

LOVE EMBODIED: JESUS CHRIST - John 3:16–17; John 13:1–17; Romans 5:6–8

Last week, we focused on a Biblical truth that reshapes everything: **God is love**. Not love as we often define it. Not love as the world defines it. Not love as a feeling, a tolerance, or a preference—but love rooted in God’s own character. We looked at Moses on Mount Sinai and heard God proclaim His name: merciful, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. We also learned that Israel’s hope—and ours—has never been about performance, but in the very essence of God.

After taking into consideration the interaction between God and Moses and the truth revealed to us through that interaction, John took it even further and reminded us that love does not originate in us. Yes, authentic Love is directly from God because God *is* love. Unless the love we have and share with others is founded in this truth, we are perpetuating a love which contradicts His character is counterfeit. So, this brings me to another important question: **Since God is the definition of love, then what does this divine love look like to us?**

Today, we are moving on from definition to demonstration. From proclamation to incarnation. God does not just leave love as this simple thought or even as a profound revelation of truth for us to consider—He builds upon this reality and takes the next step by putting it on display through a person. If you want to know what God’s love looks like in real time, you must only look at Jesus. The Scriptures teach us that Jesus is God in the flesh. Therefore, Jesus is love in the flesh. Love that walks with us, that touches us, that heals us, that weeps with us, that mourns with us, that kneels with us, that comforts us, and as we mentioned last week, love that bled and died for us. Let’s look together at how God’s love is embodied to us through His Son Jesus Christ.

Jesus Reveals God’s Heart

Read John 3:16–17 - If you recall from last week in Exodus 34, God revealed His character. In Jesus, that character steps into the world. **John 3:16** informs us of *why* Jesus came. In our business world, we would call this God’s purpose statement. God’s love for the world is so great that He gave His Son, Jesus, so that anyone who trusts in Him can receive eternal life instead of judgment. It shows that salvation is a gift of love, offered freely to all who believe. **John 3:17** reveals us *how* God, the One is just “Is” relates to us on our level. Jesus is not God changing His mind about humanity. He is God revealing His heart toward humanity. This verse then becomes God’s mission statement: *“God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him.”*

When we take God’s purpose and God’s mission into consideration, we see that God’s love is **Intentional** — it is for all people. It is **Missional** — it moves toward the lost. It is **Compassionate** — it seeks the broken. And it is **Redemptive** — it restores rather than rejects.

The same God who renewed His covenant with Israel after the golden calf incident now sends His Son to renew all of humanity. If you are here today and you’re lost, or broken, or maybe feel

rejected, there is One who wants to love you right where you're at. Jesus offers forgiveness and redemption. He is not here to condemn. **Read John 3:18.** Will you trust these words today? Will you put your faith in God's love – His Son Jesus?

Jesus Models Love Through Humility

If John 3 shows us God's heart towards humanity, then John 13 shows us God's posture. This is a familiar passage for us, but I hope as I read it to you, you will recognize how God's love is the driving force in this moment. **Read John 13:1–5.** On the night of betrayal, Jesus, King of Kings, Lord of Lords, wraps a towel around His waist and washes the feet of His disciples—including Judas. This is the love explained in Exodus 34 in motion: merciful, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love. Here we see: Love stoop. Love serves. Love chooses humility over status. Love does not discriminate between the deserving and undeserving. The God who once descended in a cloud to Moses now kneels on the floor.

Here is the answer to a question that I am asked frequently: Do you think God can really forgive me of all the things I have done? Absolutely! This story reminds us of the beauty behind God's gift of salvation. Jesus had to become flesh to save us from the things of the flesh. It is the love of God kneeling so that one day we could be lifted. What a beautiful picture of the restoration offered to those who believe.

This passage of Scripture also teaches us about humble servanthood. If Jesus washed feet, then there is no act of service that should be beneath us. In a moment where the script should have been flipped, the One who came to save, put on the towel of humility, and kneeled to serve one last time. If you're struggling with servanthood, especially towards those whom you view in a lesser light, Jesus will help you with that too. All you need to do is pay attention. Love always recognizes before it moves. If we are to "Love the Mountain," we must first recognize the hurting and those in need, understand that God's love is the answer, and then allow that love to pour out through us. Are you willing to take the towel, wrap it around your waist, wade into the dirty, and serve those who need it most?

Jesus Calls Us to Embody That Love

Let's look at the rest of this story. **Read John 13:6–17.** Jesus does not treat this moment as symbolic theater. He turns it into a command. In verse 14, we see these words, we see this command from Jesus - "*You also ought to wash one another's feet.*" This is not a command to do this physically or by repeating a ritual — it is about adopting a posture. The love God defined in His character and embodied in Christ is now meant to be reflected through those who put their faith in Him. Love is not proven by emotion. Love is proven by action. Love is not measured by words. Love is measured by sacrificial service.

Jesus Completes Love at the Cross

Read Romans 5:6–8. Paul reminds us that Christ died for us while we were still sinners. This is the fullest expression of Exodus 34 love—steadfast, forgiving, and just. Jesus on the cross absorbs our sin. Every bit of it. When that sin is absorbed, it is never given back. It is love that bears our deserved wrath. Jesus did not avoid that. Aren't you glad? Love paid a price that you and I could never pay. Aren't you glad about that? The cross of Christ is not God reacting to our goodness or recognizing our performance. It is God responding to our need. It is God, wrapped in a towel, kneeling, to clean our filthiness.

Conclusion

Last week, we learned that God defines love. This week, we see how Jesus embodies it. The love of God is not sentimental or superficial. It is humble, sacrificial, servant-hearted, forgiving, and saving. The invitation remains the same, but the call deepens:

- **Receive His love.**
- **Rest in His love.**
- **Reflect His love.**

Are you ready to put on the towel, follow Jesus, and let the love God revealed in His character and expressed through His Son be made visible through your life?