

As we begin this morning, as I often do, I want to ask you a question: What do you believe marks a true believer...a true follower of Jesus Christ? Now, I'm sure someone could offer many answers...there's not just one right answer. But, I want to postulate and offer perhaps the simplest explanation of what marks a true believer and that would be that they exhibit the fruit of the Spirit. Scripture tell us that in Galatians 5:22-23. See the fruit?



What's at the top? LOVE...the rest flow from love and you'll also notice...(and it's a good depiction), it's just one fruit...with 9 flavors...it's the FRUIT of the Spirit, not fruits...you take a bite of a Christian and you should get all 9 flavors.

Dear church, the fruit of the Spirit is the evidence of the presence of Jesus in believer's life...indicating...they are a believer...a follower of Jesus and it all starts with LOVE. Yes, for God so LOVED the world...He gave His one and only Son! And it was that "giving of His Son" is where we come to in John 13...because Jesus would soon be delivered over to death.

So, as we near the end of John 13, let's be reminded where we are...it's Thursday night of Passion week...in fact, it's interesting: John chapter 13 all the way through John 17, is the description of that one night...Thursday night of Passion Week. For you see, this night would be the beginning of torture for Jesus and part of that torture was Judas...whom Jesus had just told to "get out," because Satan had entered him and Jesus was not going to let His men be exposed to Satan's evil. Judas leaves and Jesus is left with His true disciples...the ones who were genuinely His...and now Jesus is going to continue to teach them about LOVE. Today, we continue in our series: "Jesus' Example of Love"



with this title: "If You Have Love For One Another."

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**John 13:31-35**

<sup>31</sup> When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. <sup>32</sup> If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once. <sup>33</sup> Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, and just as I said to the Jews, so now I also say to you, 'Where I am going you cannot come.' <sup>34</sup> A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. <sup>35</sup> By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

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How did Jesus say we should be known to others? By our love...we'll be known by our love. As we saw last week, with Judas gone, Jesus can now lock in to more of His encouragements to His disciples. Remember, He doesn't want them to get knocked off their mission with the events that are to follow: betrayal, death. These instructions will be some of the last Jesus will offer before His death...and it's His impending death that's the backdrop for this teaching. Watch verse 31 again...

**John 13:31**

<sup>31</sup> When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him."

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Did you notice Jesus said all of this in the past tense? Why? Because in the mind of Jesus, His death on the cross and His resurrection are as good as done/accomplished...and this comes pouring out of Jesus like a cry of relief...He's so close to finishing the work that God had sent Him to do and soon He's going home!

Think about it...for 33 years, He's lived a life of humiliation by coming to earth in human flesh, restricting the full manifestation of His glory and power, but: FINALLY...He can say: "I'm here...it's about to happen..." and this is why He will pray these words (see the screens) in the Garden of Gethsemane in just a matter of maybe an hour or two:

**John 17:4-5**

<sup>4</sup> I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. <sup>5</sup> And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed."

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He's on the brink of glory...on the brink of being glorified...what is that glorification? You may say, "Well, it's His resurrection and His ascension and return to heaven...that's His glory, right?" Yes that's true...that will be glory...but, that's not the glory He's talking about. Listen...the glory Jesus is talking about is impending death on THE CROSS! See it...



That's His glory?! You say, "That?" Yes! Listen...I want us to get this. Yes, there's glory in the events of Jesus' resurrection and His return where He sits right now in glory, but all of that had to be triggered by His death. You see, from the **human perspective**, the death of Jesus was a despicable and horrible tragedy...it was about unspeakable suffering for an innocent man, who was maligned and mistreated...terrorized and humiliated...hanging totally exposed/naked on the cross. But from a **divine perspective**...Jesus' death on the cross was the revealing of the glory of God!

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You see, God received glory because His Son was the perfect one, the only one, who could take away the sins of the world. Jesus is God's chosen One...the only one He could commission to do this work. So, it would be on a cross that salvation would be provided for all who would believe and follow Jesus. That's glory!

