



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

John 13:31-39

“The New Commandment”

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for the privilege of looking again into the Gospel of John and studying the Upper Room Discourse. We thank Thee for its place in the divine program and especially for its place in the ministry of our Lord and we recognize the significance of it for the life of the believer today. Enable us Lord to profit from the section that we look at tonight. And so we pray that through the Holy Spirit Thy wilt be here in illumination, that we may understand Thy word. We pray in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen.

[Message] We are turning tonight to John chapter 13, and verse 31 through verse 35, and our subject is the eleventh commandment. John chapter 13, verse 31 through verse 35; when we come to this section of the Upper Room Discourse we come to the question of the *summum bonum*, or “the greatest good”. What is the *summum bonum* of the Christian life? Well the Bible, I think, rather unanimously states that the *summum bonum*, the greatest good, is the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ and the practice of Christian love. When you turn to passages like 1st John chapter 4, verse 7 through verse 18, you notice that in the thought of the Apostle John love stands preeminent. And in the case of the Apostle Peter in 1st Peter chapter 4, in verse 8, the apostle also speaks about

the preeminence of love. We read in 1st Peter 4:8, “And above all things have fervent love among yourselves: for love shall cover the multitude of sins.” Notice the expression, “And above all things have fervent love among yourselves.” The Apostle Paul states much the same thing in somewhat different words but nevertheless much the same thing. In 1st Corinthians chapter 13, and verse 2, Paul writes, “And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing.” And then in Colossians chapter 3 he states it probably even more directly, verse 14 of this epistle he says that the greatest thing is love. Notice his words in Colossians 3:14, “And above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness.”

Now you might think that an apostle when he speaks about a particular virtue and recommends that it is the greatest thing that it would be something that he himself excelled in. I notice among preachers that they tend to think the most important things are the things in which they are most interested. If a person is interested in doctrine he generally thinks doctrine is the most important thing in the Bible. If he's interested more in the devotional life he will say that the devotional life is the important thing. It's very difficult to remove ourselves and our own interests from the things that we say concerning the word of God. But in this case at least the Apostle Paul was not recommending his strong point. He was a man stained with blood and the picture that we get of the Apostle Paul before he began his Christian experience is of one who was not very talented in the exhibition of love. We read, for example, in Acts chapter 8, in verse 3, “As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.” And then in the 9th chapter, in the 13th verse, Ananias said concerning him, “Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem.” So in the case of the Apostle Paul, love was not one of his natural strong-points. He was a man who was very strict about doctrinal views and

consequently he was very strong in persecuting the church when they veered from the doctrines of Judaism.

So I think that that gives his recommendation of love as the summum bonum some greater force. It was something that was not his naturally. Now when we turn to John chapter 13, and verse 31 through verse 35, we are really looking at a kind of prologue to the actual instruction of the Upper Room Discourse. You notice as you think about the Upper Room Discourse also a contrast between this discourse and the discourse that the Lord Jesus gave on Olivet. In the case of the discourse on Mount. Olivet, the Olivet Discourse, the Lord Jesus gave the instructions in the light of the temple and consequently, sitting in front of the temple his language and his interest tended more toward the future; the consummation of the Kingdom of God outwardly, because he was looking at the visible representation of Judaism in the kingdom or rather in the temple that was in Jerusalem. But in the Upper Room Discourse the viewpoint is quite different. He is speaking to the little flock and now since Judas is gone to the eleven. And so he talks primarily about individual lives in the new age. So it's not so much the nation as a whole that comes before him as it is the individuals who will be part of the body of Christ. We notice that as we go through the Upper Room Discourse.

I think that since this passage that we are looking at is one that is noted as the passage of the new commandment we should also make this point clear; that in the preceding section he had washed the disciples' feet, remember, and I had suggested to you that what he was doing was really giving a visible illustration of what he would say directly when he gave the new commandment in just a moment. So I want to repeat that: the new commandment is the express statement in so many words of the lesson of the washing of the disciples' feet. It was an act of humility and it was an act of humility that was grounded in the atoning work of the Lord Jesus. He was saying in effect, “Because I am loving you enough to give my life for you, you should love one another enough to wash their feet in Christian love.”

