

Knowing how strong

- How can you tell how **strong** someone is (or is not)?
- How can you tell how **smart** someone is (or is not)?
- How can you tell how **patient** someone is (or is not)?
- How can you tell how **kind** someone is (or is not)?
- How can you tell how **loving** someone is (or is not)?
- How can you tell how **loving** Jesus is?

1

As Jesus loved...
John 13:31-38

bib.ly/John13.NIV
tiny.cc/cmchandouts

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John 13:1-20: Jesus washes the apostles' feet

“It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, **he loved them to the end.**” *13:1*

Jesus washed their feet: a shocking display of humility and service, especially by their leader in that culture

Including Judas, who was about to betray Jesus!

“Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. **I have set you an example** that you should do as I have done for you.” *14-15*

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John 13:21-30: Jesus says 1 of the apostles is a betrayer

“Jesus **was troubled in spirit** and testified, ‘Very truly I tell you, one of you is going to betray me.’” *13:21*

Jesus knew who it was, yet He didn't tell them who or stop it

None of the rest of the apostles had any idea

Having a betrayer in your inner circle is great shame for the leader as well as the people!

- **It could suggest to the apostles that Jesus was not as wise as they thought, and that maybe He was wrong in other things too**
- **It could make them suspicious of others in their group**

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John 13:31-33

Judas

When **he** was gone, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man is glorified and God is glorified in him. If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in **himself**, and will glorify him at once.

God the Father

“My children, I will be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: Where I am going, you cannot come.

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John 13:34-35

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

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John 13:36-38

Simon Peter asked him, “Lord, where are you going?”

Jesus replied, “Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later.”

Peter asked, “Lord, why can’t I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.”

Then Jesus answered, “Will you really lay down your life for me? Very truly I tell you, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times!”

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John 13:31-38

31-33: Jesus’ time had finally come to be “glorified”

- Judas’s departure to betray Jesus for money put in motion Jesus’ final hours (“at once”)
- Glory of the Father and of the Son are tied together
 - Son’s obedience even to an unjust death shows the Father’s greatness (total submission by Son of God)
 - Glory of God seen in radical self-giving
 - Father glorifies the Son for His obedience by giving Him the name above every name
 - No more delay!

34-35: • “You cannot come”: they lack the moral courage to

36-38: stay with Jesus (even though they claim to have it)

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John 13:31-38

31-33: Jesus' time has finally come to be “glorified”

34-35: Love is the “new” command that is their key trait

- What is “new” in the ancient command to love?
 - As Jesus loves:
 - “without reservation and without limit”
 - Sacrificed His life for the undeserving
 - Even for His enemies
 - Much more urgent now because Jesus is leaving
 - Imagine disciples gathering after Jesus' death...
- Distinctive quality: the fingerprint or DNA of Jesus
 - Like looking at a crime scene: were Christians here?

36-38:

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John 13:31-38

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34-35: Love is the “new” command that is their key trait

36-38: Apostles were not very loving and not very lovable

- “You **cannot** follow me now”
 - No one was stopping them
 - They did not love Jesus enough
 - “You will disown me”
 - They were all scattered, abandoning Jesus
 - They are not worthy of Jesus’ love and Jesus’ life given for them!
- **Yet Jesus “loved them to the end”**

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John 13:31-38

31-33: Jesus' time has finally come to be "glorified"

34-35: Love is the "new" command that is their key trait

36-38: Apostles were not very loving and not very lovable

**In Jesus' own time of greatest trial
and knowing that the apostles would soon face
their greatest trial so far,
Jesus gave this great and lasting command...**

