

# Love Beyond Reason

by Brian Long

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of loving others with a boundless and selfless love, just as Jesus demonstrated through his life, death, and resurrection.*

**Duration:** 41:18

**Scripture:** John 13:1

**Topics:** "Christ Like Love", "Sacrificial Service"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the boundless love of God demonstrated through Jesus washing the disciples' feet, showcasing humility, sacrificial love, and the call for believers to love and serve one another beyond reason, words, and self-preservation. It challenges listeners to embody Christ-like love that goes beyond mere words and demonstrates action, urging them to obey God's commandments and truly love Him by serving others selflessly.

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## Transcript

I was kind of glad they found this power because I don't have the booming voice that John Wesley had or George Whitefield. I was preaching not very long ago in a place and the power went out in the whole town and they only had a couple little windows in the church building and it was dark and so I thought, well, I don't need my notes anyway, Lord help me, and we had the rest of the meeting in the dark, preached in the dark. God is faithful.

So good to be with you brothers and sisters. I was thinking this is the farthest that I've ever been from home and yet I couldn't feel more at home with brothers and sisters in Christ. The fellowship has been so incredible and it's so good to see you all here.

We met a new friend yesterday, Margaret. It's so good to see you here. You did wear your cowgirl boots, didn't you? So she loves horses as well and we got to meet her yesterday somewhere here in town and at a coffee shop.

So good to see her, but good to see all of you. We're going to turn to John chapter 13. See if this gospel of John chapter 13.

We're going to be reading from verse 1 all throughout verse 17, but before we do, I want to point out two verses here. These are the words of our Lord Jesus Christ and he says in verse 34, a new commandment

I give to you that you love one another as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another.

The one distinguishing mark of the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ that would tell all the world that we belong to him, the son of God, is the way that we love one another and he gives this commandment, a new commandment. It's a love one another, but how? As I have loved you, you are to love one another. What kind of love is this? This love of God that he's called us to love one another with.

You know, Leonard Ravenhill used to say the world doesn't need a new definition of Christianity. It needs a new demonstration of Christianity and I want to say kind of springboard off that and say the world doesn't need a new definition of love. The world has perverted the word love beyond what we can imagine and it's even been perverted in the church.

What is love? The world doesn't need a new definition of love. We don't need a new definition of love. We need a new demonstration of it and the Lord Jesus in John chapter 13, not only he doesn't just give us a definition of love, he gives us a demonstration of it and we'll see that in the first beginning in verse 1 here of John chapter 13.

Just before Jesus is going to go to the cross, this is the last meal that he'll have with his disciples. And it says in verse 1, 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. And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, Jesus knowing that the Father has given all things into his hands and that he had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper, laid aside his garments, took a towel and girded himself.

After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded. Then he came to Simon Peter and Peter said to him, Lord, are you washing my feet? Jesus answered and said to him, What I am doing you do not understand right now, but you will know after this. Peter said to him, You shall never wash my feet.

Jesus answered him, If I do not wash you, you have no part with me. Simon Peter said to him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus said to him, He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean.

And you are clean, but not all of you. For he knew who would betray him. Therefore he said, You are not all clean.

So when he had washed their feet, taken his garments and sat down again, he said to them, Do you know what I have done to you? You call me teacher and Lord, and you say, Well, for so I am. If I then your Lord and teacher have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you.

Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is he who sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. Let's pray.

Now, Lord, I cannot. I cannot preach in and of myself. I'm asking you, Lord, to speak through me to every one of our hearts.

I'm asking you to cause us to see you. Lord, would you remove the veil from all of us? Would you remove every blinder from our eyes, every callous from our hearts and unstop our years, our spiritual ears to hear you speak to us tonight, reveal yourself to us tonight and take us to a place we've never been before and change us, Lord, so that we will never be the same again, is my prayer in Jesus' name. Amen.

Verse 1 says that Jesus having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. I want you to mark that. He loved them to the end.

What does that mean? It means that he loved them to the uttermost. He loved them to the end. What kind of love is this? This is boundless love.

It is love that goes beyond where you think it can go. You know, in the 1904 Welsh revival, the central theme of that revival became the cross of Jesus Christ, Calvary, the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And in that revival, there was a hymn that was birthed called, that we sing today in English called, Here is Love, Vast as the Ocean.

I love the words to that hymn. Here is love, vast as the ocean, loving kindness as a flood, when the prince of life, our ransom, shed for us his precious blood. Who his love shall not remember? Who can cease to sing his praise? He shall never be forgotten throughout heaven's endless days.

