

# THE LOVE OF GOD

## The Love of God

### Key idea:

Our triune God serves because love is the foundation upon which His identity rests, and blessing flows when we receive His love and share it with others.

### Key text:

John 13: 1-17

<sup>1</sup> It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. <sup>2</sup> The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. <sup>3</sup> Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; <sup>4</sup> so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. <sup>5</sup> After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. <sup>6</sup> He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" <sup>7</sup> Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." <sup>8</sup> "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me." <sup>9</sup> "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!" <sup>10</sup> Jesus answered, "Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." <sup>11</sup> For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean. <sup>12</sup> When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. <sup>13</sup> "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. <sup>14</sup> Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. <sup>15</sup> I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. <sup>16</sup> Very

truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. <sup>17</sup> Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

### **Key points:**

1. Sometimes we love things that are valuable to us, but there are also things that are made valuable simply because we love them.
2. Sometimes Christians, and many times non-Christians, can think of God as impersonal. Or we can sometimes think of our relationship with God as transactional, if I just keep the rules then God will reward me. But the doctrine of the Trinity tells us that God foundational is relational and loving.
3. Because God's foundational feature is love; therefore He stoops to wash the disciple's feet. Therefore He serves. Therefore, He cleanses. Jesus doesn't wash the disciples feet in spite of His deity, service is an expression of His deity.
4. Many people's idea of God is as a rule-giver ready to punish those who don't obey. But Jesus is a God who foremost loves, serves, and sacrifices so that we might be made children of God and joint-heirs with Christ.
5. This story is a picture of everything Jesus came to do. The Son leaves His place with the Father, He stoops, He suffers, He cleanses us from the stain of our guilt.
6. Finally, Jesus tells us the way to experience blessing and happiness is to receive His love and pass it on to others.

### **Questions for discussion/application:**

1. What part of Sunday's teaching stood out most to you? Why?
2. John 3:16 makes clear God so loved the world He gave His son, but have you ever wondered if God really loved you? Or have you thought God didn't love you as you expected His love would look like?
3. Have you ever loved anything that maybe wasn't valuable to anyone else, but it was made valuable to you simply because you loved it?
4. Do you think the doctrine of the Trinity is difficult to understand? Mysterious?

5. Do you see that understanding the doctrine of Trinity is necessary to understanding who God is?
6. What does it mean to you that Jesus knew He was God, Son of the Father, Heir of the cosmos “SO” he washes the feet of His disciples? Does that surprise you?
7. What does God look like to you? Does He look like Jesus?
8. What does real love look like to you?
9. Do you see how the parable of Jesus washing the disciples feet is a picture of what Jesus has come to do for us all?
10. Do you agree that the happy life, the “blessed” life, will be your’s if you follow Jesus’ example, receive His love and then pass it on?
11. Is there someone specifically you know who you could bless with the love of Christ this week?