Might we go one step deeper. Lock in now...stay with me...it's through Jesus that all of the promises of God that were given to Abraham, Moses and David, it was all of those covenants that pointed to the cross and it's through Christ's death on the cross that the power of sin and death would be destroyed, and **that is glory!**

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It's on the cross that Jesus would destroy Satan's power over the grave, and ultimately consign Satan to the lake of fire, **and Church, that is glory!** It's on the cross that Jesus would satisfy the price that God deemed necessary, that by the shedding of blood, by Jesus being willing to allow His body to bear all the sins of the entire world for all time...**that is glory!** And it's on the cross that Jesus would cry out: "It is finished," **and Church, that is glory!**

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You see, God is just...God is holy...God is righteous...and what Jesus did on the cross satisfied God's justice, holiness and righteousness. Listen, do you know what Jesus became on that cross? The embodiment of our sin... See it...

**2 Corinthians 5:21**

**<sup>21</sup> For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.**

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Oh, it's hard to fathom...but NEVER did God show any greater love than He did as when He turned His back on His Son, while He hung on the cross paying our sin debt. Church, how holy is God? He's so holy that He would allow His own Son to be **imputed with my, your sin** and then crush Him because of it. Think about it...every animal sacrifice that had occurred during the entire Old Testament period pointed to Jesus and the final sacrifice of a lamb...the Lamb of God...but that required a cross...which exhibited the amazing love of God for us! John describes that in...

**1 John 4:10**

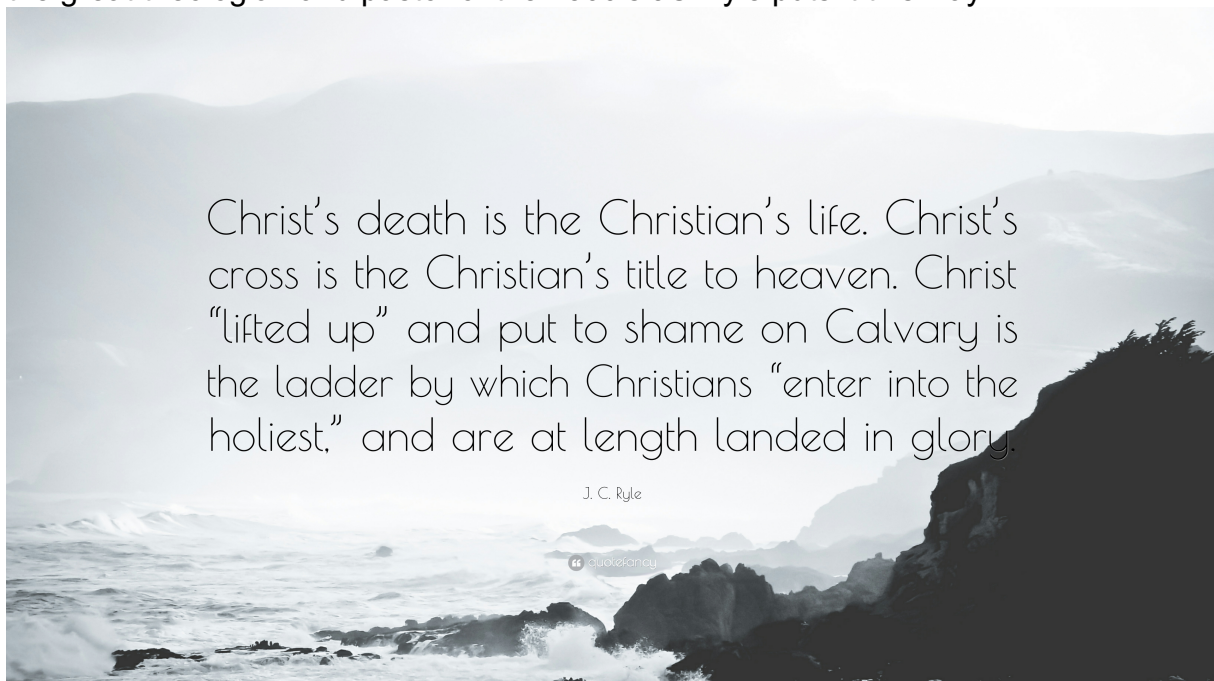
**<sup>10</sup>In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.**