Now this linking of atoning love on his part with non-atoning love on the part of Christians is a particular doctrine which the Apostle John loved and which he mentioned again when he wrote his epistle some time later. He said this, “By this perceive we the love of God because he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.” He doesn’t suggest that when we lay down our lives for the brethren that we atone for them by virtue of our self-sacrifice for them, he’s just saying that those who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ and who appreciate what has happened to them and recognize thereby their indebtedness to him and to his interests and since he has loved the saints enough to give himself for them we surely, if we have the same attitude that our Lord has, will be willing to give ourselves for them. Not in atoning love, but in non-atoning self-sacrificial love for them.

So now, having given us an illustration visibly in the washing of the disciples’ feet with water, he will speak directly and plainly here in verse 31 through verse 35. Now first of all he speaks about his glorification and let me read verses 31 and 32, “Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God also shall glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.” Notice the opening words of verse 31, “Therefore when he was gone out.” Now to whom does the he refer? Well looking at the immediately preceding context you see that it is a reference to Judas. So Judas’s separation from the twelve, making only eleven now, is a kind of change of atmosphere in the midst of the Upper Room Discourse. This was necessary because the barrier between the Lord and Judas was different from the barrier between the Lord and the eleven. In the case of the eleven the barrier between the Lord and them is the barrier of immaturity. In chapter 16, in verse 12, he will say, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.” They are immature; they are unable to understand the things that he would like to speak to them.

Now in the case of Judas, however, the barrier is unbelief. The Lord can teach those who are immature but he cannot teach an unbelieving man until there has been the communication of faith through the Holy Spirit. So in the case of Judas there is an unteachability and in Judas's case the later instruction is not for him. So when he was gone out then the Lord Jesus begins to speak about the new commandment.

The eleven men are probably, if we were to classify their condition psychologically, they are men who are just about to panic because the Lord Jesus has already told them that he was going to leave them and now in the Upper Room Discourse he will reiterate that. And I am sure that they had already begun to feel something of the anxiety that was to grip them when the Lord Jesus was gone. The question must have come to them even though they were still immature, “What will we do when the Lord Jesus is no longer with us?” That, incidentally, is a question that often comes to Christians who have been taught by some Bible teacher and they are very indebted to this Bible teacher, and then the Bible teacher will say, “God has called me to another place,” and some of them go into a tailspin. As if the Lord is dead or at least that the Lord has changed his address and is now no longer in their midst. It's a good thing to remember that in the final analysis we are to be related to the Lord himself and give thanks for the teachers, who were given by God, but the important person is not the human teacher, the important person is the Lord Jesus.

No doubt they were panicking, thinking about the future, and he will remind them that he's going to go. Later on this discourse he will seek to comfort them in their panic. But let's notice, now, the statement concerning glorification, “Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.” I believe that in order to understand this we must say right now that the Lord Jesus is saying this from the standpoint of the cross. In other words, he is speaking as if the cross is taking place. Will you turn back to chapter 12, in verse 23, and I just want to read a couple of parallel passages, “And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.” Now notice, that

seems to be clearly a reference to the cross; the hour is coming when he is to be glorified. Look at verse 1 of chapter 17 now, “These words spoke Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee.”

So it does appear, as most of the students of John have suggested, that when he says, “Now is the Son of man glorified,” he’s writing from the standpoint of the death that he shall die soon upon Calvary’s cross. Now he says, “The Son of man is glorified.” In what way is Jesus Christ glorified in the cross? You might think at first that he’s not glorified at all, that Satan is glorified because he was able to engineer his death. Or that the Jewish leaders were glorified in their power and might because they were able to engineer the death of our Lord Jesus. But we know that our Lord’s saving work is a manifestation of the glory of his person and also the glory of his work. And let me just suggest a few things. We could talk for the rest of the night about this, really, since there is so much by way of the glorification of the Son of God in his death on the cross.

Let me just think about some of the things that are seen so far as the person of our Lord is concerned that bring glory to him. The first thing is the grace of God is seen in the death of Jesus Christ. Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor,” so the cross is a glorification of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Furthermore, the cross is a glorification of the love of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul writing in Galatians 2, in verse 20, says, “I am crucified have been crucified with Christ: I no longer live, but Christ liveth in me, and the life that I live I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.” So it is the love of gift of the Son for the saints.

Now the love of Christ is the glorification of the Son and the cross; that is, he is glorified in his love. He is also glorified in his holiness for on the cross he does not back bite, he does not complain, he does not even complain to God in heaven. And you’ll remember that the thief, who came to faith, looking upon the Lord Jesus, commented

upon the fact that, “This man hath done nothing amiss, and contrary to our attitudes and our acts, this man had done nothing amiss.” And even the Roman centurion who saw that our Lord was suffering in a way that no other individuals that he knew had suffered, said, as our Lord suffered and died, “Surely this was the Son of God.” So he is glorified in his person; in his grace, in his love, and his holiness. In fact, almost all of the virtues that make up the attributes of our Lord are seen in the death of Christ on the cross.

