

DAY 11

Love Like Jesus: Love

Having loved his own who were in the world ...

John 13:1

Leadership Affirmation

I greet this day with love for those I lead, calling out their names in prayer to the Lord.

One of the shortest yet most profound sentences in the Bible simply declares *God is love* (1 John 4:8). This word is *agape*, an abstract noun the Greek philosophers thought was unattainable on the terrestrial level. Yet here it is fully embodied in Jesus Christ in an upper room filled with tired men and dusty feet.

Great leaders love those they serve. Every action Jesus took was motivated by love. This is an expression of His intrinsic nature. It is an attribute of deity. Though it is an abstract noun, it is better understood as the complete embodiment of every high and noble quality of self-giving, sacrifice, service, building up, and giving with no expectation of return.

The verse before *God is love* is another simple sentence: *Love is from God* (1 John 4:7). The only way we can truly love those we lead is to abide in the One who lavished His love on us. Yes, Jesus loved His band of followers: our verse for the day is clear, *having loved his own who were in the world*. But in His high priestly prayer just a few chapters later in John's Gospel, we read of Jesus' love for *us* as well (John 17:20–23).

The Holy Spirit led Paul to paint a picture of *agape* love with a series of descriptive terms: *Love is patient, love is kind. Love does not envy, is not boastful, is not arrogant, is not rude, is not self-seeking, is not irritable, and does not keep a record of wrongs. Love finds no joy in unrighteousness but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things* (1 Corinthians 13:4–7).

How do we know God loves us? He *washed* (John 13:1–15). He *gave* (John 3:16). He *laid down* (1 John 3:16). He *demonstrates* (Romans 5:8–9). He *revealed*, coming to us that we might live through Him (1 John 4:9). Love is far more than a “feel good *feeling*.” Love is an active *doing*. Great leaders love like Jesus loved. It's instinctive.

Prayer for Protection

Dear Lord Jesus, I pray for the well-being of those who question my motives, misunderstand my aims, and disagree with my ideas. Lead me to remember the servant is not above his Master.