

“What Did Jesus Say, Again? Part 2”
John 13:31-35
5/19/2019
(Show Title Slide)

Years ago Joleen and I were camping at a state park.

One morning as we were walking back from the shower house,
A stranger approaches us and asks me,
“Are you a youth pastor?”

I said,
“Why yes, I am.”

He said,
“I thought so”

And he walked away.

I don't know about you,
But that caught my attention
Later while we were still camping
We ran into this guy again
And I just had to ask why he thought I was a youth pastor

If you want to know how to spot a youth pastor
In the wild from 20 feet away
Ask me after the service

Ah, but how can you spot a Christian
On a weekday from 20 feet away?

Jesus told his disciples
At their last meal before he was arrested and executed
“This is how everyone will know that you are my disciples...”

How can you spot a Christian
On a weekday from 20 feet away?

We, in the Church, are still in the Season of Easter
We are basking in the glow of Jesus' resurrection from the dead
(Show Jesus Appearances Slide)

In the first Sundays after Easter, we heard the stories of Jesus
Repeatedly appearing to his disciples
After his death and resurrection

And now in these Sundays,
As we get closer to Jesus ascending to heaven
And the arrival of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost
(Show Last Supper Slide)
We are being reminded of the things Jesus told his disciples
At the Last Supper

This year I'm imagining that I'm with the other disciples
And it's after Jesus has appeared a couple of times
And we're just sitting together and talking

The disciples now have the new perspective
of being on the other side of Jesus' death and resurrection
And they are recalling what Jesus said to them
in those final hours of his life at the Last Supper

They are now able to see and hear what Jesus said to them
with new eyes and new ears
And now it makes sense

Today's scripture passage begins just after
Jesus sent Judas to go do quickly what Judas needed to do

So, after receiving the piece of bread that Jesus gave to him,
Judas immediately went out. And it was night, as John says

Remember what Judas went out to do?

And then Jesus continues talking with the disciples who remained

What do we call the Thursday that is the day before Good Friday?
(Maundy Thursday)

It's not “Monday Thursday”, but “Maundy Thursday.”

The term “Maundy” comes from the word behind “Mandate”,
(Show Maundy/Mandatum Slide)
Which is the Latin word “*mandatum*”
Which means “commandment”

Remember how many commandments, statutes and ordinances
are in the Hebrew Bible?
(614)

And now, in the last hours before his death,
Jesus adds one more to the list
Perhaps the most important one to us who are Christian

(Show Last Supper Slide)

³⁴ “I give you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, so you also must love each other. ³⁵ This is how everyone will know that you are my disciples, when you love each other.”

– John 13:34-35

(Show Title Slide)

Last week, if you remember, we talked about the importance
Of hearing and knowing and recognizing and following
The voice of Jesus, who is the Good Shepherd.
And we focused on us attending to the ordinances of God
Of us regularly practicing our spiritual disciplines
So that we will truly know Jesus' voice when we hear it

Today we start to see the Christian faith in action

³⁴ “I give you a new commandment: Love each other.
Just as I have loved you, so you also must love each other.”

Remember that as we are looking that these words today
It is now in the context of what happened
in the hours that followed the Last Supper

We, like the disciples,
are now able to see and hear what Jesus said to them
with new eyes and with new ears
with now the new perspective
of being on the other side of Jesus' death and resurrection

As some of the disciples saw Jesus hanging on that cross
The words, “Just as I have loved you”
Have a whole new power of meaning

Jesus loves us so much that he died for us

*I asked Jesus how much he loved me
And he said “this much”
And he spread out his hands... and died for me*

And not just me and ye, but for the world

Remind me again what Jesus said as he was dying on the cross
Father, forgive them; for they know not (what they do)

– Luke 23:34

And when Jesus loves us, this much,
It is a love that demands a response

We could ignore Jesus love for us
We could pretend that nothing happened at that place
just outside of the ancient walls of Jerusalem
1985 years ago

We could ignore what Jesus did
Many people do

Instead I hope that our response would be
To love Jesus in return

To give thanks to God with everything in our heart
For this gift of abundant, eternal, everlasting life
that Jesus gives to us

And maybe even take that next step
Of actually doing what he commanded us to do
In his final hours before he died

*³⁴ "I give you a new commandment: Love each other.
Just as I have loved you, so you also must love each other.*

Now did Jesus say
Love each other – just when it is convenient?
Love each other – just when you feel like it?
Love each other – only when you get something in return?
Love each other – just when it is easy?

Is loving one another always going to be easy?

Think
Washington DC
St Paul, Minnesota
Fairmont City Council
United Methodist Church's Special General Conference
To agree on A Way Forward for our church
(Stop thinking before we get to our Congregation – in our pew)

So, is loving one another always going to be easy?

But does Jesus command us and expect us to love each other?

John puts it this way in his first letter,
*²⁰ If anyone says, I love God, and hates a brother or sister, he is
a liar, because the person who doesn't love a brother or sister
who can be seen can't love God, who can't be seen. ²¹ This
commandment we have from him: Those who claim to love God
ought to love their brother and sister also.*
– 1 John 4:20-21

So, but how can you spot a Christian
On a weekday from 20 feet away?

*³⁴ "I give you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I
have loved you, so you also must love each other. ³⁵ This is how
everyone will know that you are my disciples, when you love
each other."*
– John 13:34-35

When we love each other...

Living such a way is not automatic

It's not a given

This is where our spiritual disciplines come in
Prayer
Bible study
Holy Communion and worship
Christian Conferencing Small groups

But when we love one another,
we will show the world that we are his disciples

How does that song from the '60's go?
*And they'll know we are Christians
by our love, by our love;
yes, they'll know we are Christians
by our love.*

(Recognition of Graduating Seniors)