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Oh, how rich this is? What Jesus is sharing with His Apostles is so deep and so beautiful and so profound. I think it's summed up well by this man"



That's the great theologian and pastor of the 1800's JC Ryle puts it this way:



Christ's death is the Christian's life. Christ's cross is the Christian's title to heaven. Christ "lifted up" and put to shame on Calvary is the ladder by which Christians "enter into the holiest," and are at length landed in glory.

J. C. Ryle

**"Christ's death is the Christian's life. Christ's cross is the Christian's title to heaven. Christ 'lifted up' and put to shame on Calvary is the ladder by which Christians 'enter into the holiest,' and are at length landed in glory." And church, that is glory. Verse 32...**

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**John 13:32**

<sup>32</sup> If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once.

What does that mean? It means that just as God is going to be glorified in the cross, (as Jesus pays our sin debt), **God will also glorify His Son**. And I believe it was the part that was **so exciting for Jesus**...to think he was going back home. Because after the cross was what? Resurrection. And after the resurrection...in just 40 days, Jesus would ascend to Heaven...glory! Hebrews 1:3 sums this up so well.

**Hebrews 1:3**

<sup>3</sup> He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

Now, you ask: “Why is Jesus saying all of this...talking about glory?” Church, He’s preparing them. He knows what they’re going to see and experience is going to be so bad. If they think what they had just seen (the humiliation of having Jesus wash their feet was something bad or hard), man, they hadn’t seen anything yet...because His betrayal in the Garden of Gethsemane by Judas was going to be horrible and this...the next day...beyond comprehension:



No, He doesn’t want them to get thrown off. He’s wanting them to know that all that’s coming...as bad as it looks, is for the glory of God and for His glory and ultimately for ours.

Can I ask you something? Are you going through something really hard right now? Something bad? Are you going through something that’s humiliating...painful...something you don’t quite understand...you can’t grasp it? That’s exactly what was getting ready to happen to the Apostles as they’d watch Jesus arrested and then killed. Can you imagine the grief and pain that was coming? But, Jesus prepared them. And you know what? Jesus prepares us...we have His Spirit...the Holy Spirit to comfort us, to guide us, to help us. Watch how Jesus tenderly addresses them:

### John 13:33

<sup>33</sup> Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, and just as I said to the Jews, so now I also say to you, 'Where I am going you cannot come.'

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There's so much kindness and love in Jesus calling them: "Little children." That's so tender, because He knows their world is getting ready to be turned upside down. He's getting ready to die and to leave them...and be reminded...they've given up everything to follow Him and they've been doing this for close to 3 years, and now He's going to leave them. His time with them is almost over...He's preparing them.

And they can't come with Him on this journey. He's got to **do it alone!** YOU CANNOT COME. Can you imagine hearing those words after all this time. All He's been saying for 3 years is "COME FOLLOW ME," but now He's says: "You can't come." It had to be so shocking to them!

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Church, I still believe they thought in some way, some how...Jesus was going to set up His kingdom. That's what Judas thought, right? That's why he finally "sold out" for 30 pieces of silver. Can I show you what they were still thinking even after His resurrection. This is Acts 1. Watch this...

### Acts 1:6-7

<sup>6</sup> So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" <sup>7</sup> He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority."

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"When are you setting up your kingdom?" They're still asking. Church, remember, what they were arguing about at the last supper: who's the greatest? They were all caught up in this kingdom "right now" idea...which, in their minds would lead to THEIR glory, their elevation, their fulfillment of ambition. And that's why Jesus was teaching them that glory comes from humbling yourself, washing feet...being consumed with others, not yourself...and that's why He said this in verses 34 and 35...

