

JESUS LOVES YOU

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Presented at Trinity Community Church, San Rafael, California, on Sunday, March 4, 2012

“Jesus loves you!”— It’s trite, cliché, and usually lacks the depth of a known relationship.

Yet, it expresses a ponderous truth: God, our Creator, has loved us with an everlasting, unending love!

Paul, an apostle tried and true, wrote these words: *I’m absolutely convinced that nothing—nothing living or dead, angelic or demonic, today or tomorrow, high or low, thinkable or unthinkable—absolutely nothing can get between us and God’s love because of the way that Jesus our Master has embraced us.* (Romans 8:38-39; MSG)

God’s love is so remarkably strong and enduring. Today, consider with me seven facets of the love that God has shown us through Jesus Christ.

1. Jesus’ Love is Patient

For how many years did God wander with the Jewish family, preparing them with His Law, His rituals of worship, His prophets? For how long has God dwelt with His Church, preparing her to carry His revealing message to the ends of the earth, preparing His Bride for His return?

God’s love is patient. It has no personal timetable; it works for the benefit of another, however long that may take.

Your love, therefore, should also be patient. People’s fickleness and indecision can provoke impatience. But don’t let impatience rule you; let love reign, with patience.

Don’t give up. You may be just one more act of kindness away from a breakthrough.

2. Jesus’ Love is Perceptive

This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin. (Hebrews 4:15; NLT)

According to the writer of Hebrews, Jesus, our Great High Priest, sympathizes with our weaknesses. He is moved by what moves you. He feels it when you are troubled or afraid. And when you feel weak or broken, He understands and stands with you.

He has carried your sorrows, and He shares your pain. His love is sensitive and caring.

God’s love does not pull away when things go awry for you. He is neither embarrassed, nor ashamed. Rather, He reaches out to you at just such times.

God’s love grieves with you and, thereby, heals your wounds. Would you do the same for someone else? When you feel like pulling away and disassociating yourself, ask God to love them through you. Your sacrifice will not go unnoticed.

3. Jesus' Love is Persevering

[Jesus] had loved his disciples during his ministry on earth, and now he loved them to the very end. (John 13:1; NLT)

Jesus' love never gives up. He dismantles guilt and overcomes shame. Jesus sets us free.

How many times has He reached out to you, when you had assumed He had given up? His love perseveres.

God's love empowers people. It generates hope. It releases people to effectiveness. Because it perseveres. Do you persevere in love? This may be love's greatest strength.

4. Jesus' Love is Provocative

God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8; NKJV)

Jesus sets His own example before us to inspire us to further acts of love—the godly died for the ungodly.

God's love leads the way, It takes the initiative and takes the risks to carve a path for others to follow.

If you won't take the initiative or risk rejection, it's hard to say that you have ever really loved.

An important thing to know: when God provokes you to love, He will back your initiative. Trust Him.

5. Jesus' Love is Persistent

A third time he asked him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" (John 21:17; NLT)

Jesus never gives up on us. He repeatedly calls us back to Himself. He is ever the Servant—our Lord and Master (what irony!). But that's the kind of leadership He teaches.

God's love persists, keeps returning. Love checks in, follows up, reconnects, and prods again. Won't you do the same?

Haven't you needed God's persistent love and grace? Where might you be today without it? Probably there's someone in your life today who needs that same kind of persisting love. Go ahead; it will be worth it.

6. Jesus' Love is Provident

Before they call I will answer; while they are yet speaking I will hear. (Isaiah 65:24; ESV)

God was known in the Old Testament as "the One who sees and He provides."

God's love observes and serves, according to the need of the one loved. A faithful servant is always observant, seeking to anticipate his master's needs before he is asked.

The waiter who gets the big tip is the one who not only responds when you call, but who sees you emptying your glass and, by the time you set it down, is there with a pitcher to refill it.

If you're going to really love others, in the way that Jesus has loved you, you must become keenly observant of the ones you love, jumping at the opportunity to meet a need.

7. Jesus' Love is Peaceable

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. (John 14:27; NIV)

Jesus generally seeks peace, and makes peace, wherever He is permitted. He is committed to breaking down divisions and developing unity.

God's love stands ready to forgive, even "seventy times seven." His love seeks to understand, not to judge (there will come a time of judgment, but for now, in grace, it has been suspended). Can we do less?

God's love breaks down walls and builds bridges. How can we do the opposite and call ourselves His children?

Matthew 5

It's remarkable how these seven facets of Jesus' love parallel the guidelines He laid down for us, which we know as the Beatitudes.

"You're blessed if you live this way," He said. "You're blessed if you do these things."

After He had washed His disciples feet, Jesus used that poignant moment to teach a lesson:

I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you... Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them. (John 13:15, 17; NIV)

God loves to bless His people, but most times, in order to do so, His people must cooperate with His purpose. We will be blessed *if* we love as He loved us. The alternative is not something I want to invite.

1 Corinthians 13

It is equally notable that these seven facets of the love of Jesus correspond quite well with Paul's description of godly love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. This is how God loves us, and how we, in turn, are to love others, starting with the people in your family and church.

It's Not Up to You Alone

It's not always easy; it's often challenging. But God has prepared us. He has poured His love—this same seven-faceted love—into our hearts.

God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us. (Romans 5:5; NIV)

His love... into *our* hearts. What a marvel! He does not demand that we come up with a love that matches His. Instead, He offers to pour His love through us!

Have you ever felt like you had come to the end of your love? Like you just had no more to give? I know I have. And it is just then—at the end of your love—that God’s love grabs the baton and runs on. If you ask Him.

Don’t hesitate to ask Him, for He never expects you to achieve this on your own. That is impossible! Such love is too great for any of us. That’s why we call it “the love of God.”

He pours it in; we need to let it out.

It’s to Be Shared

God has called us to show these seven facets of love to one another.

This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. (John 15:12; NLT)

Jesus replied, “ ‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.” (Matthew 22:37-40; NLT)

Everything else that God has ever required of men hangs on these two hooks: love God and love each other. If you work at these two, you will cover all the other bases at the same time.

You may fail in a lot of other ways, and still succeed in the Christian life; but if you fail to love as Christ has loved you, you will have missed the single most important opportunity of your life.

Loving others will always be your greatest challenge, but it will also be your greatest blessing.

Remember, it doesn’t start with you. Christ is our example, and Christ is our source. It’s not a matter of imitation, it’s a matter of impartation. Let Jesus love you—just let Him love you—until His love simply overflows.

Are you a candidate to receive more of His love? Here’s how you can do it:

Begin by thanking Him for the ways He has already loved you; be specific and thank Him one by one. Don’t forget to thank Him for the times He has loved you when you were unlovable (how amazing was that?!). And then, thank Him for how He loves you right now, today. When you wind up by worshiping the Great Lover of your soul, you will discover that your heart is filling up. Keep at it ‘til it reaches the brim, then go find someone to whom you can give it away.

Jesus really loves you!