One verse says, on the mount of crucifixion stood a fountain deep and wide, when the floodgates of God's mercy poured a vast and gracious tide. Grace and love like mighty rivers poured incessant from above. Heaven's peace and perfect justice kissed a guilty world in love.

Love, vast as the ocean, it's boundless love. I say it's boundless because it's love that when you think it can go no farther, it goes farther still. The love of God, when you think it can't go any higher, it goes higher still.

When you think it can't go any deeper, it goes deeper still. And here Jesus is demonstrating once again just how far his love for his people will go. He's doing the duty that was only given to a slave and yet he is the king of kings.

He's the king of glory. Jesus didn't begin in Bethlehem. He's God.

He's God incarnate. He had no beginning, just like he'll have no ending. He became a baby in Bethlehem.

He became man. That was humility enough. But he didn't just become man.

He became a servant. He lowered himself and came underneath all of us. And here it says, having loved his own, he loved them to the end.

He loved them all the way to becoming their servant. So he is the master. Washing disciples' feet.

That's something that would be unheard of in that day. The duty of a slave. But that's what boundless love does.

Boundless love always goes beyond self. It takes us beyond self-preservation. It says in verse 1 that Jesus knew that his hour had come.

What was that hour? He knew he was going to die very soon. He was going to lay down his life for the sins of the world. Now let me ask you a question.

If you knew that you were going to die tomorrow, you knew that you were going to die tomorrow, would you be thinking about you? Or would you be thinking about your brother, your sister, your sons and daughters? Would you be thinking about others? Now let's go beyond that boundary. If you knew you were going to die tomorrow, would you be thinking about how you could serve someone you knew had betrayed you or would betray you? If you knew you were going to die tomorrow, would you go so far, even farther than that, that you would love someone and serve someone that you knew would betray you and deny that they even ever knew you? That's what our Lord Jesus Christ did. Knowing that his hour had come.

He's not thinking of himself at all. He goes to Peter, someone he knows. You're going to deny me three times.

And still he stooped down to wash Peter's dirty feet. Going to Judas Iscariot and knowing that Judas Iscariot would betray him for 30 pieces of silver. And still he bends down and picks up Judas' feet and serves him out of love.

It's incredible to me. It goes beyond self. All of us are selfish by nature.

We all think about ourselves. We all think about preserving ourselves. And yet the Bible says in 1 Corinthians chapter 13, that great love chapter, one of the characteristics of true love is that love never seeks its own.

Lust seeks to take. Love gives. Lust is selfish.

Consume on me. Love gives away. It never seeks its own.

Jesus Christ our Lord never sought his own. Boundless love goes beyond self-preservation. It's that kind of love that lays aside self, lays aside pride, lays aside position.

There's so many of us that wouldn't have dared in that day to wash feet because it would be beneath us. There's so many of us today that won't stoop to jobs that we think are lower than us because we're full of pride. Boundless love goes beyond self and it lays aside pride.

It casts off pride. It casts off position. If my Lord and my King became a servant, what must I be? What must I be doing? What must you be doing? We must be serving others.

We must be loving others and going beyond ourselves, becoming servants even when it seems unreasonable. Some of you have heard that great true story of those Moravian missionaries. There were two young men in the 1700s.

They were in a service, maybe something like this, and they heard the pastor preaching and he mentioned an island in the West Indies that was owned by an atheist British slave owner. And on that island were I think about 2,000 slaves, maybe more than that, but there were thousands of slaves. And that atheist British slave owner said, no one who is a Christian will ever be allowed on this island.

I'm finished with all that nonsense. And he would allow a Christian to come and share the gospel. Well, those two young men, those Moravians heard about that and the Lord stirred their heart and they said, we

will go and share the gospel of Jesus Christ with those slaves.

But the only way that they could go was to be, was to sell themselves as slaves to that British slave owner, that slave owner. And while he was willing to buy them as slaves and they would have to sell themselves as slaves for life, he would not even pay their fare to get there. And those two young men paid their way, got on the ship to go to this island, knowing they would never see their families again.

To go to this island for the rest of their lives, for the sole purpose of telling 2,000 slaves about their Jesus who had never yet heard his name. That's love. That's boundless love.

That's love that goes beyond self-preservation. Even their family members questioned the wisdom of it and wondered if they're really doing the right thing. But the love of God compelled them to go.

