



## OPEN

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As we continue our series on our church vision and values, this week we look at our core value of Relationship. In John 13, Jesus said, *“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”* Out of the love of God, Jesus initiated deep relationship with his disciples, even when he knew one of them would betray that love, as we see in this pivotal chapter in the Gospel of John.

Jesus’ words about love are a command, reminding us that if we claim to follow Jesus we must show love for others – first and foremost to other believers. What makes this command of Jesus ‘new’? It is that we are to now love one another, *as he has loved us*. How has Jesus modelled love to us? This week, that’s what we want to find out, as we re-commit ourselves to forging ‘redemptive relationships’ with one another in the Body of Christ as a witness to the world.

## REFLECT

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- To better hear Jesus’ words in vv.34-35, take a moment to read the context of the whole of chapter 13. Summarize the main events of this chapter as a group.
- In what ways does Jesus model God’s love in this chapter?
- The book of John is like a pendulum. It starts off high about the Word being made flesh and ends high with Jesus being glorified through the cross. The low point is the middle, chapter 13. In verse 22, what troubles Jesus? In response, what is the focus of Jesus’ parting words to the disciples?

## DISCUSS

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- This week’s message is about the importance Jesus places on us loving one another as he has loved us. Is there a person in your life journey that stands out to you who modelled the love of Christ to you? Who? How? Share with the group.
- Jesus’ new command is actually focused on believers first showing love to one another...that takes place in relationships within the Body of Christ...describe the characteristics of Jesus’ relationship / friendship with the disciples. What kind of relationship did he have with them?
- For the sake of overcoming them, what obstacles can get in the way of developing meaningful relationships with others at church? What prevents people from going deeper?
- When a friendship / relationship at church ‘goes south,’ what are some redemptive ways we should respond to restore it?
- If there is time, consider Paul’s words regarding Christ-focused relationship in Ephesians 4:2-3. What are the things that Paul says should characterize this community we call ‘church’? What characteristic needs the most attention now?

## APPLY

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Believers are not called to pursue just any kind of community or relationships but ‘redemptive relationships.’ ***To build a “redemptive relationship” means to invest oneself in the life of another person, whether that person is a believer or not yet a believer, in such a way that he or she is drawn more closely to Jesus Christ.***

- Who could you initiate relationship with to a greater degree for the purpose of drawing them closer to Christ?

## PRAY

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- Ask God to grow the love of Christ in our body at Wellspring and to show you where to help.
- Ask God who you specifically need to demonstrate greater love to in the areas of either family, church, or work, or all three. In prayer, submit those relationships to Him.