

Presbyterian Church of Henderson

Worship Service 10:00 AM

August 16, 2020

Love Like That Series

Prelude Kristin Jones, Director of Music

Welcome and Announcements Pastor Eric Hoey

- Come join us as we continue our discussions on how to "Love Like Jesus." Sunday afternoons at 4:00p.
- Online Sunday school class on current issues, Sunday, 9:00am
- HCCO collection item for August is canned tuna
- Youth and children are to continue the worksheets in the bags that were delivered to their homes.

Call to Worship

God has forgiven us and drawn us close, reconciling us through Jesus Christ, who has lavished upon us the fullness of the Holy Spirit. With glad and grateful hearts, let us worship and praise the Lord together!

Hymn PH 376 "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" vs. 1,3,4

1 Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heaven to earth come down,
Fix in us Thy humble dwelling,
All Thy faithful mercies crown!
Jesus, Thou art all compassion,
Pure, unbounded love Thou art;
Visit us with Thy salvation,
Enter every trembling heart.

Thee we would be always blessing,
Serve Thee as Thy hosts above,
Pray, and praise Thee without ceasing,
Glory in Thy perfect love.

3 Come, Almighty to deliver,
Let us all Thy life receive;
Suddenly return, and never,
Nevermore Thy temples leave.

4 Finish, then, Thy new creation;
Pure and spotless let us be;
Let us see Thy great salvation
Perfectly restored in Thee;
Changed from glory into glory,
Till in heaven we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before Thee,
Lost in wonder, love, and praise.

Call to Confession

Let us confess our sins without fear to the One who yearns to embrace us, forgive us, protect us, and bless us.

Prayer of Confession (unison)

Holy God, we confess we have not been obedient to your will for us. We have sought justice for ourselves but neglected justice for others. We have insisted on our rights but have not lived rightly in our relationships. We have desired mercy for our sins, but we have not offered mercy to those who have sinned against us. By the power of your Holy Spirit free us from the prison of our disobedience. Help us to love as you have loved us that our lives may testify to your abounding grace through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Our God bestows upon us kindness, forgiving our sins, preserving our lives, and restoring our souls through the abundant provision of our Lord Jesus Christ. Receive now that for which faith has hungered: you are forgiven and healed in the name of Jesus the Christ.

Passing the Peace

Please take a moment to text someone now or in the future, "The Peace of Christ be with You!"

Special Music Wayne and Kristin Jones

Prayer for Illumination

Merciful Savior, your suffering has saved our lives, secured our future, and restored us to relationship with God. Remove the shame and fear that cause us to cower in your presence. By the power of your Spirit, open our eyes and hearts to your Word of love, mercy, healing, and blessing through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

First Reading Luke 7:36-50

One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and took his place at the table. And a woman in the city, who was a sinner, having learned that he was eating in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster jar of ointment. She stood behind him at his feet, weeping, and began to bathe his feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair. Then she continued kissing his feet and anointing them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw it, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him—that she is a sinner." Jesus spoke up and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." "Teacher," he replied, "Speak." "A certain creditor had two debtors; one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they could not pay, he canceled the debts for both of them. Now which of them will love him more?" Simon answered, "I suppose the one for whom he canceled the greater debt." And Jesus said to him, "You have judged rightly." Then turning toward the woman, he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has bathed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which were many, have been forgiven; hence she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little." Then he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." But those who were at the table with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" And he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

Second Reading Luke 15:11-24

Then Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So he divided his property between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs.

He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands."' So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

Children's Sermon Pastor Eric

- The other day, my adult son came into my study and asked me a question. "Dad, if you are not too busy, will you help me fix up a bike so that I can take it to school?"
- Q: Why do you think he asked me if I was too busy? Doesn't he know that I would drop anything and help him?
- Most likely, he was being polite and not too demanding.
- Have you ever felt your dad was too busy to help you? God?
- Matthew 19:14 Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me
- The disciples were sending away the parents who were bringing their children to Jesus because they did not want to bother Jesus
- Jesus wants to have children around him.
- This means that we can always turn to Jesus and not feel that he is too busy for us.

SERMON "Love Like That: Approachable"

Luke 7:36-50; Matthew 19:13-15; Luke 11:1-2; Luke 15:11-24

- We have been going through a sermon series driven by a book *Love Like That* by Les Parrott.
- Also on Sunday afternoons, we watch a video lesson based upon his book using our subscription to RightNow Media and discuss its implications for us.
- Everyone is welcome join us.
- At the beginning of the book, *Love Like That*, Les Parrott asks the question: Can anyone really love like Jesus? After all he raised the bar of love to extraordinary heights. Love your enemies? Walk the extra mile? Turn the other cheek? This love is beyond reason, isn't it?
- The whole premise of the book is that we can Love Like Jesus.
- Most of the book is about looking at some of the qualities of Jesus' Love from a 30K foot level that anyone can apply to their lives.
- These qualities are what have been covering in our sermon series.
- Last week we looked at the idea of being MINDFUL — seeing what others do not see.
- When everyone sees people a certain way, Jesus looks right into the heart and sees what people often miss.
- Today we look at the quality of Jesus as APPROACHABLE.

