



A New Commandment

WEEK 3

Look Back (10 minutes)

- In his sermon on last week's scripture passage (2 Corinthians 5:11-21), Pastor Curtis asked whether we forgot the simple message that we are a new creation. Discuss the implications of this simple message.
- Paul states that reconciliation through Christ makes us ambassadors. What are the responsibilities of an ambassador?
- How has the ministry of reconciliation impacted your life?

Read Aloud

Passage for this week: **John 13:33-38**.

Head (15–20 minutes)

OBSERVE THE TEXT AND THE AUTHOR'S MAIN POINTS

- What event is Jesus anticipating as he instructs His disciples?
- What new commandment does Jesus give his disciples?
- What does Jesus promise the world's reaction will be if His disciples obey His new commandment?

Heart (15–20 minutes)

ENVISION HOW THE TEXT—WHEN APPLIED—MIGHT TRANSFORM YOUR INNER LIFE IN TERMS OF YOUR THOUGHTS, ATTITUDES, AND BEHAVIORS

- What might it mean for you to love your fellow follower of Jesus even as Jesus has loved us?
- Why do you think a non-believer would know that we follow Jesus by witnessing our love for one another?
- What comfort can we derive from the fact that in the same episode Jesus commands Peter to love even as He predicts Peter's denial of Him?

Hands (10 minutes)

APPLY THE TEXT BY MOVING FROM INWARD REFLECTION TO OUTWARD ACTION LOOKING FOR WAYS TO LIVE THE TEXT OUT IN OUR LIVES TO SERVE OTHERS

Reaching Upwards: Growing in Your Relationship with God

- Meditate on Jesus' ultimate act of love on the cross, and ask the Holy Spirit to help you love others by convincing you of the reality of His sacrifice.
- Jesus tells us being His witness is a matter of loving others; ask the Holy Spirit to show you any ways in which you are instead settling for doing or saying the "right" things.

Reaching Outward: Investing in Your Neighbors

- Sometimes loving another means an uncomfortable or difficult task geared toward their ultimate good. If you know you need to do such a task, ask God for the courage and strength to accomplish it.
- Your unbelieving friends are to witness Jesus by observing His followers love each other. To do that, it helps for unbelievers to be where His followers are. Consider inviting an unbelieving friend to a church service or event. For opportunities to do this, check the Announcements in the Bulletin or handout each week and the Events Calendar at <https://fpchouston.org/events-calendar>.
- Peter swore he would love Jesus to the utmost, but then denied Him. If you have failed to love others as Jesus commands, confess that to Him, and take comfort in Jesus' loving forgiveness of Peter.

Reaching Beyond

- Sometimes local opportunities allow us to show practical love to those from around the world. On January 25, from 12 - 1 pm there is a Local Mission Partner Field Trip to Prestige Learning Institute (PLI) to see their new building and hear about their mission to educate, equip, and minister to immigrant and refugee families, many of

whom are from Afghanistan. Contact Madie Weir, Missions Coordinator at mweir@fpchouston.org for more information and to let her know you will attend.

- Houston is one of the most diverse cities in the country. Pray for the FPC Outreach Team's upcoming TED talk, discussion, and tacos on January 25 from 7 -10 pm, in the basement. It is a great opportunity to invite friends, believers, and non-Christians to FPC in a seeker-friendly environment. Contact Emmanuel Paulpeter, Pastor of Outreach, epaulpeter@fpchouston.org, for more information.