And when they got on that ship and the ship began to go, go off from their families and the distance between the ship and the harbor grew wider and wider, the last thing their family heard them say as they lifted their hands together was, may the lamb that is slain, may the lamb that was slain receive the reward of his suffering. And they said that phrase became the call to Moravian missions. May the lamb who was slain receive the reward of his suffering.

Boundless love. Love that goes beyond ourselves. That's the love that Jesus demonstrated.

And that's the love that he calls you and I to love one another with. It goes beyond self. It goes beyond reason.

It was so unreasonable for Jesus to take on this duty of a slave and wash his disciples' dirty feet. It was so unreasonable and that's why Peter cried out, Lord, are you going to wash my feet? It seemed crazy to him. Jesus said, Peter, if I do not wash you, you have no part of me.

And Peter, you don't understand what I'm doing right now, but you will later. Boundless love goes beyond reason. There must have been a holy hush in that room when Jesus, the Son of God, picked up his disciples' feet and began to wash them in such humility.

But I wonder if there wasn't a hush in heaven, a holy hush in heaven, as they all, all the angels, all of heaven looks down and sees the Son of God take on this kind of a job, this kind of a position. What humility our Lord Jesus demonstrated. What love.

Love that goes beyond reason. Unreasonable love. I met a brother several years ago and we actually were on a ranch and we saddled up horses and we took off for a ride and we had the most wonderful fellowship.

But he told me something that shocked me. I'd never heard him share before. He said, Brother Brian, I need to share something with you about my story.

I said, I want to hear it. He said, years ago, when my little, my children were small, my wife and I were young. He said, I started working away from home more and more.

And he said, I, I was really drifting away. And he said, I did something that I never dreamed I would do. He committed a horrible, horrible sin.

And he was unfaithful to his wife. And he said, the day came when I confessed what I'd done to my wife and it absolutely crushed her. She was angry.

She was crushed. She was so hurt. And she took the children and she left.

And rightly so. He said, I began to sink from that day forward into such a deep depression and I saw no way out of it. Day after day, never able to see my kids again, never able to have my wife again.

He said, it got so bad that it came. He said, the only way out that I could see was to commit suicide. And he said, the day came when that was so real in my mind.

I had it in my mind when I go home, I'm going to end it all. There's nothing left for me to live for. He said, I went home and I unlocked the door of my house and I opened the door and he said, I smelled cooking.

I smelled food cooking. And he said, I made my way around the corner and I looked in the kitchen and my wife was over the stove cooking supper. I had not seen her for months on end since I had confessed my sin.

He said, I just stood there and I said, what are you doing here? And she just said, and she walked over to me and she led me by the hand and took me across the house and opened the bathroom door. And she said, he said, she had me a bath ready with towels laid out. He said, go ahead and take a bath and then come eat supper.

I took a bath. He said, I cried most of the time, just shocked by what was going on here. Came back in the kitchen, sat down at the table, and she had this wonderful meal planned.

Every time I tried to speak, she'd just say, I couldn't eat. I broke down weeping. She looked at me and she said, Peter, I want you to know that I love you and I forgive you.

God restored that marriage. And today that marriage is like this one. You say unreasonable, absolutely unreasonable.

But this woman was willing to take the love of God and go beyond reason. And there are little children that are so happy that she did. And that man repented.

I'm not talking about a man who just going to go back and do the same thing. Can you imagine receiving that kind of love and forgiveness? He would never go back. It absolutely gripped his heart.

This is the love brothers and sisters, love that goes beyond self-preservation, love that goes beyond reason. And that's the kind of love that our Savior loved us with. And that's the kind of love he's calling us to love one another with.

But it doesn't just go beyond the bounds of reason and beyond the bounds of self-preservation. It's the kind of love that goes that goes beyond words and it's demonstrated in action. How many of you know that words are cheap and words are useless if there's nothing to back it up? I remember one time being invited to preach to a large group of young people and we were to have these young people for three days at a camp.

We had cabins. We would stay with them. We would preach.

We would teach the Bible. We had games and activities that we were invited to join them in. We were just invited in.

Others were leading this camp. And I remember having these sermons prepared and some of them were hard sermons. And I remember being so excited to preach and I remember preaching the first night and nothing happened.

And I preached the second day and nothing happens. And I remember I think it was the second night I was up there just preaching my heart out and didn't seem like anybody was even with me or being moved. And the next thing I noticed my wife was on the floor sitting next to some of them and some of them the girls were weeping that evening as she spoke to them.