### John 13:34-35

<sup>34</sup> A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. <sup>35</sup> By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

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Now understand something...don't be confused...this commandment to love was NOT new. Let me explain. They knew Deuteronomy 6:5...where they're commanded to love God. They knew Leviticus 19:18 where they're commanded to love their neighbor. Jesus had already taught them saying: the greatest commandment is: to love God and the second is like it...love your neighbor as yourself. **So, you say, "What does He mean when He said: 'This is new?'"**

Here's how...Jesus was commanding a distinctly new standard for them. The new standard? Sacrificial love (the washing of feet, kind of love). Not the kind of love that argues about WHO IS THE GREATEST...not a selfish kind of love that says, "What's in it for me." You see, it's "foot washing kind of love," not the world's love that's the new standard. Because the world's love says LOVE MEANS ACCEPTANCE OF SIN SO THAT YOU WON'T OFFEND ANYONE), that's not love...that's cowardice...that's leaving people in bondage. No...it's foot washing kind of love that leads us to pray for our enemies...to walk the second mile, turn the other cheek and return kindness for hate.

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You see for the Jews...you'd never see, nor hear of a Rabbi washing their students' feet. But, the Son of God did and He's on the brink of doing more than just washing feet, He's getting ready to lay down His life as a sacrifice for sin.

**John 15:13**

**13 Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.**

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Can you see now how all of this was “new” to them? I thought of an analogy to express this “newness.” Do you see these? What are these?



Tulips... These tulips have popped up out of the ground. But, then a days later, you go back and you see this...



Well now, you say: that's new...Yep, there are blooms now...that's NEW! I mean it's the same plant...but, what's new about is that the plant is in bloom. Church, when love was talked about in the Old Testament...it was like tulips popping up out of the ground...that's the Old Covenant...but, when Jesus came...and brought the New Covenant...that was now love in full bloom! New!

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I want to begin to close by applying this passage and to do so, I would like for you to **turn with me in your Bibles to 1 John chapter 2.** I want to show you how the Apostle John grasped this full bloom love of Jesus. Remember, 1 John was written so that we might be assured that we're saved.

If you are every struggling trying to determine if you are saved, 1 John will encourage you. We're reading this because I want you to see how this NEW commandment of love is described.

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### 1 John 2:1-10

<sup>1</sup> My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.<sup>2</sup> He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. <sup>3</sup> And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. <sup>4</sup> Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, <sup>5</sup> but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him:<sup>6</sup> whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked. <sup>7</sup> Beloved, I am writing you no new commandment, but an old commandment that you had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word that you have heard. <sup>8</sup> At the same time, it is a new commandment that I am writing to you, which is true in him and in you, because<sup>[a]</sup> the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. <sup>9</sup> Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness. <sup>10</sup> Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him<sup>[b]</sup> there is no cause for stumbling. <sup>11</sup> But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

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Do you love your brother? We're talking about Christians here... If you do...you'll wash their feet. If not, you'll be blind like Judas and walk in the darkness, giving evidence you've never been saved.

Church, do you know how the first Church showed this kind of sacrificial, full-bloom kind of love to one another? They sold stuff to meet the needs of their brothers and sisters. Remember, when the church started, as believers in Christ, they were nobodies...they were being persecuted...they're under great stress and duress. As followers of Christ, turning to Jesus meant they left Judaism and that meant they gave up everything...because the community was tied to Judaism that meant your means of making a living was tied to your synagogue...and now without it, you're struggling to survive. Watch what they did:

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### Acts 4:34-35

<sup>34</sup> There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold <sup>35</sup> and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

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Do you love this way? Do I? Would we, would you sell a piece of land...a car...a house for if your brothers and sisters were in need? **It's radical isn't it**. Well so is this if you think about it. From this...





to this



That's quite different. Aren't the blooms pretty? How about you? Are you willing to bloom? Oh, it takes a lot of sacrifice to bloom. So, how are you loving? That's what Jesus was teaching His disciples in that upper room. Jesus said:

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**John 13:34-35**

<sup>34</sup> A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. <sup>35</sup> By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

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Let's go love this way! Let's bloom for Jesus!