

1. Today is Palm Sunday. It is the Sunday before the week of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus.
2. There are several events that took place during this week, but one of those events that personally minister to me is the humble act of Jesus washing his disciple's feet.
3. The account of this selfless act is only found in one of the gospels. The book of John. And it is there that we read and understand the motivation as to why Jesus would do something that was reserved for the lowest of servants.
4. Next week, for Easter, we are going to be talking about the fact that there is victory in the resurrection of Jesus.
5. But I believe the subject this week is highly important to accepting the victory that is made available to us.

**TEXT:** **John 13:1-5** 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. **2** The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. **3** Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; **4** so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. **5** 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.

**TITLE:** **Never Ending Love**

**INTRO:**

1. I want us to focus today on this idea. The never ending love that Jesus has for us as his children.
2. I want us to think about this love that is un-conditional. That does not have an ending point. That doesn't have a stopping place.
3. And I want us to focus on this love so that there is not a barrier to the victory God makes available to us.
4. It is a love that we have difficulty understanding, because there isn't really a qualified example of the kind of love God has for us here on earth.
5. Verse one says that it was just before the Passover celebration. This was an annual event in which the people celebrated what God had done for the Israelites in Egypt when they were slaves.
6. The death angel literally passed over the homes of those who had applied the blood of a lamb to the doorposts of their house. It was a picture of the future work Jesus would do for us when he shed his blood on the cross.
7. So this was to be a time of great celebration. But at the same time Jesus knew that there was a very sorrowful ending that was about to take place.
8. Jesus knew that the time was approaching when he would leave this earth and go back to the father. Jesus knew that this event would bring heartache to his disciples.
9. So he wanted to do something that would express to them his love for them.

10. He wanted to communicate how absolutely and how powerfully his love for them was. We find that at the close of verse number one. **John 13:1** ...Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.
11. Notice with me that Jesus doesn't want to show just the depth of his love, but he wants to show the length of his love. He loved them to the end.
12. I think that is a highly critical point that we shouldn't miss, because it is a type of love that is in absolute contradiction to what we see today.
13. I could be wrong, but it seems to me in our world today, people fall in and out of love more frequently than at any time in history.
14. Please don't misunderstand this next illustration as being judgmental. That is not my intent at all. My intent is to reveal truth.
15. At no point in history have more couples lived together before marriage than do right now.
16. Young people are getting married much later in life, which is fine. But they are more willing to live with someone before marriage than ever before.
17. We find couples who want the benefits of marriage without the commitment of marriage.
18. What's interesting is that studies suggest that couples who live together before marriage are more likely to get a divorce. (Pause) Now I don't know all the reasons for that, but what I do know is that the kind of love relationship we really want is not one that says I will love you till this gets old, or I will love you until I get bored, or I will love you until something better comes along.
19. No, what we want is a love relationship in which the other person commits and says. I will love you till the end. Till the end of the relationship? No. Till the end of time. Till the end of our lives.
20. And that is exactly what Jesus wanted to point out to his disciples. He wanted to communicate to them that his love for them was not hot and cold, on again off again. He wanted to communicate that his love was a constant, never ending, never changing love like no other they would ever experience.
21. Today I want to offer you that same kind of assurance when it comes to your relationship with Jesus.
22. Today I want to offer this truth as hope even if you don't have a relationship with Jesus.
23. He loves you. He loves you with a never ending love. He loves you with a love that is constant and is true.
24. His love is not like this world's messed up idea of love. His love is a perfect love. And because of the power and the depth of His love, he invites us to come close. He invites us to intimacy.
25. You see when we are not sure of someone's love we exist at arm's length. We keep a distance. We form a barrier.
26. But today the barriers and the distance can be removed, not because we are perfect at loving God, but because he is perfect at loving us.
27. Today I want to share a couple of characteristics about God's love for you.

