

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Sermon Road Map
Pastor Roger W. Huffman

John 13:31-35
May 18 & 19, 2019

The love of Christ - not a feeling or just being nice! Our new life.

- Al Fadi - raised in Islam - Saudi Arabia - most closed nation to the gospel
- Zeal - eager to be a jihadist in Afghanistan. Spared - became engineer
- USA for graduate school - hope to convert people to Islam
- Help with conversational English - assign to family (a Christian ministry)
 - ♦ *Something was so special about them. They were different ...lifestyle ...attitudes ...love and kindness I could tell they had this genuine heart - desire to help me.* He was touched by this - seed sown, germ planted
 - ♦ Years later, a Christian coworker, genuine interest, answers - cracks
 - ♦ Check it out: ***A Jihadist Overcome by the Love of Jesus***
- ❖ The power of Jesus' love
 - The wife of a WELS missionary to Indonesia grew very close to a woman who told her: *I hate you. You are not what we were told Christians are.* Her love was breaking through and disrupting the lies of Islam.
 - LWMS speaker - Susan Hatcher - the power of Christian unconditional love gave witness to a very different God. LDS teacher led Susan to see God as a mean old man on the throne out to get her for all her sins.
 - Jesus promised. ...***love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, [since] you have love for one another.***

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- A love different than the love common to families, friends, your people
- ⁴⁶ *...if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Even tax collectors do that, don't they?* ⁴⁷ *If you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even the unbelievers do that?* Matt. 5
- A different love - hallmark of Jesus' followers (Not *cultural Christians*)
- The mission of God - distinctive love - draws - unique Source: God
 - ♦ Response: anger - resist - cause to pause - draw in
- Jesus knew the impact this would have on others. Striking, some strike back. Others drawn to it. Others resist, but in time can't deny. Unique to Christianity. Marker that it is real - of God.
 - ♦ *In the same way let your light shine in people's presence, so that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.* Matt. 5:16
 - ♦ Different: Jesus and the Father are glorified as the Source

"A new commandment I give you: Love one another. Just as I have loved you, so also you are to love one another." John 13:34 EHV

- *New commandment* to love? What's new about that? Here's what's new:
 - ♦ ***Just as I have loved you***
 - ♦ Love known for, his glory: suffering, cross, death, burial - in our place.
 - ♦ From this springs our new life of love, Jesus modeled: attitude, mindset
 - Patiently dealt with foolish blind sinners - to set free from sin's grip
- ❖ The Source of this love - Jesus.
 - We don't do this. Jesus works this new life in his followers to his glory.
 - New Converts: this love is remarkable, new, renews, new life, vital
 - So is this new commandment optional for Christians?
 - ♦ It's only as optional as Jesus' love is for us.
 - ♦ Those who can't live without Jesus' love - will love. Their new life.
 - ♦ Those who think *knowing about the cross* is all there is - will tire.
 - ♦ This love calls for daily plumbing the depths, height, breadth of Jesus
 - The more we taste the character, quality of his love - it infects us.
 - John knows: ***We love because he first loved us.*** 1 John 4:19
 - Followers of Jesus reveal their Maker. They belong to him.
- ❖ This new love infects us to the core. Made new - we live new.
 - ***...love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, [since] you have love for one another.***
 - This unique fruit of faith reveals the character of faith/new life.
 - Love is God's will. Sin is loveless and/or pseudo-love
 - Forgiveness is the wellspring of God's love.
 - ♦ His care that doesn't treat us as we deserve, paid for our sin in full.
 - ♦ His loving forgiveness rescues us from sin's self-serving agenda
 - Our new hearts - forgiving hearts - patience, shares God's rescuing goal
 - ♦ Not see Muslims, Mormons, atheists as enemy - victims of the enemy
 - ♦ Listen, respect as people, care, share God's good news
 - ***A new commandment I give you: Love one another.***
 - ♦ Jesus is clear. Special love for fellow believers is how we love him.
 - ♦ Since this new love is our new life - it's our mission, purpose of life
 - ♦ Brothers and sisters - family - share common new life - 1 Cor. 13
 - Patient. Listen. Empathize with weakness. Respect. Encourage.
 - Acts 11 - challenges us to love *people who are different* in the church
 - Communication - not judging, assuming - give benefit of the doubt
 - ♦ The need for a community of care - universal, especially now.
 - This difference - a big difference - God's work in you

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Hymn of the Day

Church of God, Elect and Glorious | 774

¹ Church of God, elect and glorious, Holy nation, chosen race;
Called as God's own special people, Royal priests and heirs of grace:
Know the purpose of your calling, Show to all his mighty deeds;
Tell of love that knows no limits, Grace which meets all human needs.

² God has called you out of darkness - Into his most mar'ulous light;
Brought his truth to life within you, Turned your blindness into sight.
Let your light so shine around you - That God's name is glorified;
And all find fresh hope and purpose - In Christ Jesus crucified.

³ Once you were an alien people, Strangers to God's heart of love;
But he brought you home in mercy, Citizens of heav'n above.
Let his love flow out to others, Let them feel a Father's care;
That they too may know his welcome - And his countless blessings share.

⁴ Church of God, elect and holy, Be the people he intends;
Strong in faith and swift to answer - Each command your master sends:
Royal priests, fulfill your calling - Through your sacrifice and prayer;
Give your lives in joyful service - Sing his praise, his love declare.