Now if you think about his work there is further reason for him to say, “Now is the Son of man glorified because it is here that Satan was annulled. It was here that Satan’s work came to naught, for the Lord Jesus died for sin. And it is sin that Satan had as a means by which he was to overcome men. He also, on the cross, obtained a release for those who were his people. As Peter says in 1st Peter, chapter 2, verse 24, let me see if I can repeat it, “He in his own body on the tree, bore our sins: that we having died to sin might live unto righteousness, by whose stripes we are healed.” Peter speaks about how the work of Jesus Christ is the means of the healing of believers. Further, he obtained a judgment against the sin nature there as well, dying not only for sins but for sin itself. What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh in the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus. And so he was glorified in his work of obtaining judgment against sins and also against the sin nature.

In chapter 12, in verse 31, the Lord - or John writes, giving words of the Lord Jesus, “Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.” And so in the death of Christ there is the judgment of the world. Putting it all together it’s almost as if he is thinking about the words that the Apostle Paul writes in 2nd Corinthians chapter 4, in verse 6, where we read, “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shown in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” Now is the Son of man glorified, if you examine carefully the cross of the Lord Jesus you will see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Truly, the

Son of man is glorified in his person and in his work when he gave himself for sins on the cross.

Now he says not only is the Son glorified but the Father too. He states, “Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. We need not go through the same methodology, but all of the attributes of deity are superlatively magnified in the death of Christ. And looking at it from the standpoint of the Father, we see his grace, we see his holiness in that he requires the death of a substitute in order that the sinners may go free. We see his grace, we see his love, we see his holiness, we see all of the other of the attributes of deity. And we also see the glorification of the Father in the work of the Son, for all of the trinity works together toward the salvation that we have come to experience.

So the Son is glorified and the Father is glorified. In the 33rd verse he speaks of the going away of the Son after having spoken of the glorification. “Little children,” isn’t that interesting? “Little children,” this word, by the way, is a diminutive; that is, it does speak of little children. It’s the only time that it’s used in the Gospel of John, but it’s used seven times in the 1st Epistle. It’s almost as if the Apostle John, who was leaning on the breast of the Lord Jesus, was affected by this particular word. He heard the Lord Jesus call them little children and he thought that was good and so he uses it in his epistle, but it’s the only time that the Lord uses it. And notice, he does not use it until Judas is gone. It’s after Judas is gone that he says, “Little children.” The word “little children”, one of the commentators, I think he was a Scott, suggested that the Scottish word “bairn” is best. Little born ones, is the idea back of it, little born ones; little children.

Now what is so interesting about this to me is that, remember, at the last supper, the last Passover, the first Lord’s Supper, it was the work of the person who was the host at a certain point in the eating of the Passover supper to explain the significance of the Passover. Now he was called the *pater familias*; that is, the father of the family. Now in this case it was the Lord Jesus who was the *pater familias*. That is, he was the person who was the host and the eleven are his guests, and so at a certain point in the service he

was to explain to them the significance of the Passover night. That is, he was to give them the theology of it, he was to explain why they ate the Passover supper. And, of course, he went back to explain how they were in bondage in Egypt and how God brought them out on that night and how the blood was placed on the doorposts and all of the other details by which the Lamb of God is made plain to them.

Now here we have a word from the pater familias and he, like a true father, addresses them as little children. And I think also it's not stretching it too much to say that in the light of the fact that this was his last Passover that he would eat with them we can think of him as a dying Father, giving last instructions to them. Now we all know that when people are about to die their words assume great significance. The things that they say when they're about to die are generally things that can be relied upon to be true insofar as that person is concerned. Now our Lord's words were always true. We don't have to make any distinction between his dying words and his living words, but in the case of individuals we do do that. Necessarily human experience has shown that to be true. Well here we have the dying Son of God and there is a solemnity about these words that is very significant, the dying pater familias speaks to the children and gives them instructions, “Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Where I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.” Now if you'll just allow me just a little bit of time, I mean if you'll not require this of me I will not look back at the passages in the Gospel of John where he warned them that he was going to leave them, but that he did.