- There is a powerful sensitivity God built into humanity — it is the strong avoidance to being ignored and the strong desire to be included.
- We call this today the power of “peer pressure.”
- In 1951 Solomon Asch conducted an experiment where he filled a room with a group of people around a table.
- Everyone in the room except the test subject was to collectively give a wrong answer to the length of a line.
- 75% of the time, the test subject would join the rest of the group by giving the wrong answer because they did not want to be left out.
- Asch concluded that humans will go through great lengths to NOT be left out proving the power of conformity.
- It is true we humans have this deep longing to belong.
- We will often do, say or agree with things we that we really don't, just to be apart of it.
- According to Les Parrott, he says, “Jesus understood this deep and powerful need like nobody else. It is why he was intentionally and profoundly and often shockingly approachable. In fact, he says, that Jesus was the most approachable person ever lived.”
- This morning we are going to look at the ways Jesus was approachable.

Jesus was approachable with:

1. Abundant Forgiveness - Luke 7:36-50

36 One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and took his place at the table.

- Simon the pharisee has a dinner where he invites Jesus to join him in his home.
- In the next sentence, Luke describes an uninvited guest who had heard he was there and invited herself in the house.

37 And a woman in the city, who was a sinner, having learned that he was eating in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster jar of ointment. 38 She stood behind him at his feet, weeping, and began to bathe his feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair. Then she continued kissing his feet and anointing them with the ointment.

- She is described as a “sinner” - where her reputation was known as a “sinner.”
- It is not uncommon for uninvited guests to drop in this private gathering especially when a Rabbi was visiting or teaching.
- She stood at his feet, weeping, a bathing the dirt off his feet with her tears.
- Then she did what no respectable woman does in public, she uncovered her hair, and began to dry his feet with her hair and anoint with her perfume.
- Listen to the Simon's response:

39 Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw it, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him—that she is a sinner."

- Q: Why is Simon so upset here in verse 39?
- Simon was thinking out loud, had Jesus prophetically known she was sinner, he would have prevented her from touching him because it would have made him ceremoniously unclean.
- Simon practiced a religion of exclusion where sinners had their place, and all others had their place religiously separated from each other.
- It is called being clean and unclean.

- Only certain privileged people were able to come near a Rabbi or teacher and especially not an unclean person.
- Their discrimination of this woman was that she was inappropriate for the presence of Jesus, and deserved to be cast out of the house.
- After telling the religious leaders a parable about two debtors, Jesus turns and forgives the sins of the woman and told her to go in peace.
- Jesus' approachability was in full force when he forgave her.
- This means that no matter what a person has done in the past, no sin has the ability to disqualify a person from being able to approach Jesus.
- What is beautiful about this story is the sinful woman's humble and contrite heart that is shown in her tears.
- What is amazing about the shocking approachability of Jesus is that he made himself approachable to both the rich as well as to the poor, to the schooled or unschooled, the healthy or sick.
- There were no lines of division, separation, and judgment
- Jesus played no favorites contrary to the religious leaders of their time
- For every wall they created to put people into categories of exclusion, Jesus broke down those walls with his approachability.
- When Jesus called his disciples he did not call the brightest and the best religious leaders, but he sought out lowly laborers, fishermen, and even tax collectors.
- Do you see the diversity and inclusivity Jesus had in his ministry?
- He moved the emphasis from the law to love, from exclusivity to radical inclusivity.
- He went out of his way to embrace the unloved and the unworthy.
- Jesus was approachable to everyone and offered abundant forgiveness to those who approached him in humility.

Jesus was approachable with:

1. Abundant Forgiveness - Luke 7:36-50

2. Open Arms - Matthew 19:13-15

13 Then little children were being brought to him in order that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples spoke sternly to those who brought them; 14 but Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs." 15 And he laid his hands on them and went on his way.

- Children in Greco-Roman society were to be seen and not heard.
- They had no rights and no status.
- So when the disciples were shooing away people who were bringing children to Jesus for his blessing, in their typical Jewish understanding, they were excluding children because they thought Jesus had better things to do.
- They believed Jesus was wasting his time with children.
- What is interesting, their cultural understanding of children was so deeply conditioned into their minds, that they must have forgotten what Jesus said one chapter earlier about the worth of children and the seriousness of causing them to fall.
- *Matthew 18:1-5 At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" He called a child, whom he put among them, and said, "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.*

- The kingdom of Heaven was not only for adults of certain status, but to everybody who has the humility of a child.
- Jesus had time for the children, and he did not leave until he had blessed them all.
- He welcomed children with open arms.

