



## *Jesus' Farewell Word*

**Above all, love**— John 13:31-38

January 29, 2023

We return to John 13 as Pete Greasley preaches this poignant message about relationships in the local church.

For personal reflection/community discussion

**Read** – Read the passage in its context several times. Read it slow enough to understand what God is saying through it.

- What ideas or words are emphasised, repeated or related in this passage?
- In your own words, what is the main idea of this passage? (Try to summarise these verses in 10 words or less)

**Examine** – Next, try to understand the specifics of what the passage is communicating.

- What do you notice about God? What has he done/is he doing in these verses?
- What do you learn about Jesus and his gospel from this passage?
- What does it reveal about people?
- How do you think the writer wanted his reader to respond to these words?

**Apply** - After seeking to understand God's Word in this passage, consider how he intends to use it in your heart and life today.

- How might your understanding of unconditional love differ from unconditional affirmation? Where might you be tempted to mistake the two?
- Toward the end of his message, Pete asked three questions to help assess our love toward others:
  - Do I have this person's spiritual good as my aim?
  - Am I willing to love at a cost to myself and not keep offences?
  - Is there tender-hearted patience in my heart toward this person?
 Consider three close relationships in your life (a family member, friend and church brother/sister) and ask these questions of your last interaction with them.
- Pete quoted the Netflix film, *The Adam Project*: "It's easier to be angry than it is to be sad" and explained when you're angry you spit the pain out at those around you. To take the pain yourself makes you sad, but it spares others. Does this resonate with you?
- Consider the impact a loving community might have on the world with these words from Bruce Milne. "A loving community, says Jesus, is the visible authentication of the gospel. Love is the 'final apologetic' (Francis Schaeffer). . . . To love like Jesus is to love inclusively, indiscriminately and universally. When that kind of love flows within a congregation the world will take note that 'they have been with Jesus' [see Acts 4:13]... , "[in the early church] their mutual love was the magnet which drew the pagan multitudes to Christ. It has the potential to do so still."  
Pray today that it would be so through our church.