Now he says, “Just as I told the Jews, where I go you cannot come, so now I am saying to you.” Then we come to his gift in verses 34 and 35. Verse 34, “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” Why did he speak of this as a gift? It seems more like a yolk doesn't it? Just think, I've got to love the brethren. I've got to love my fellow Christians.

How often have you heard people say, “I know that I’m to love that brother and I do love him, but I don’t like him.” [Laughter] I’ve heard lots of Bible teachers say that. Now I must say that’s being honest, at least. But really it’s a little bad. It’s not the high step, it’s very rarely true that a person loves someone that he doesn’t like. Usually when you don’t like a person you run from them, don’t you? If you see them coming you find it convenient to duck around the corner. Or you can find it convenient to be absent. Now it seems to me that the ideal is to advance beyond like to love, or beyond love to like, but these two should go hand in hand. He calls this a gift and it seems like a yolk.

I’ve often thought about this, who could fulfill this to start with? And if we look at the complete fulfillment of it then we would have to say, yes it’s a yolk because I don’t think it’s possible for a person as long as he’s in the flesh to perfectly fulfill the new commandment. But yet at the same time it comes with a glorious promise and it’s accompanied with the greatest power. It comes with the promise that, “By this men shall know that ye are my disciples,” and of course it comes with the power of the Holy Spirit as we shall read. And when we get to the 16th chapter and read about how the Holy Spirit, well not even the 16th, in the 14th chapter, we read of the gift of the Holy Spirit. So it is a gift in spite of this tremendous requirement to love one another as Christ has loved us. It comes with a glorious promise and it comes with the greatest power. The potentialities of the fulfillment of the new commandment make this a gift of grace beyond measure, by the help of God the Holy Spirit I am able to love my brethren as Christ has loved me.

Now let’s look at it a little more carefully, “A new commandment I give unto you.” Why does he call it new? Well now, in the Old Testament we are told that love formed a great part of the Law of Moses. For example, let’s just turn to Leviticus chapter 19, and verse 18, this is a text that’s cited in the New Testament more than once and our Lord refers to it too. In Leviticus 19:18 we read this, “Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any

grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am the LORD.”

Is this new simply because in the Old Testament we are told to love our neighbors whereas in the New Testament the Lord Jesus tells us to love members of the family? A new commandment I give unto you that you love one another, is that the difference? Is that why this one is new? Well I'm not really sure that's so because in the Old Testament we are told to love our neighbors as ourselves. It's true that that is a neighbor kind of love but he's talking about neighbors in the family of Israel. And then we are further told that we are to do good to all men in the Old Testament, even those that are outside the family of Israel. In fact, some of our Lord's teaching is directed toward the sin of Israel in thinking they can act toward outsiders in an evil way and toward the members of Judaism in a noble way and think that they've fulfilled the law of God. Now I'm not going to really - I don't really think that is what our Lord means when he says, “Now we have a new commandment and your love now is greater than to love your neighbor.” I doubt that's what he has in mind. I'm rather inclined to think something else about this and I put this forth a little hesitantly because I'm not at all sure that I'm right. I know that's uncharacteristic but nevertheless [Laughter] in this case I'm not at all sure that I'm right.

You know, in the synoptic when the last supper takes place the first Lord's Supper, the last Passover, we read, “The Lord Jesus took the bread, then he took the wine and he said, This cup is the new covenant, in my blood which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” In other words, he took the bread and the wine and they were symbolic of certain spiritual facts. Now we don't read about that in John chapter 13, what we read about in John 13 is the new commandment. So I'm inclined to think that when he says, “I give unto you a new commandment he's saying that the old covenant, the old covenant, had as its basis the moral law, the Ten Commandments and also the Mosaic law because you cannot break up the law, the law is composed of the commandments, the

civil ordinances, and also the ceremonial law. But attached to the new covenant is the commandment, “To love one another as I have loved you.”

In other words, the law of the new commandment is this mutual love in the family of God, measured by the love of Jesus Christ for us. So I think of this as a new commandment because he’s talking to the new creation; those who had been born again who form the body that is known later in the New Testament as the church, the people of the new covenant, their commandment is to love one another as Christ has loved them. So I rather think, then, that this is the love of the new commandment and that’s why he calls it a new commandment. It’s true, it’s family love as over against neighborly love. And furthermore, there is one other important thing, it is measureless and in this sense it is in contrast to the wording of the Old Testament. The measurement of the love of the new covenant is the love of Christ for us and every one of you who knows anything about the love of God knows that that love is measureless. It is infinite love and this is the kind of love that is spoken of here.

