

Sermon Title- What Are We Known For?

Sermon Synopsis- As Christ followers we must represent Jesus to the World (Great Commission) by loving each other the way He Love us

Themes- Christ-like Love, Gospel

A One Week Break from Luke-

In our months long series we have been focusing on apprenticing Jesus- what he said & did and how it applies to us living lives on a pathway w/ Christ

We are taking a 1 week break from Luke and will kick off a 6 week mini-series continuing in Luke next week titled- "Detours"

This Week we will still studying apprenticing Jesus but starting in a short 2 verse section in the Gospel of John. This sermon is titled- **What are we known for?**

John 13:34-35 (ESV)

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.** ³⁵ **By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."**

Intro-

- **USC story** (emphasizes representing for the purpose)
 - **Purpose & Standard**
 - Attitudes & Actions
- Very Distinctive in the way we represented the Trojan Football Team....In these 2 verses in John, Jesus lays out how as Christians we are to be distinctive/in what we are known for....in the way we represent Jesus as disciples/apprentices

Context- setting the stage for the text we are going to look at today:

- After 3 years of teaching/coaching hours before Rabbi Jesus leaves the disciples, demonstrates Christ-like Love by washing their feet (explain)
- **A NEW commandment was given-** not a suggestion or request
- Interesting what he did **NOT** say what they would be known by
 - Knowledge, Power, Faith, Generosity, Sacrifice

Love chapter in 1 Corinthians reinforces a similar point- after discussing the importance and power of various spiritual gifts in 12, Paul puts a caveat as we start Chapter 13

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

13 If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, **I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.** ² And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, **I am nothing.** ³ If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, ^[a] but have not love, **I gain nothing.**

- **It's abundantly clear to Love each other is important but how is this commandment really "new"**
 - Leviticus 19:18- God lays out this command to Moses- Love your neighbor as yourself- hundreds of years b4 Jesus's birth
- **2 things make it new-**
 - **A New Standard**
 - **As I have loved you**
 - Jesus's LOVE is the New standard-Immediately after a live demonstration- washing feet (humble service) and right before Jesus dies on the cross- Bookended
 - Ephesians 5- standard for Husbands in marriage- "as Christ loves the Church" (sacrifice)
 - **A New Purpose**
 - **By this ALL people will know** (representing Jesus), His reputation is at stake
 - Great commission is coming (Matt 28)...(relate to people on the fence)
- If you asked those closest to you, what do you think they would say you are **"known for?"**
 - Reality SB?
 - The Church?

Problem

- Studies say we (Christians) are known for lots of things
 - **Barna Study-**
 - **Hypocritical-85%**
 - White washed tombs- clean outside/dead inside, say 1 thing do another- (say one thing-do another)
 - **Judgmental-87%**
 - Log in your eye, (critical spirit)
 - **Pharisee like in attitudes & actions-51%** (self-assessment)
 - **Lifestyle the same as non-Christians- 85%**
 - Not distinctive, transformation not obvious
 - **Favorable view of evangelicals- 3%** (18-29 year old non-Christians)
- Have you ever gotten this feedback (or felt it yourself)?
 - I like Jesus but I don't like Christians and I don't like the Church
- How does this impact the mission?- (making disciples of the nations)
 - Out of alignment with Jesus's plan to work through Christians and the Church

Listen to Paul's explanation of God using the church in Ephesians 3-

Ephesians 3:9-11 (NLT)

⁹ I was chosen to explain **to everyone** this mysterious plan that God, the Creator of all things, had kept secret from the beginning.

¹⁰ God's purpose in all this was to use the church to display his wisdom in its rich variety to **all the unseen rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.**¹¹ This was his eternal plan, which he carried out through Christ Jesus our Lord.

God has a plan to use us for His grand purpose, not just those around us, but for us as the Church to show off in the heavenly realm...like a mirror

- So we have this grand plan, a new commandment- to Love as Jesus Loved....But there is a GAP, we are missing the mark

Why do we have a gap? It's not our natural human tendency- (old self & new self) battling.....Jesus's Love is the standard.....where do you see yourself living out life on this spectrum....

- Humility- Selfishness
- Gentleness- Harshness
- Patience- Impatience
- Compassion- Indifference/ Cruelty

On a 30 minute trip to the grocery store this weekend God showed me how the battle is being waged in my heart.

- Parking lot- empty spot/cart
- Isle- blocking my progress
- Check out- 15 item line

Can you relate....can you see in your marriage, with your parents or kids, in the workplace, at school.....how the battle in your heart is being waged

Living this out is obviously a challenge given the Barna Group survey results. We have a new command to Love like Jesus loves us, but a GAP exists and a battle is being fought in our hearts. In Philippians Paul emphasizes we aren't on our own in battle.

Philippians 2:1-4 (ESV)

2 So if there is any encouragement in **Christ**, any comfort from love, any participation in the **Spirit**, any affection and sympathy, ² complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, **being in full accord** and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

It's not something we can do in our own power, it flows from the Love of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit in us (Father, Son, Us, Others)

Look at Jesus's demonstration in the scene just before He gave this New Command to the disciples-

WE have a command with a NEW standard and a NEW purpose but we have a problem/gap/challenge. A battle being waged but there is GOOD NEWS.....we are not expected to wage the battle alone

Solution/Step forward

Colossians 3:12-17 (ESV)

1. Remember Who loves you-

¹² Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved,

2. Remember how He loves you-

(NIV- "clothe yourself") with compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³ bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

3. Rely on how He's Equipped you

¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. *And be thankful.* ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

4. Represent HIM with a thankful heart

¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Conclusion-

We are being called to Love like Jesus in a new standard for a grand purpose, but not being left alone to do it....it is fueled by the overflow of his love for us. As we spend time in worship, remember- who loves you, how He loves you, as a Christian how he equips you to Love others and step into His purposes.

Benediction- Eph. 3:17-19

(May) Christ dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Amen