

**Life Group Notes**

**Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

**Speaker:** Sean Green

**Title:** Love Each Other

**Passage:** John 15:12-14

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**Read** Jn 15v12-14

**v12** Jesus commanded them to love each other in the same way He loved them. Love is more than an emotion; it's a choice. He didn't love from a distance; He came up close. Incarnation is the wonder of the Christmas story.

**v13** Jesus practiced what He preached. He set the standard, lived the standard, and said "Go do likewise" (Thankfully help was coming, in the person of the Holy Spirit).

**v14** Jesus no longer calls them servants but friends, not because they were worthy, but because he chose them (Grace). A friendship with Jesus is one of ongoing revelation and then a call to imitation. Note, obedience doesn't 'make' them a friend of Jesus, obedience 'characterises' them as a friend of Jesus.

**Three things the Holy Spirit would say to us at the start of lockdown 2:0:**

**Love shows up:** We need to be good citizens and observe appropriate social distancing rules (Hands, Face, Space). But love compels us to find a way to show up in each other's lives. Maybe by using screens or 1:1 outside walks. Don't kid yourself that you're the exception, that you don't need to show up. Love urges us to keep showing up to help those with the least influence, opportunities and resources in Reading and beyond.

**Love lays down:** Jesus set the standard, lived the standard and said "Go do likewise" (Thankfully he sent help, the person of the Holy Spirit). But Lockdown tempts us to be more self-centred. Let's continue to resist that. We can't meet everyone's needs, but we can meet a few. And If we all meet a few needs, that will cover it. Loving people is not efficient in emotional energy, time or money. Loving people is sacrificial, can be messy and costly, and feels like we are laying down our lives.

**Love is commanded:** We can't hear these verses and conclude lockdown has let us off the hook. Jesus didn't give us that option, He never intended to. Lockdown can diminish our ability to disagree well, our relational muscles atrophy. Let's continue to think the best of each other, neighbours and our leaders. Taking offence is a choice (Proverbs 19v11).:

**Questions:**

1. Who is the Holy Spirit putting on your heart to love?
2. How can you care and connect with them? (whilst observing social distancing)
3. What do appropriate and emotionally healthy boundaries look like in Lockdown?