There is an old story, it’s a tradition -- I wonder if it’s true -- but it is a tradition that Archbishop Ussher who was responsible for the dates that appeared in the King James Version, 4004 for the creation is traced to Ussher’s chronology. Many Bible students, I think most, today believe that it’s probably off. But nevertheless, he was responsible and he was a very godly man. And the tradition is that once he was passing through Galloway, a town in Scotland, and he turned aside on a Saturday to enjoy the society of Samuel Rutherford. Now Samuel Rutherford was one of the godly men of Scotland and Mr. Rutherford was one of the men responsible for the Westminster Confession of Faith. Well the story is that Archbishop Ussher wanted to visit Samuel Rutherford and not have Mr. Rutherford know that he was who he was and so he was welcomed as a guest in Rutherford’s family but the Archbishop had disguised himself.

Now Samuel Rutherford was a man of great love and he welcomed him into his house as a Christian brother and that night it was on a Saturday and it was the custom for

Mr. Rutherford to quiz the members of his family and others who were there about scriptural topics, and when he came around to this man he said, “How many commandments are there?” And Archbishop Ussher said, “There are eleven.” And Mr. Rutherford corrected him, he said, “Oh no, there are only ten.” And this visitor said, “Mr. Rutherford, you’re wrong. There are eleven. And he said, ‘A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another,’ that’s eleven.” Well that stopped Mr. Rutherford. The next morning it was Sunday and early in the morning Mr. Rutherford is supposed to have gotten up as his custom was, gone out into the garden outside for a time of meditation before the preaching of the morning and as he was walking around he happened to hear someone praying and he heard some very fervent prayer and he went over to where it was and it turned out it was Archbishop Ussher who was praying very fervently. And, of course, they then came to an understanding, he came to an understanding of who the Archbishop was, an explanation of what had happened, he thought he was entertaining angels unawares and found out it was only an archbishop, after all [laughter]. And according to the tradition he invited the archbishop to speak for him that morning in church and so the Anglican went up and conducted the usual service of the Presbyterian minister and he preached that mornings, so tradition has it, on the new commandment.

Well it is a new commandment whether it’s the eleventh or not, well I’ll leave you to make the decision. But at any rate it is a new commandment and it’s new because of its relationship to the new covenant, in my opinion. Now he says, “A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another.” It is interesting to look at the tenses of the verb. “That you love one another,” it is a present tense and so it speaks of a continuous durative kind of love that goes on and on. Now when he says, “As I have loved you,” then he refers to the event of the cross. So he says, “You should go on loving one another as I have loved you in that supreme manifestation of the shedding of my blood

upon the cross.” He also uses the term for love that is associated with the love of God in the New Testament.

Now many have pointed out to you that there are three loves, three words, for love in the New Testament. There is the word eros which is the word for love from which we get the English word erotic and so consequently it is suggestive of a sensual, sexual kind of love. There is the word phileo; it is the love of affection, the love that is produced because people have common interests. Two people love football and they say, “I love that man,” that is, because they love football. They have that love. There’s nothing wrong with that, incidentally, and it’s used in the New Testament for the love of God, too. But the characteristic word of the New Testament is the word agapao which is the love of the will, the will directed toward the good of an object and it frequently involves self-sacrifice. This is the word that is used here, “That you love one another.” That is, that you love to the extent of giving yourself in sacrifice for the object of the love, “Just as I have given myself in an act of the will for you.”

Someone, incidentally, has said that this is the love of take; sexual love. This is the love of give and take; common love, affection. And this is the love of give. That’s not bad, I don’t know whether we should say that’s altogether accurate but its fairly accurate, it expresses the idea behind the love of the new commandment, it is love in the sense of a giving of oneself to another person.

Now when we think of New Testament love we are not to think of the kind of love that is expressed in ancient religions. T. R. Glover wrote a little book *The Influence of Christ in the Ancient World*. It’s a fine little study of Christianity and its nearest rivals: Stoicism, Epicureanism, and so forth. He pointed out that Epicureans spoke of undisturbedness as one of the supreme emotions and the Stoics of freedom from emotion. Now both of these things are essentially selfish ideals -- undisturbedness, freedom from emotion -- and he points out in the case of the Stoic it was always modified by the memory of the rest of the kosmos but still, freedom from emotion? Do you know what

