

Love: “a strong affection for another arising out of kinship or personal ties; An assurance of affection.” [Merriam-Webster]

We all need that – assurances of love. Do you still love me?

Passover. Jesus knows - final night - disciples will need to remember this.

They will have questions . . . but - what they should never Q is Jesus’ love.

John 13:1 – “He had loved his disciples during his ministry on earth, and now he loved them to the very end.” **Us, too.**

Jesus got up, took off robe, wrapped a towel, and poured water into basin.

- He washed the feet of disciples. Peter protests.
- **John 13:7** – “You don’t understand now what I am doing, but someday you will.” More protests. Unless I wash you, you won’t belong to me.”
 - Jesus: “Do you understand what I was doing?” “Lord”.... example.
 - Yes, it’s a message of service / follow His example. But it’s more.

Jesus said - He came **not** to be **served**, but **to serve**. **Matt. 20:28.**

But It’s not service for the sake of service.

Philip asked: “Lord, show us the Father.” Jesus said: “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. . . ¹⁰ Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me?” - **John 15**

¹¹ **Just believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. Or at least believe because of the work you have seen me do.”**

- **His service – His works** – was to **show He’s in** the Father. Connected.
- **Father = Love.** Jesus showed the Father’s love. Every act was an act of love:
 - Stopped for **woman/well**. To talk... change her life.
 - Made **children** feel noticed, important. Changed lives... His time.
 - Talked with **lepers/tax/Centurion**... outsiders, alienated, castaways.
 - Highlighted **poor widow’s** giving ... she was valuable. Jesus noticed her
 - **Healing** the lame, blind, deaf . . . restoring withered hands, lives.
 - Dying on a cross. . . ultimate act of love.
 - Jesus didn’t just talk about the love of God, He lived it.
 - He showed it – actions were **evidence** of His connection to God, the Father.

John 13:34-35 – “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

- Love is **empty words** if not demonstrated. **Love=action**. Must show it!
- **1 John 4:9** – “This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.”
 - o God took action. **God sent...** and Jesus showed love in His service.
 - o God isn't a **distant being**, unattached, uninvolved ... wants relationship.
 - Jeremiah tried to explain this - **Jer. 31:3** - “I have loved you with an everlasting love. With unfailing love I have drawn you to myself.”
 - How does God draw us? By acts of mercy & kindness...
 - o He **rebuilds** us b/c life tears us down;
 - o He **restores** us b/c we screw up; selfish living.
 - o He **rejuvenates** us b/c we became weary; living life for ourselves, on our own, being in charge... making a mess.
 - o He **redeems** us b/c we can't save ourselves. Not perfect.

But what if you feel empty... nothing to give. How to bring **Love Alive**?

- **Ezek. 36:26** – “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will remove your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.”
- God has a **heart exchange** program. We **first** have to see the **need**.
 - o **1 John 4:7** – “let us love one another, for love comes from God.”
 - o You can't just try to make yourself love more.
 - It's why **David prayed**: “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.” – **Psalms 51:10**
 - **Our love goes out because Jesus' love has come in.**
 - o If struggling to show love to others, the problem isn't you... it's in your relationship with Jesus.
 - o **2 Cor. 5:17** – “anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person.”
 - Some **struggle** to “become a new person.” **2 common problems**:
 - 1) Want control** instead of surrendering; **2) hold** onto old life.
 - o Paul: “put off our former way of life”
 - o Jesus: “Remember Lot's wife. If you cling to your life, you will lose it, and if you let your life go, you will save it.”

- **Be willing** to give control to Jesus, and walk into a new, better way of living.
 - “We love because He first loved us.” – **1 John 4:19**
 - **For more love in our lives, get closer to Jesus.**

We all need love. . . to **know** when our **loved ones** are **gone**, **there was love**.

For the Disciples – that **Last Supper** would be Assurance/Reminder of His love.

- **Good Shepherd** is willing to **die** for the sheep. **Bread** ... broken for you.
- **Isaiah prophesied** Messiah would “pour out his life unto death.”
 - Jesus **poured** out His **blood** as a ransom for us. **Wine** ... for you.
 - Jesus gave His life... laid it down willingly.
 - “**There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.**”
John 15:13

Jesus didn’t ask us to die for each other, but He did say love each other.

We need to love each other when life gets dirty. Messy. Get out basin!

- We need to **show up** when people are hurting. **Yes, you’re loved.**
- We need to **reach out** - include people. **Yes, you’re loved.**
- We need to **grow up**. Stop living selfish... do for me.
 - As **kids**, love was what people did for you. C-mas: gifts for you.
 - **Adults**: love is what we give. It’s what we do for others.
 - **Don’t wait for someone to wash your feet. Pick up a basin.**

LOVE ALIVE in 2025 is possible. Get in the **heart exchange program**.

Love is shown because love is known.

Jesus asked Peter, “Do you love me?” Feed my sheep. **John 21:17.**

- **If we love Jesus ... if we stay connected to the vine ... we will love others.**
 - **Our love will show who we belong to, and that God is love.**
- How much do you love Jesus?
- It’s time to get up, take off robs, wrap in towels & pour water in basins.