It's the night before His crucifixion. The disciples are gathered around the table, completely unaware of just how close they are to the most pivotal moment in history. Jesus has just washed their feet—a radical act of humility and service. An act so shocking for the time because this task was normally reserved for the lowest of servants.

Jesus didn't wash their feet out of kindness. He did it to model the upside-down nature of His Kingdom. Jesus, our High King, kneels before His followers, taking the position of a servant. Jesus is showing them and us that love is demonstrated through humility and service.

And then, He gave them what He called a new commandment: "Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another" (John 13:34).

Maybe you're in a season of waiting, heartache, or confusion. You might be questioning why certain doors have closed or why certain prayers haven't been answered yet. It's in these moments that God invites us to go deeper into our trust in Him.

Think about Joseph's story in Genesis 37-50. He was betrayed by his brothers, sold into slavery, and imprisoned unjustly. Joseph went through unimaginable pain. Yet in the end, Joseph was able to declare:

"You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives." – Genesis 50:20 The same God who redeemed Joseph's story is at work in ours. Trust that He is there even in your mess. Lean into His promises. Despite what it looks like around you, He is still on the throne, and He isn't done yet.

The command to love wasn't new but what was new is Jesus' definition of love. The example that He gave us through His life and ministry. Jesus redefined true love. His love was sacrificial, unconditional, and active. It wasn't just a feeling but a choice to put others before Himself-even when they didn't deserve it.

In verse 35, Jesus explains the profound effect of this kind of love:

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Our love for others is meant to be our most visible testimony. The world won't recognize us as Jesus' followers by the crosses we wear, the bumper sticker on our car, a tattoo, the church we attend, our inspirational t-shirts or hats, or even how many Bible verses we know. It will be through the way we love and how we treat people. This isn't just about loving when it's convenient or when others are easy to love. It's about loving sacrificially, unconditionally, and relentlessly, just as Jesus loved His disciples—despite their flaws, failures, and betrayals. His love is a counterculture radical love that causes the world to stop and be curious as to why our love is so extravagant.

Loving others the way Jesus loves us is not easy. It means loving people who frustrate us, who have hurt us, or who think and act differently than we do. It requires grace, patience, and a willingness to put someone else's needs ahead of our own. This is why Jesus' command is so radical-because it calls us to die to ourselves daily and live out His love.

And His love is active, not passive. It goes beyond kind words and good intentions. It looks like:

- Forgiving someone even when they haven't apologized.
- Serving quietly, without expecting recognition.
- Listening with empathy instead of rushing to judgment.
- Giving sacrificially, whether it's our time, talent, or treasures.
- Standing with others in their pain, even when we don't fully understand it.

When we choose to love like this, we reflect Jesus to a world that desperately needs Him. In a culture that often celebrates selfishness and division, Christlike love shines like a beacon of hope. Imagine how different our communities, families, and workplaces would look if love was our first response in every situation. Imagine the impact on those who don't yet know Jesus if they encountered His love through the way His people treated one another.

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Every interaction we have is an opportunity to point others toward Him. When people see our love in action, they should be able to say, "There's something different about them." And when they ask, we can then point them to Jesus **READ:**

1 John 4:7-8

Romans 12:10

Colossians 3:14

Matthew 5:16

REFLECT:

- How do my actions demonstrate love to those around me?
- If others followed me around for a day, would they see Jesus through my life and in my daily actions?
- Who in my life do I find most difficult to love?What steps can I take to show them love like Jesus?
- When has someone's love for me made me feel seen and valued? How can I offer that same gift to others?

PRAYER:

Father God, thank You for showing me what true love looks like through Jesus. Thank You for His example of love and sacrifice. Help me to love others with that same selfless, patient, and unconditional love. When it's hard, remind me that my love is a testimony to the world of Your grace. Let my words and actions reflect You so that others may see You through me. In Jesus name I pray. Amen.