Love one another, as I have loved you

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The Big Idea

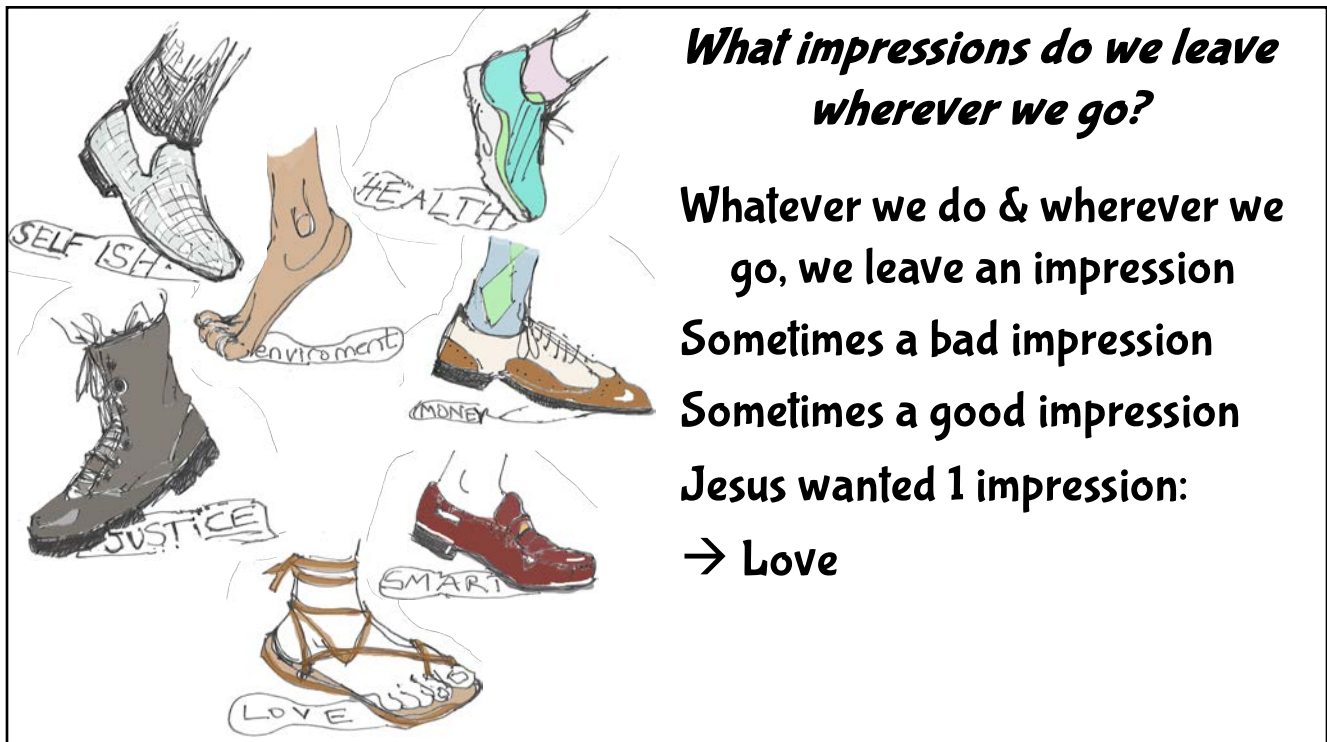
**The distinctive mark of Jesus' disciples
is self-sacrificing love
for God's people
even when they don't deserve it**

This is the evidence that Jesus is present: Love!

**Love is NOT unquestioning and unending tolerance
of wrong words, attitudes, and actions!**

Our focus today: the people we personally encounter

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What do people know about Jesus from people like us who claim to be His disciples?

- Jesus' said it should be...
 - **We love each other like Jesus loved us**
 - **Sadly it is so often many other things instead**
- Love is most visible when it is across differences and challenges, especially when there is great stress
 - “Ethnic and other forms of reconciliation within the Christian community are essential to its identity as a Christian community; **without such evidences the world cannot see the character of Jesus.**”

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- I so often (very wrongly) think...
 - My lack of love is okay (maybe even good) because these people don't actually deserve love, and because I am in great stress
 - In reality: “unlovable people” and stressful times reveal the weakness of my love and the glory of His
- Jesus' love was most obvious in His greatest stress and for the people who were failing Him
 - Our identity in Christ is clearest to us and to the world when we love like Jesus loved

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- Jesus treated Judas so well, no one (except Jesus) knew that Judas would betray Jesus for money!
- “As I have loved you”
 - Jesus washed their feet as the lowest servant
 - Even Judas's!
 - Jesus laid down His life for the disciples
 - Peter denied even knowing Jesus three times!
 - The others also abandoned Jesus

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The Big Idea

**The distinctive mark of Jesus' disciples
is self-sacrificing love
for God's people
even when they don't deserve it**

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Application

Be determined in Christ to love each other like Jesus

- And all the more when it gets stressful
- So what is love like?

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Love is patient, love is kind.

It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking,
it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

Love **does not delight in evil** **Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.** *Romans 12:9*

but **rejoices with the truth.** **Speak the truth in love** *Ephesians 4:15*

It always **protects**, always **trusts**,
always **hopes**, always **perseveres.**

Love **never fails.** *1 Corinthians 13:4-8*

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Application

Be determined in Christ to love each other like Jesus

- Love as Jesus loved
 - Self-sacrificially
 - Including when others don't deserve it
 - Hate evil, and speak the truth, yet **always** with a deep desire for the genuine good of the other, clinging to what is good
- Can only happen when Jesus lives in us, and we in Him
 - “I am the vine; you are the branches. **If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit**; apart from me you can do nothing.” *John 15:5* **“The fruit of the Spirit is love...”**

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GROWING +
in Christ
together
through all of us

Our vision for our church in 2021

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GROWING +
in Christ
together
through all of us

**People will know that Christ is present among us
when we love each other across our differences
the way that Jesus loved**

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Application

Be determined in Christ to love each other like Jesus

- Memorize 1 Corinthians 13 (or parts of it)
- Pray this passage daily and more (confessing...)
- Pick 2 people to love as Jesus loved
 - An existing relationship, maybe strained
 - A new or deepened relationship across a difference (race, ethnicity, nationality, education level, personality, ...)
- Pray **for** them
- Find an opportunity to **listen** to them
 - with humility & empathy
- Emphasis in relationship: looking for ways to love them

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The Big Idea

**The distinctive mark of Jesus' disciples
is self-sacrificing love
for God's people
even when they don't deserve it**

**How will people know that we truly are Jesus' people?
When Jesus is really among us and shaping us
The evidence: we love like Jesus loved**

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