

Maundy Thursday 2023, “Dinner Church”

In our Gospel, Jesus commands his students to wash one another’s feet and to love one another as he loves you.

Sounds pretty simple right? And yet this is the hardest commandment to live out... because our human condition gets in the way. We get too wrapped up in ourselves and our own stuff to love like this. But we can try.

The word in Greek for this love that Jesus is talking about is agape, which is love for the other – without the expectation of getting anything in return. It is sacrificial love that seeks the good and well-being of others, of society, and the world. It is not a feeling of love or an emotion like when you are dating or smitten over someone. It is an action. It just loves because God created that person or group of people. Jesus’ act of foot washing is an example of agape love.

I am reminded of Aunt Pam. Jeranna’s Aunt, who sends a birthday card to every relative every year with a good amount of money in it. It must be a full time job for her. All the cards and stamps. Does she ever get repaid? Not in cards or money. Maybe in the joy of giving. It is a complete selfless act. I am not sure about others, but I make a point to thank her and update her on what is happening in our family. I don’t deserve these cards. I married into the family.

What does the love Jesus commands here look like in everyday life?

I can’t help but to think of Robert Fulghum’s book, “All I Really Need to Know I learned in Kindergarten”

Share everything

Play fair

Don’t hit people

Put things back where you found them.

Clean up your own mess.

Don’t take things that aren’t yours.

Say you’re sorry when you hurt somebody.

Wash your hands before you eat.

Flush. (with the lid down)

Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you.

Live a balanced life – learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some.

Take a nap every afternoon.

When you got out into the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands, and stick together.

I think it is all there.

The Apostle Paul says it this way in 1st Corinthians 13

Love is patient, love is kind, love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things. Love never ends.

Paul is basically saying, we can have all the spiritual gifts in the world, faith to move mountains, or prophetic powers, but if we don't use them with agape love, they are nothing... a banging gong or clanging symbol.

What does it look like to metaphorically wash one another's feet these days? Amen!