Love Commandment

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**SUMMARY KEYWORDS**

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for today is from John's Gospel in chapter nine, we'll be picking up where we left off last week at verse eight. So from John beginning in chapter 50, with verse nine. We'll remember that this is part of the journey kind of setting our stage that Jesus has just celebrated the last supper with His disciples. He's washed their feet, he's proclaiming his last message to them, as they go for as his light and love, following his crucifixion. So listen with me, for the word spoken among us beginning at verse nine. As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. If you and abide in My love, and if you keep my commandments, you will abide in My love. Just as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in his love. I've said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete. This is my commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends, you are my friends, if you do what I commend you, I did not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing. But I've called you friends, because I've made you know known to you everything that I have heard from my father, you did not choose me. But I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last so that whatever the Father will, or excuse me, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name, I am giving you these commands, so that you may love one another. Prince, this is the word of the Lord. So as John continues his narration of this last message of Jesus with His disciples, I think it is especially poignant today that as we receive new members, into our church community into our worship fellowship, here at RPC, that Jesus in many ways, if we listen to this text with fresh yours, is proclaiming now to the disciples. This is what it means for you to be the church. Here's what I'm commissioning you to do. Here's what we sign up for when we embrace this space, even today, known as Christianity. So he starts off with, I guess, if we were to use a sports analogy advanced, we would say starts off with softballs. He gives them that easy commission that basically says, Love one another, right? And he ends this passage with that same statement. In fact, the word love is heard over 31 times in these last few verses in this sermon that Jesus is sharing with his friends and his disciples. But where it gets troubling, is when we figure out as the church as followers of Christ. What does it mean this type of love, he calls us to? Release says it clearly the verse excuse me, the very first verse is listening with with me again on verse nine. Where he says, As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Abide in my love. Now, when we abide in something, that's not a word, we use that often. But if you look up that word abide one definition, for the word abide is means when we accept a position without exception. So if we are a law abiding citizen, we pay attention to what is set forth, and we adhere. Jesus says, For you to be my disciples for you to be my church, for us to be members of this body. Then here's the call. here's the rub. Here's where the softball stop and the fastball start coming. As the father love me, I love you, and you should also look Love one another in that way. You see, here's where it gets complicated. We have one word for love in our tradition, right? In English, we we say, I love you, honey to the moon and back. I love turnip greens. And I love my country. We wrap it all together, right? Well see in the Greek in the first century, they had multiple words had three words to express love, there was a rose, where that's the romantic, affectionate love between you and your partner your intimate feelings. You had Philo, we understand that because we have a city in this country known as the City of Brotherly Love, right, Philadelphia rooted in that word that brotherly love. And then we have the ultimate love, the Agape love, that love that's best described as this self sacrificing love. And Princess the love Jesus is talking about in our text today. It's love that transcends even brotherly love. You know what it's more like? It's more like a parent, child love. Or maybe a child parent love, the ultimate willingness to sacrifice for those God has entrusted us to write. This week I, I did something that you only do in a parent child love. Our son, Luke's been studying, getting ready for finals and he was getting a little home see, missing his mom was cooking. I've got a board meeting come up next week had several people I needed to see and deal with. And in the middle of this busy week, you know what it did. I headed to Oxford after work one day, went and picked him up, drove him home, so he could have supper with His mama in May. And then he stayed another night and had suffered with his pop and shishi. And then his pop got up and drove him back to Oxford Friday morning for class. Now I tell you what, I love a lot of y'all people. And I love my brother Miki, that's a brotherly love, but I'm not driving to Oxford to pick him up in the middle of the week. That's what a parent does for a child, right? That's the self sacrificing love that is reserved for those intimate family members in mind use the same lady, she gives that same sacrificial love to our kids. I remember when Luke or excuse me it was no one was getting his shots for the first time. You remember that going to the doctor and those babies they don't know what's coming. And that mean? Oh, nurse, like Rose may 6, that needle in their leg. Net baby just burst out crying and mom was holding them milimani was holding Oh, Noah, and the tears started running down her face. And she said what only a mama would say, Oh, I'm so sorry. I wish that it could have taken it for you. See, that's that's self sacrificing love we bestow upon those intimate ones God's entrusted to our children. Here this here, this child of God. You are God's children. That's the love. He sent to this earth in Jesus Christ to claim us through his self sacrificing. So we all could be part of the family of God that even transcends brotherly love. But then as we receive, he calls us as members of the church to give it to live out the love we've received. For those God's entrusted us to in this holy place called church. I visited with the McCoys this week in the miscarries. And we talked about church membership. And they could tell me more about what it means to be a member of the church than I can them they been part of the church for their lifetime too. But as we were visiting this week, and I asked Marty's permission to tell his story. He said, You know what, what I found here God is what I've found in other places that I'm willing to call church home. He said You know, we live in a world and we're busy. We get beat down with work. We got problems. All the time people tell us how sorry we are either through their words or their actions. And he said one day a week, one day a week, I need to be told how special I am loved. And how am a child of God. And he said, That's what our failed here. See, Marty understands. There's a reason we call this a sanctuary, a safe place to get away from what's out there where we can bring proclaim once more, we are precious in the eyes of the one who made us not because of what we've done. But the cost of who's we are a forgiving and gracious Father above. So he's come today, he and Dana and Dawn and Blake saying, we see in this place, a place where we want to give self sacrificing love, and where we want to be loved that way too. They've made their choice. They've claimed us. The session has made their choice. They've received them. Now the question is for all of us church, will we love them as children of God? I don't think we need to take a vote. This church that I know receives them through acclamation. Let's pray. Oh, God, we thank you for your church. We thank you for this congregation that receives us as a part of your family this place where people are willing beyond understanding to sacrificially love us in trying to give to us the way Jesus gave and that's the model you call us to. But the good news the Good News of the Gospel is that as we give that love to one another, we receive that love and we receive what you proclaim in our text today. joy of our salvation. So God continue to bless us with new growth and new life and new members, people we are willing to embrace just as they are. Are they like us? Our broken children in need of restoration and grace of our loving God? And Jesus we pray, amen. Brands I invite