

This Week's Theme: Raising Your LQ

This Week's Memory Verse: *A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. John 13:34*

Monday, June 16

Scripture Reading: John 13

John 13 is such a fascinating passage. Jesus is sharing His last Supper with His disciples, though they have no clue the end is just hours away. He knows that this will be a moment they will never forget, and so he chooses His actions and words wisely and deliberately. He washed their feet to give them a memorable picture of the servanthood their lives were to model. And, for all the teaching He had given them over the years, he chose to leave them with one final command.

Love one another.

And the standard he gives them for loving one another is nothing less than the love Jesus had for the disciples: *as I have loved you*. And this was not an option, but rather a command to be obeyed: *you **must** love one another*.

Sunday our fathers (and everyone else) were challenged at the point of their Love Quotient – their “LQ.” What capacity do we have to love others? This week we'll be looking at some passages and stories that will confront us each day with this command to love. But let's start today with one profound thought from Jesus.

Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. (John 15:13)

The greatest love is love that is sacrificed; it is love that is given away. Reading about love, studying about love, even receiving love is not what love is all about. Love is all about giving. It is all about sacrificing my life for the sake of your life. How great is my love for my spouse, my children, my friends? How much am I sacrificing; how much am I giving away. That is where I find the true answer.

For God so loved the world that He gave . . .

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Tuesday, June 17

Scripture Reading:

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

1 Corinthians 13

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Wednesday, June 18

Scripture Reading:

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God. And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.

God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.

1 John 4:7-21

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Thursday, June 19

Mother Teresa was one who understood what active, sacrificial love was all about. In 1950 she founded the order of Missionaries of Charity and spent her life living among the lepers and poor of Calcutta, India. Enjoy some of her words about love today:

True love causes pain. Jesus, in order to give us the proof of his love, died on the cross. A mother, in order to give birth to her baby, has to suffer. If you really love one another, you will not be able to avoid making sacrifices.

Someone once told me that not even for a million dollars would they touch a leper. I responded, "Neither would I. If it were a case of money, I would not even do it for two million. On the other hand, I do it gladly for the love of God."

Good works are links that form a chain of love.

Do not be afraid of loving to the point of sacrifice, until it hurts. Jesus love for us led him to his death.

God pays attention to our love. Not one of us is indispensable. God has the means to do all things and to do away with the work of the most capable human being. We can work until we drop. We can work excessively. If what we do is not connected to love, however, our work is useless in God's eyes.

Love is, just like Christ himself showed with his death, the greatest gift.

God has created us so we do small things with great love. I believe in that great love, that comes, or should come from our heart, should start at home: with my family, my neighbors across the street, those right next door. And this love should then reach everyone.

To me, Jesus is the Life I want to live, the Light I want to reflect, the Way to the Father, the Love I want to express, the Joy I want to share, the Peace I want to sow around me. Jesus is everything to me.

Quotes from *Mother Teresa in My Own Words* by Jose Luis Gonzalez-Balado, (New York: Gramercy Books, 1996), 31-46.

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Friday, June 20

Enjoy this great hymn of love written by Peter Scholtes:

We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord
We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord
And we pray that our unity may one day be restored
And they'll know we are Christians by our love
Yes they'll know we are Christians by our love

We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand
We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand
And together we'll spread the news that God is in our land
And they'll know we are Christians by our love
Yes they'll know we are Christians by our love

We will work with each other, we will work side by side
We will work with each other, we will work side by side
And we'll guard each one's dignity and save each one's pride
And they'll know we are Christians by our love
Yes they'll know we are Christians by our love

All praise to the Father, from whom all things come
And all praise to Christ Jesus, His only Son
And all praise to the Spirit, who makes us one
And they'll know we are Christians by our love
Yes they'll know we are Christians by our love

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Friday, June 20

One more great hymn that expresses Jesus' sacrificial love for us. May these words inspire you to live a life of sacrificial love this day.

O sacred Head, now wounded,
With grief and shame weighed down,
Now scornfully surrounded
With thorns, thine only crown:
How pale thou art with anguish,
With sore abuse and scorn!
How does that visage languish
Which once was bright as morn!

What thou, my Lord, has suffered
Was all for sinners' gain;
Mine, mine was the transgression,
But thine the deadly pain.
Lo, here I fall, my Savior!
'Tis I deserve thy place;
Look on me with thy favor,
Vouchsafe to me thy grace.

What language shall I borrow
To thank thee, dearest friend,
For this thy dying sorrow,
Thy pity without end?
O make me thine forever;
And should I fainting be,
Lord, let me never, never
Outlive my love for thee.

Text by Paul Gerhardt, based on a medieval Latin poem by Bernard of Clairvaux

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Sunday, June 15

It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.

The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. 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.

He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

"No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."

"Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"

Jesus answered, "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

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. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

John 13:1-17