freedom from emotion is in Greek? Well, freedom from emotion in Greek -- you're having a Greek lesson tonight, I know you are feeling very learned -- freedom from emotion in Greek is - this should be in alpha. This is apatheia. Now, if you look carefully at it this is an A, this is a P, and this another A, and this is a T-H. Well, if you're anticipating what this is I'll just put the word here, apathy. That's what apathy is. It's freedom from emotion, and the thing that the Stoics think of as being something great, the Stoics incidentally were very moral people. But freedom from emotion, that's apathy. “I do not hold,” wrote the gentle Plutarch, “with those who hem the savage and hard apathy.” It was no ideal of Jesus Christ's. Like the master, the Christian must exercise himself to feel what retches feel. In Hinduism holiness and love are not what they are in the Scriptures. You can always find, if you study the false religions, that their ideals never measure up to the Christian ideals as ideals.

People are inclined to think, “Why all religions teach this, all religions teach that and Christianity with them.” Oh, no. The ideals that lie back of Christianity are far higher than the ideals of the ancient religions or the modern ones, for that matter. If you just study Christianity enough and study them enough. It's not true that the ethics of the non-Christian religions are the same as the ethics of the Christian religion, it's not true. The differences are not only bound up in the nature of the founder of Christianity and the work that he has done for us, but in all of the issues of that work in the ethical system, putting it in the form of a system that we know as Christianity.

So, “A new commandment I give unto you, that you love (love in the sense of agapao, love in the sense of give, not love in the sense of absence of emotion, not love in the sense of blamelessness or any of the other ideals of the ancient religions, but,) love one another as I have loved you.” By the way, the Bible says that we are to love one another. We are told, if we listen to liberals very much at all we are ultimately faced with the doctrine of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. But that is not a biblical doctrine. Our Lord Jesus did not say that we are to love the world because we

have a common Father and we are all men. It is true that there is a sense in which there is a fatherhood of God and there is a brotherhood of man, but that sense is the fatherhood of God as creator, not as redeemer. And the brotherhood is the brotherhood of a common descent from Adam, creatures, but the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man as if there is no distinction, is not something that our Lord Jesus Christ taught, he was very much opposed to that. He said that we were to love one another. Now John spells it out, he says in 1st John chapter 3, in verse 14, I'll read it to you, “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.” That's what he means; love the brethren. That's a little B, incidentally. “He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.” So there is not such doctrine as the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man in the sense that it is taught in liberal circles. We are to love one another and the one another is the body of believers. There is that special sense in which we have a relationship to our brothers and sisters in Christ. The brethren, incidentally, does include the sisters [Laughter]. So we are to love one another and we are to love one another, “As I have loved you.” And that tense is a reference to the cross, that's the measure, that's the standard, and that's an infinite love.

Now the last verse is also important and I'll just mention this, somebody ran that clock forward [Laughter] while I was not looking at it. I was keeping pretty good look at it I thought. He says, “By this, (that is, by this love, one for another,) shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one to another.” By this shall all men recognize, how do you recognize a disciple of Jesus Christ? Incidentally, that word “my” is emphatic, “By this all men shall know that ye are my disciples, if you have love one to another.” How do you know Moses' disciples? Well, you would know them by circumcision. How do you know the Pharisees? Well, you know them by their phylacteries. How do you know the disciples of John the Baptist? Well, you know them by their fasting. How do you know Baptists? Well, you know them by how significantly they talk about immersion and some other things. How do you know Presbyterians?

Well, ideally you should know Presbyterians by the fact that they sprinkle, not immerse, and they always talk about the doctrine of Predestination, at least they used to. How do you know Episcopalians? Why, they are dignified. They don't mingle with the rest of us [Laughter]. How do you know Romanists? Well Romanists, you know them by the mass and all of the other things that go to make up their sacramental religion. Now the Lord Jesus says, “If you want to know my disciples, you know them by their love one for another.” That's the way you know them. Not by things such as these, but you know them by their love. Minucius Felix said concerning the early Christians, “They love before they know each other.” And the railing Lucian declared, “Their master makes them believe that they are all brothers.” It is the final test of discipleship, the love that Christians have one for another and it's the final test, my Christian friend, of your relationship to the Lord and mine. By this shall all men know that my disciples you are if you have love one for another.

Now I don't mind being known as someone who preaches election and predestination and sovereign grace, but I hope that they know me also as one who has love for the brethren, that's what I would like to have. I would like to know the doctrines and put them in practice, wouldn't you? May God help us to have true discipleship, the discipleship of the love of Christ. Let's bow in prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for these wonderful...

[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]