

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Sermon Road Map
Pastor Roger W. Huffman

John 13:31-35
May 15, 2022

Reveal God's real cure for the isolating impact of sin.

- Last Friday's *All Things Considered* - Ari Shapiro took his listeners into Warsaw's picturesque Castle Square to meet a young musician in his 20s, *long hair tucked under a brown leather baseball cap. On his feet are mismatched socks - one yellow, one blue, the colors of the Ukrainian flag* - Roman Panchenko, a Ukrainian.
 - ♦ To support his country and fellow Ukrainians, isolated from their country, he started singing in the square - singing the songs of Ukraine.
 - ♦ On *ATC* he sang a song sung by BoomBox entitled *Lyudey* - Ukrainian for *human*.
 - Refrain: *We are only human when we love a lot.* - care and encouragement
- We keep hearing about the isolation brought on by the COVID pandemic.
 - ♦ Children longed for friends to play with - to love and be loved.
 - ♦ Adults pulled out of their communities, lacking interaction, purpose, love
- Humans need human interaction.
 - ♦ *It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.* Genesis 2:18
 - ♦ People need people - relationships, interaction, stimulation, to love and be loved.
 - ♦ The impact of the lack of love - of healthy relationships - devastating toll on children
 - ♦ We love stories of humanity and care - people making a difference to the hurting.
 - ♦ People know, BoomBox, the Beatles: *All you need is love...*, song after song says it.
 - ♦ So why so much loneliness? Why does human love not fully meet the need?
- Jesus spoke about a love that would stand out as totally unique.
 - ♦ *By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.*

Jesus Revealed God's real cure for the isolating impact of sin.

- ❖ Jesus reveals the **key** to this **unique** love.
 - *I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, that you also love one another.* NASB
 - ♦ This passage has a double *purpose clause* (**that**) - emphatic. Jesus' purpose for us.
 - ♦ The commandment to love is not new or fresh. What is *new* about it?
 - ♦ 1. *...as I have loved you* - 2. *one another* - the community that loves, his disciples
 - Jesus defines this love: *as I have loved you*
 - ♦ Jesus is going to be glorified for this love: the cross, resurrection, ascension, reign
 - ♦ The Father honors Jesus for his self-sacrificing love for us - atoning death.
 - ♦ Love: devoted to seeking **the benefit of others**, no matter what the cost.
 - *Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.* John 15:13
 - That's impressive. Others might do this for good friends. Are we good?
 - ♦ What's unique and stunning about Jesus' love? That he loves **self-centered rebels**.
 - We are in love with ourselves. Live for self. Trusting **self** - **self**-reliant.
 - **Self**-centered, lazy, choosing our *ease* over *challenges*.
 - We love others because it feels good to **me** - it gives **me** what **I** want or *need*.
 - We are born seeing ourselves as the *lord of my life, the decider* = freedom
 - In fact this is enslavement to sin - blind to reality, the truth, and our Creator.
 - Detest submitting to God and his will. Rebels. Sin **isolates** from God and others.

- It's hard to love a person like us, so absorbed in self that we **isolate** from others.
 - We isolate thinking we are our own *lord*. We didn't bring ourselves into existence, endow ourselves with our gifts or provide our daily needs. Isolates us from God
 - Why would God care about us? He had every just reason to write us off. Still does.
 - Because he chose to value worthless JUNK!
 - He ascribed value to us, wanting to reclaim and remake us to be his own children.
 - That's how Jesus loved us and brought us into the relationship: friends of the Lord.
 - His love paid for crimes and rebellion with his life blood.
 - His blood washed us clean in God's sight and robed us in his perfect love.
 - He changed us, creating a new heart and mindset in us - in his image.
 - His children are changed by his love - empowered & equipped to love.
 - That was his purpose or goal for us. That's who we are. That's our new calling.
 - Our new hearts love to serve our God. His kind of love is our new nature.
 - It's what we will be for all eternity and want to mature in and practice now.
- ❖ How can we love Jesus when we cannot go where he has gone?
- *just as I have loved you, that you also love one another.*
 - ◆ This new command goes beyond, *love your neighbor as yourself.*
 - ◆ The *one another* is your fellow believers, made new by Jesus' love.
 - ◆ We share a real bond of new life in Jesus - a new mindset - a heart of unique love.
 - ◆ Jesus will note this on Judgment Day: *'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'* Matthew 25:40
 - ◆ Yes, like Jesus, Christians care about unbelievers and show love.
 - ◆ Yet Jesus makes the unique life of love among his own the hallmark others see.
 - The only way you can love your fellow believers is to spend time together.
 - ◆ If you don't get to know each other, love is hamstrung and remains surface love.
 - ◆ This is why Christians have always gathered in communities out of isolation to love.
 - Gathered to encourage one another in worship, study, service, relationship building
 - Jesus gave you this mission. His work is done in us getting to know each other.
 - This is not merely a cultural bond. Share your faith, challenges, and hope.
 - Are you one who is eager to love and give, but don't like to receive? Why interfere?
 - Sin separates and isolates - Christ-like care unravels and heals isolation.
 - ◆ Love doesn't demand that others love me. It's too busy loving others.
 - ◆ This love loves like Jesus: patient, respectful, gentle, merciful, yet persistent.
 - ◆ Because love seeks to promote God's transforming and maturing work in each other.
 - ◆ Since Christ's love made us disciples, we disciple each other by modeling love and training one another in love.
 - ◆ You see this love is not merely caring feelings. It is active, involved.
 - It has to be for others to see it and sense how unique this love is.
 - *By this everyone will know* - know by experience, seeing, sensing...
 - Isolated people longing to be loved and to love - see Christians have something special.
 - ◆ Al Fadi, raised in Islam in Saudi Arabia - the love of Christian family was used by Jesus to create a crack and plant a seed. *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. - A Jihadist Overcome by the Love of Jesus*
 - ◆ Let the unique love of Jesus work in your relationship among believers so others see we have something unique - something missing in their lives. It's Jesus' purpose to

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