### Christ doesn't love until we make a mistake

1. Have you ever begun a friendship or a relationship with someone and at first everything was going ok? But then as time went along they just did some things that got on your nerves?
2. With time they just did some things that rubbed you the wrong way.
3. Jesus proved that his love was not like that kind of love, by the way he loved his disciples.
4. Jesus had made it clear what his purpose was for coming to the earth. He had a mission and he was passionate about that mission.
5. So to help Him in that mission Jesus chose twelve disciples.
6. We find Jesus' mission in the book of Luke. Jesus is speaking to an unsaved tax collector by the name of Zacchaeus, but he is also communicating to those around him.
7. **Luke 19:10** For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."
8. That is a pretty straight forward description. I have come to seek and save those who are lost.
9. There were in fact other occasions where Jesus reminds his disciples that this is his mission. Again, Jesus chose the disciples to help in that mission.
10. But I am always amused by an incident that happened in Luke chapter nine. Jesus is sending out his disciples into towns ahead of him to prepare the way. We assume that James and his brother John are sent into a Samaritan town. They preach the good news of Jesus but the people of the town reject the message.
11. Here is where I am amused, because this was James and John's solution. **Luke 9:54** When the disciples James and John saw this, they asked, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?"
12. If ever Jesus had a right to look at these two guys and say, sorry boys. You two just don't get it. You flunked the test. You're fired. You can no longer travel with me and be my disciples. If ever there was a time this was that time.
13. But Jesus didn't do that. In the next verse it says that Jesus did rebuked them, but what he didn't do was stop loving them.
14. You see we tend to tolerate people just as long as they don't get on our nerves too bad, but once they have taken it too far we again want to keep our distance.
15. And we mistakenly assume that's how Jesus is. We reason, surely when I make a mistake or miss the mark or fall flat on my face, Jesus keeps his distance. Surely he puts up a barrier between us and him.
16. Not on your life. Even when you and I get on His nerves, he never stops loving us.
17. Another characteristic about God's love for us.

### Christ doesn't love us just until our true colors come through

1. Have you ever met a person and you began a friendship or a relationship and you thought everything was going well?

2. But then at some point you began to see some things about them that bothered you. The real them seemed to be different than the façade they had allowed you to see.
3. How many women fall in love with this guy who seems to be a knight in shining armor, only to discover later that he is abusive, either physically or verbally or emotionally.
4. I'm sure all of us have come to the shocking reality that someone just wasn't who they said they were.
5. Friend, we don't have to relate to Jesus with a fear that at any moment the real us will come bubbling out and we will be rejected. That's not the way Christ's love works.
6. Christ's love works this way. Christ already knows who the real us is like, and he loves us anyway.
7. And who is the real us?
8. Who all of us really are, are sinners. Imperfect, impatient, flawed, less than desirable, you name it. We are sinners.
9. This next passage isn't going to inspire anybody, but it is the truth. **Romans 3:10-18** As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; **11** there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. **12** All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." **13** "Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit." "The poison of vipers is on their lips." **14** "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." **15** "Their feet are swift to shed blood; **16** ruin and misery mark their ways, **17** and the way of peace they do not know." **18** "There is no fear of God before their eyes."
10. Let's just sum up what Paul the apostle is saying here. We are all basically pretty worthless.
11. We can try and dress up this earthly body, we can apply makeup and we can bathe it and try and make it presentable, but down deep we are still a sinner without Jesus.
12. But here is the thing. Jesus sees right through our veiled attempts to present ourselves as something better.
13. From the moment he met us, Jesus saw the real us. Jesus is not waiting for the other shoe to drop. He's not waiting for the real us to suddenly spew out all over the place and make a mess, he knows the real us.
14. But here's the thing. He loves us in spite of who we are. He died for us in spite of how sinful we really are.
15. Two chapter's later Paul explains why we can have confidence in the love of Jesus Christ. **Romans 5:8-10** But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. **9** Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! **10** For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!

16. Christ says to us. You're not gonna surprise me. I already know how you are. I already knew who you were. I knew the real you, and I loved you enough to die for you anyway.
17. We can have confidence in Christ's love for us. We can be real and genuine and forthcoming with the Lord.
18. When we sin, we don't have to stay at arm's length, we can come close and ask forgiveness and seek the comfort of the Lord's love.
19. Maybe someone watching has been relating to the Love of the Lord from a distance. There has been separation, there has been awkwardness, but that is not the kind of love relationship the Lord wants.
20. The Lord wants you to know that though you are not perfect, his love is perfect. Because.

### **Christ loves us till the end**

1. **John 13:1** Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.
2. The end was coming. Jesus was going to soon return to his father in heaven.
3. The disciples were going to betray him. They were going to stand at a distance as he is tried and convicted to death.
4. But still the words ring true. He loved them to the end.
5. That struck me so deeply. Even when we are at our wits end. The love of the Lord is still there.
6. When relationships end, Jesus love is still there.
7. When the money ends, when comfort ends, when happiness ends, when health ends, Jesus' love is still faithful and true.

### Conclusion:

1. John wrote the book that is titled after his name some 65-70 years after this event had occurred. And as he remembers what Jesus did he becomes aware of the motivation.
2. It was love.
3. Washing the feet of the guests was reserved for the lowest servant in the room. And Jesus, who was the greatest in the room, put himself in the place of a servant, to elevate the disciples and to show them how special they were to him.
4. He gets a towel and wraps it around his waist and then one by one begins to wash his disciple's feet. Out of love.
5. My prayer today is that you too will accept this perfect love that Jesus offers.
6. Salvation call.
7. If there is any distance between you and the Lord. You love him. You are saved. But there's distance. Come.
8. Ask the Lord to help you see and remove the barriers keep you from accepting His love for you.