



Loved to the End

"The Love of Jesus That Saves, Befriends, Restores, and Remains True"

- **John 13:1 NLT** Before the Passover celebration, Jesus knew that his hour had come to leave this world and return to his Father. **He had loved his disciples during his ministry on earth, and now he loved them to the very end.**
- **John 13:34-35 NLT** - So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. [35] Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples."

The Heart of the Message

People use the word "love" in many different contexts. Scripture shows that **love can include sacrifice, friendship, tenderness, correction, forgiveness, truth, and boundaries.** Jesus loved everyone, but He did not relate to everyone in the same way.

- His love for the world moved Him to the Cross.
- His love for the disciples created friendship and shared mission.
- His love restored Peter after failure, remained truthful toward Judas in betrayal, and entered the grief of Lazarus and his family.

Three Dimensions of Love

1. **Agape** is self-giving love that seeks another person's true good, even at personal cost. This is the love revealed in **John 3:16: God loved**, God gave, and Christ came to save.
2. **Philia** is affectionate friendship expressed through trust, companionship, and shared life. Jesus said to His disciples, **"I have called you friends."** John 15:15.
3. **Eros** is romantic and marital desire. It belongs within the discussion of human covenant relationships, but it is not the character of the relationships between Jesus and the people discussed in this message.

Agape does not eliminate friendship, emotion, correction, or boundaries. It governs them. It teaches us to seek another person's good without surrendering truth.

Jesus and the World - Love that Saves

The world did not first earn Christ's love. God took the initiative. Jesus welcomed outsiders, served sinners, touched the rejected, and prayed for His enemies. His agape was offered before it was deserved and demonstrated through sacrifice.

John 3:16 - "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son..."

Jesus and the Disciples - Love that Befriends

Jesus called the disciples to follow Him, taught them, corrected them, washed their feet, and shared His mission with them. **Agape and philia were present together:** sacrificial commitment joined with friendship, trust, and companionship.

John 15:15 - "Henceforth I call you not servants... but I have called you friends."

Jesus and Peter - Love that Restores

Peter promised loyalty but denied Jesus three times. Jesus had already prayed that Peter's faith would not fail. After the resurrection, Jesus asked him three times, "Do you love me?" and then commanded, "Feed my sheep."

Love did not ignore Peter's failure. It confronted the failure, forgave the repentant disciple, and restored him to responsibility.

Jesus and Judas - Love that Remains Truthful

Jesus knew that Judas would betray Him. Still, Judas sat at the table, received the bread, and was treated without revenge. Jesus did not approve the betrayal or pretend that trust remained unchanged.

This relationship teaches that agape can preserve a person's dignity while naming wrongdoing and allowing consequences. Love does not require us to call evil good, enable destructive conduct, or place others in danger.

Jesus and Lazarus - Love that Enters Our Grief

Lazarus and his sisters were friends of Jesus. At the tomb, Jesus wept, and the people said, "Behold how he loved him!" Jesus displayed philia through personal affection and agape through compassionate action.

John 11:35-36 - "Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!"

What does this love require from us?

1. Love the world without becoming like the world

The Church is sent into the world with compassion, truth, and the message of reconciliation. **We do not wait for people to agree with us before treating them with dignity.** 2 Corinthians 5:18-20 NLT And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. **And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him.** [19] For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. [20] So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, "Come back to God!"

2. Build friendships that carry responsibility

Philia is more than enjoying someone's company. Christian friendship encourages, corrects, protects, and helps another person grow. **"A friend loveth at all times."** Proverbs 17:17 NLT: A friend is always loyal, and a brother is born to help in time of need.

3. Love without enabling betrayal or abuse

Jesus loved Judas, but He did not call evil good. Agape can forgive while maintaining boundaries. Love may require confronting, protecting others, and refusing to participate in destructive behaviour. Ephesians 4:15 NLT - **Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church.**

4. Enter the grief of others

Jesus wept with Lazarus's family. Sometimes love speaks; sometimes love serves; sometimes love simply remains present. Romans 12:15 NLT - **Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep.**

Conclusion

Jesus is the perfect revelation of love. He loved the world sacrificially, the disciples relationally, Peter restoratively, Judas truthfully, and Lazarus compassionately. **The same Christ commands us to love one another as He has loved us.**

Our love must be more than emotion. It must become service, friendship, truth, forgiveness, boundaries, presence, and sacrifice. When the Church loves this way, people do not merely hear a message about Jesus; they encounter evidence of His life among His people.

Prayer Points

- **Prayer for Christlike Love** - Lord, fill us with agape that serves without selfishness and loves without discrimination. John 13:34
- **Prayer for Restoration and Truth** - Lord, give us wisdom to forgive the repentant, confront wrongdoing lovingly, and maintain righteous boundaries. Galatians 6:1; Ephesians 4:15
- **Prayer for Compassionate Action** - Lord, make Citywide Christ Church a place where the grieving are comforted, the rejected are welcomed, and broken lives are restored. Romans 12:15; Isaiah 61:1-3

Final declaration: We will love as Christ loved us - sacrificially, faithfully, truthfully, and to the end.