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오늘의 말씀

"Relationships"
When Grace Flourishes Between Us

[John 13:34~35]

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. (35) By this all will know that you are My disci-ples, if you have love for one another."

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IIntroduction ~ More Connected, Yet More Lonely

Dear brothers and sisters, We live in a world more connected than ever. With our phones, we can instantly reach people far away. Yet strangely, we have more connections but fewer people with whom we can truly share our hearts. Sometimes, our closest relationships be-come the most difficult. We try to understand others and avoid conflict. But Jesus shows us a different starting point: “As I have loved you, that you also love one another.” Before telling us what to do, Jesus reminds us of what He has already done for us. Today, we are not learning techniques for better relationships. We are discovering how relationships are transformed when we have first been loved by Christ.

Exposition of the Word

Relationships Begin Where We Are First Loved.

[John 13:34, NKJV] “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.”

Jesus calls this a “new commandment.” Yet the Old Testament already commanded us to love our neighbors. Why, then, is it new?

[Leviticus 19:18, NKJV] “You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.”

The Greek word for “new” is καινός (kainos), describing not only something recent but something new in quality. Jesus was not introducing love for the first time. He was revealing a new standard of love through His own love.

That standard is found in the words, “As I have loved you.” The Greek [καθώς(kathōs)] means “just as” or “in the same way.” Our

standard is not our feelings or abilities, but Christ's love. This may sound overwhelming: “How could I ever love like Jesus?” But remember, Jesus loved His disciples before commanding them to love.

[John 13:1, NKJV] “Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.”

Jesus loved His disciples knowing their weaknesses and coming failures. We often think, “I must love to become worthy of love.” But the gospel reverses that order: “I have al-ready been loved; therefore, I can live in that love.” This is grace. We love not be-cause we possess enough love within ourselves, but because Christ loved us first. This is where relationships begin anew.

Jesus Did Not Love Only Perfect People(John 13:1–11).

At the Last Supper were disciples with different personalities and weaknesses. Peter would deny Jesus three times, and Judas would betray Him. Yet Jesus wrapped Himself with a towel and washed their feet, showing love through humble service. He knew their weaknesses and loved them first.

In relationships, we often think, “If only that person would change,” or “If only they un-derstood me better.” Of course, harmful behavior must be corrected, and wrongdoing carries responsibility. But when we focus more on changing people than loving them, relationships become places of constant judgment. Jesus knew Peter's weakness, yet He washed his feet. He showed love before Peter overcame his failures.

Love does not wait until someone becomes perfect. It remembers that others, like us, are imperfect people in need of grace. This does not mean ignoring wrongdoing. Love does not overlook what is wrong; it sees the person beyond the

wrongdoing. None of us is complete, yet Christ loved us. His grace opens new possibilities in our re-lationships.

Grace Changes the Way We See Others(John 13:34).

[John 13:34, NKJV] "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another."

Before love changes our actions, it changes how we see people. We easily judge others by how they treat us. Those who are kind seem good; those who make us uncomfort-able seem difficult. But grace changes our questions. Instead of asking, "Why is that person like that?" we begin asking, "Could there be pain I do not understand?" or "How does Jesus see this person?" Pain never excuses wrongdoing. Yet grace keeps us from defining someone only by their failures.

[2 Corinthians 5:16] "Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no long-er."

Paul describes a new perspective in Christ. We no longer judge people merely by out-ward appearances or human standards. Rather than asking how useful someone is to us or how well they meet our expectations, we remember that they too are people in need of God's love and grace.

Here is something important: Loving someone does not mean taking responsibility for changing their entire life. We can encourage, correct, and speak the truth. But ul-timately, God changes hearts. When we try to take His place, love can become control. When we entrust others to Him, we are freed from the burden of controlling them. We love without controlling, correct without condemning, and serve without forcing others into our expectations.

This is neither indifference nor unconditional acceptance of harmful behavior. As we learned last week, forgiveness does not excuse wrongdoing or require returning to an unsafe relationship. Love also requires truth, accountability, and healthy boundaries. Sometimes, safety requires distance. Through it all, remember: Grace does not give us power to change others into what we want. It gives us new eyes to see them through the love of Jesus.

Love Becomes a Witness to the Gospel Between Us.

[John 13:35] "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

The Greek expression [ἐν τούτῳ(en toutō)] means "by this" or "through this." Through what? Through the disciples' love for one another. Jesus identified the mark by which the world would recognize His disciples—not their knowledge or accomplishments, but their love for one another.

The church is not a gathering of perfect people. It is a family formed by Christ's grace. Misunderstandings, conflicts, and hurts may arise. Yet what the world should see is not a church without problems, but people who respect one another, uphold the truth, and keep learning to love despite their weaknesses.

[Ephesians 4:15, NKJV] "but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—"

Love and truth are not opposites. Genuine love does not abandon truth, and truthful re-lationships must not lose love. Love may not solve every problem immediately. But judgment can give way to understanding, competition to encouragement, and indiffer-ence to genuine care. These are the fruits of grace growing in our relationships.

Dear brothers and sisters, the church's greatest witness is not

how perfect we are, but how much grace we have received. When that grace shapes our words and attitudes, the world begins to see Christ among us.

Conclusion — Grace Flourishes Between Us.

Dear brothers and sisters, Jesus did not command us to create perfect relationships. He called us to love one another in the love He first showed us. We remain imperfect. We misun-derstand others and sometimes fail them. Yet Christ loved us first. Remembering His love gives us new eyes to see others—not merely through our expectations, but as people who also need God's grace. May the love we have received flourish in our families, our church, and eve-ry relationship. Grace begins within us and ultimately flourishes between us.

Next week, we will explore “Compassion”—how seeing others through the love of Jesus leads us to care for those who are hurting.

Today's One-Line Reflection ~ “Grace does not empower us to change others into what we want; it gives us new eyes to see them through the love of Jesus.”

Today's Prayer Points

A. Help us remember Your love for us. Rather than focusing on our weaknesses or those of others, may we remember the grace of Jesus, who loved us first.

B. Renew the way we see others. Instead of judging or controlling them, help us see and serve them with Your love and truth.

C. Let our church reveal the gospel through love. May we respect, encourage, and gen-uinely love one another as a community

shaped by grace.