Unbeknownst to me, this young lady had been sexually misused. This one confessed that she had seen her own dad die of a drug overdose and one heartbreaking story after another. I was preaching to them.

She was loving them. It does no good for us just to talk, talk, talk, talk if there's no love that backs up the words. The scripture says in 1 John 3 18, Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue, but with action and in truth.

Jesus, how do I know God loves me so much? How do we know Jesus loves us so much? Not just because he told us so, but because he showed us so. He showed us so. And he's showing his disciples by washing their feet.

But how much more when notice this, if you will, in verse three, it says, Jesus, knowing that the father had given all things into his hands and that he had come from God and was going to God rose from supper and laid aside his garments, took a towel and girded himself. He had the father had given all things into his hands. That's all that's heaven and earth, all power, all dominion, all authority, all of heaven and earth are in the hands of the son of God.

And with those hands, he picks up a towel and a basin. That's why I say there must have been a holy hush in heaven, but even more so when the next day, those same hands of the Lord God pick not up a towel, but a cross. And those same hands in whom the father had placed everything, all of heaven and earth, those same hands open themselves up and receive the nails.

And he stretched out his arms and he died. How do we know he loves us so? Because he showed us so. And he said, You are to love one another as I have loved you, not just with words, but with action by what you do.

Romans 5 8 said God demonstrated his love for us and that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Selfless, sacrificial love that went beyond reason and was demonstrated in action. Carter Conlon told the story about his father.

His father was very disappointed with him when he didn't finish college and he was pursuing a law degree and he didn't finish and he let the law degree go because God had called him to preach the word of God and the gospel of Christ. And he surrendered to the Lord and began to preach the gospel. But his dad was very, very unhappy with him and he had a strained relationship.

And Carter tried to explain to his dad. He tried to share the gospel of Christ with his dad many times and his dad would have none of it. He wouldn't hear it.

Years later, the day came when his dad became very ill and he was diagnosed with cancer and he had surgery and he had to have his, I think, part of his colon removed and he had to have a colostomy bag. And his dad was a very proud man and he wouldn't take care of this colostomy bag. You're supposed to empty it and clean it and he wouldn't do it.

He wouldn't let his wife do it. And one day Carter's mom called him and said, what to do? Your dad won't take care of this colostomy bag. It's overflowing.

It's a mess and he's resisting the nurses and everything. And Carter says, I'll come. So he comes and the nurses explained to him the situation and he said, no worries, I'll take care of it.

And they said, OK, well, here's your mask and here's some gloves and here's some. He said, no, he's my dad. I don't need any of that.

And Carter goes to his dad and he begins to clean this bag and clean his dad up. And he did it day after day after day until one day, once again, he shares with his dad the gospel of Jesus Christ and his dad opened his heart and repented and believed and received Christ. And you know what Carter said? He heard me not because the message had changed, but because his waste had been on my hands.

Love that goes beyond reason, beyond words, love that's willing to get your hands dirty and serve somebody. That's the love of God. And that's the love that he has called us to demonstrate to one another.

He says, if you will notice verse 14, if I then your Lord and teacher have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. That doesn't just mean washing feet, brothers and sisters. That means lowering ourselves and humbling ourselves and esteeming others better than ourselves, more important than ourselves.

What kind of revival would that be when all the people of God don't even hesitate to lay down their life for their brother or sister and the people of God go beyond words and beyond reason and beyond self-preservation and begin to love and serve an unbelieving world by proclaiming the truth, but also living the truth. There are many people I believe and I've seen in my own life, just like my wife demonstrated at that youth camp. It wasn't until they saw Jesus living in us that they opened their ears to hear Jesus speaking to them.

May God fill our hearts with his love. And I'll tell you this, it says in first John chapter four, it says in verse 16, and we have known and believed the love God hath for us. You have to know this love before you can give it away.

You have to believe this love of God, that I am loved with an everlasting love. I have to know and believe and receive it before I have anything to give away. Apart from the love of Christ living in you, you have nothing to give away.

You have something, but it goes only so far. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, how? By the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of the living God, boundless love. I want to just make two appeals.

One is for those of you who know that you're born again and you know you have repented of your sins and you've believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, you've been baptized, you belong to him. Do you know this love? Have you believed this love of God? And thirdly, I want to ask you, do you love him in return? Jesus said to Peter three times, Peter, do you love me? Do you love me? And it doesn't matter how many times

we say, yes, Lord, we love you if we do not obey him. Why do you call me Lord, Lord, and not do the things which I say? He says, if you love me, you will keep my commandments.