Jesus was approachable with:

1. Abundant Forgiveness - Luke 7:36-50

2. Open Arms - Matthew 19:13-15

3. Dedicated Nurture - Luke 11:1-2

He was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples." 2 He said to them, "When you pray, say:

- All the disciples knew how much Jesus was dedicated to prayer.
 - He often prayed alone (Luke 5:16)
 - He prayed with others: Peter, James and John (Luke 9:28-29)
 - Jesus prayed for Simon (Luke 22:32)
 - He prayed before his betrayal (Luke 22:40-44)
 - He even prayed on the cross (Luke 23:46)
- One of his disciples seeing Jesus in prayer wanted to learn from him.
- We know in Matthew's account of this, it was because John the Baptist taught his disciples how to pray, he wanted to learn as well.
- Jesus was approachable to his disciples who wanted to learn from him.
- Jesus gave them direction using the Lord's prayer.
- EX: I remember, when I was young, I had so much respect for my teachers that I would be afraid of them, and especially afraid of asking my dumb questions.
- But in our text here, Jesus must have created this approachability with his disciples where no question that is too dumb.
- Jesus being a teacher desired to seize opportunities to teach his disciples.
- Notice that they respected him enough here to wait until he finished praying.
- Jesus was approachable because he was dedicated to nurture his disciples.

Jesus was approachable with:

1. Abundant Forgiveness - Luke 7:36-50

2. Open Arms - Matthew 19:13-15

3. Dedicated Nurture - Luke 11:1-2

4. Complete Restoration - Luke 15:11-24

- You know the parable about the prodigal son.

But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

- Upon the son's return, here is where Jesus' shocking story challenged the exclusivity of the religious leaders, Jesus accepted him and celebrated his return.
- The shocking part of the story is that the father **ran** to the wayward son.
- In this culture, an older, respected man never ran.

- Since the man ran to the son, Jesus was underscoring how excited and eager the father was to see his son.
- Les Parrott explains that the father not ran out of excitement, but to catch his son before the others in the village could see him.
- If a Jewish son lost his inheritance among the Gentiles and returned home, the community would greet him first and perform a ceremony called "kezazah."
- The community would break a large pot infant of him and yell, "You are now cut off from your people."
- This would begin a total rejection of the community towards the son.
- Because the father ran to greet him on the edge of town, there was no kezazah, but only repentance, restoration, and celebration.
- This story illustrates the accepting nature of Jesus toward a "sinner" who repents and seeks restoration.
- Jesus is approachable because he offers to us his loving and complete restoration.

CLOSE:

Les Parrott: "If you want to love like that, you can't size a person up. You can't first determine if they are deserving. You can't assess whether they meet your standards before you show them love. You must be approachable—to everyone. Here's the hard truth: if you want to love like Jesus, you can't be exclusive."

1. Abundant Forgiveness - Luke 7:36-50
2. Open Arms - Matthew 19:13-15
3. Dedicated Nurture - Luke 11:1-2
4. Complete Restoration - Luke 15:11-24

Offering

Christ has provided for us from his own table of blessings. Anointing and abundance overflows! Let us offer our gifts together from the bounty he has given.

*Prayer of Dedication

Gracious Lord, you have given us more mercy than we could imagine and more blessings than we deserve. Receive now these gifts as tokens of our gratitude to you, that your mercy may be multiplied and your blessings abound to embrace all those in need. Amen.

Affirmation of Faith (Apostle's Creed)

Minister:

Brothers and Sisters in Christ, what do you believe?

All:

I BELIEVE in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Let us pray for the needs of the world, saying, Lord help us. **We trust in you.**

God of mercy and healing, you are Lord of all, embracing the estranged, blessing the banished, reconciling the rejected. We cry out to you now, confident that your provision is abundantly more than enough to preserve the church, redeem the world, and deliver the tormented. Lord, help us. **We trust in you.**

- For the household of faith near and far, Lord, help us. **We trust in you.**
- That the church may replicate your reconciliation, model your mercy, and herald your healing for all, Lord, help us. **We trust in you.**
- For unity and harmony to flow freely among your creatures and throughout your creation, Lord, help us. **We trust in you.**
- For reconciliation and new beginnings among estranged families, races, nations, and peoples, Lord, help us. **We trust in you.**
- For healing for those who are tormented, rejected, marginalized, fearful, forgotten, cast off, Lord, help us. **We trust in you.**
- For those whose names we now lift in your presence, silently or aloud. [Names may be called forth from the assembly or silently remembered.] Lord, help us. **We trust in you.**
- For our ancestors in the faith, now kept in your care and never forgotten by you, Lord, help us. **We trust in you.**

We stand in your circle of favor, embraced by you, healed by you, blessed by you, remembered by you, secured by you, grateful for your loving care, and now, with confidence as children of God, let us pray:

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory forever. Amen.

Hymn PH 386 "O For a World"

1 O for a world where everyone respects each other's ways, where love is lived and all is done with justice and with praise.

2 O for a world where goods are shared and misery relieved, where truth is spoken, children spared, equality achieved.

3 We welcome one world family and struggle with each choice

that opens us to unity and gives our vision voice.

4 The poor are rich, the weak are strong, the foolish ones are wise.

Tell all who mourn, outcasts belong, who perishes will rise.

5 O for a world preparing for God's glorious reign of peace, where time and tears will be no more, and all but love will cease.

Benediction

The LORD bless you and keep you; The LORD make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; The LORD lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace both now and evermore.

Postlude