It is useless and it is an empty lie for us to sing and to say how much we love Jesus if we do not obey him and keep his word. Do you love him? Do you really love him? Then you will obey him and you will do whatever he tells you to do from the tiniest thing to that great big decision that stands before you. It may be some of you even tonight.

And the other appeal is if you've never trusted the Lord Jesus Christ, if you've never repented and trusted the Lord Jesus Christ and believed on him to save you, you have a decision to make. Will you reject once again everything you've heard and God who laid down his life, your only payment for your sins, the perfect sacrifice of the son of God? Will you reject him again or will you believe and receive him tonight? The choice is yours. Let's pray.

Now, Lord, I thank you with all of my heart that you didn't just tell us you loved us, but you showed us, Lord, so clearly. You didn't just tell us to serve one another. You showed us what it looked like.

You showed us the depth of humility, the depth of love. Lord Jesus, you yourself demonstrated in that upper room. And even more so, you demonstrated it on the cross where you died, not just for Peter and James and John, but Jesus, where you died for me, where you died for me, where you died for each and every one of us.

Thank you, Lord. Thank you, Lord. Thank you, Lord.

Thank you, Father God, for giving your only begotten son, the Lord Jesus Christ. You gave the ultimate gift, Lord, when you gave your son. Now, I hear you calling us.

Do you love me? Do you love me? Help us, Lord, to lay aside all pride, all pomp and all position, to pick up a towel and to serve those in front of us, next to us, behind us. Lord, I surrender to you tonight myself. And I say, I am your servant.

Show me what to do. And I pray for my precious brothers and sisters. Show each and every one, Lord, the depth and the magnitude of your love.

And help us, Lord, to receive it and to give it away from this day forward. In Jesus' name, amen. Amen.

Brother, I don't know if, did you want to have another song or something? I'll turn it to you, Brother Sam. Maybe a time of prayer. Praise the Lord.

Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands and that he had come forth from God, going back to God, got up from supper and lying beside his garments and taking a towel, he girded himself. And then he poured water into the basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded. Brethren, this is the Lord.

This is Jesus, the real Jesus. And I believe tonight, you know, we looked at the glory of God on the face of Christ. Have you seen the glory of God on the face of Christ? The Bible says that we, looking at that glory, we have changed ourselves from glory to glory.

In other words, we look at this glory of God on the face of Christ and we become like him. And my prayer is that tonight, you know, seeing the love of Christ and seeing his humility and seeing the way he related to

his disciples, that we will become a bit more like Jesus. Amen? Do you want to be like Jesus? Do you want to do that? Do you want to serve your brothers, your neighbors like that? See, when I think about these things, you know, this night, this dinner, this supper that I had together that evening, this is the evening before the Passover when Jesus met with his disciples and he instituted the New Covenant meal as it is.

That's when he broke bread and had his dinner together, supper together and broke bread and shared the cup of the New Covenant. And what I believe happened there, you see, I went in, the room was prepared for them and there was no servant as it is there to wash anybody's feet. And they started as it is, they started to eat and Jesus didn't say anything.

So during, you know, the meal started to eat, nobody washed anybody's feet. You know, in those days, the feet were smelly. They walked in sandals, you know, those dust and smell.

And normally people, when they eat together in Middle East, you know, they have a rug in the middle of the room and they recline, there is no table there. So it is a must that somebody must wash the feet of the visitors when they eat together. Nobody did it.

You know, just imagine yourself being there, you know, when you go and there is no one, you just start eating because there is no servant to wash the feet of people, of the visitors. And then Jesus saw that no one took the initiative and said he wanted to teach them a parable. And he himself, the Lord, it says here that he knew that the Father had given him all things into his hands and that he knew where he came from and where he is going.

It says that he took that towel and that basin and, you know, he started serving them. This is what we need in our churches these days. We need to wash each other's feet.

It doesn't mean literally, but there are so many other things where we can serve each other, sacrificially. In other words, to be like Jesus, to be changed into, you know, having this glory, be more like him. That's why in the new government we are called to be a priesthood, a royal priesthood, and that includes doing this dirty job, serving each other sacrificially.

That's what we are called for. That's revival in our churches. I really believe that people would come and they would see how we love each other and how we serve each other and how we give our lives for each other as it is for the brethren.

Then they would know that Jesus is the Messiah, isn't it? That we are his disciples. Amen. So we want to come and let's stand together and just have a time of prayer where we all can respond to this message.

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