

Service Overview

Speaker: Andrew

Sermon Series: Learning To Walk

Message: Learning To Walk in Love

Scripture Reference: 1 John 2:28-29, 1 John 3: 1-3, 11, 16-19, 21-24 + 1 John 4:4-6

This transcription was generated by Adobe Premiere. It may contain small errors that don't perfectly match up with words spoken and is provided to assist with accessibility but without warranty. While the document has been edited for spelling and clarity by a member of the congregation, the speaker(s) have not proof-read or corrected this document themselves.

Table of Contents *Click to navigate*

- ▶ [Worship Singing](#)
- ▶ [Service Welcome](#)
- ▶ [Worship Singing](#)
- ▶ [Bible Reading: Words from John](#)
- ▶ [Worship Singing](#)
- ▶ [Post-Worship Prayer](#)
- ▶ [Introduction, Announcements & Upcoming Events](#)
- ▶ [Prayer](#)
- ▶ [Worship Singing](#)
- ▶ [Bible Reading](#)
- ▶ [Sermon](#)
- ▶ [Post-Sermon Prayer](#)
- ▶ [Worship Singing](#)
- ▶ [Post-Worship Prayer](#)
- ▶ [Conclusion](#)
- ▶ [Online Outro](#)

Worship Singing

Song: How Deep The Father's Love For Us by Stuart Townend

Service Welcome *Speaker: Worship Team*

How beautiful. It's so good to be together, worshipping the Lord. We welcome everybody today. If you've been here 1075 times or this is your first time, or you've lost count, as most of us have, we're here to offer praise and worship to the Lord and also to welcome you. And we pray that God will bless you today, and, just, take courage that God knows where each of us is at, and what each of us needs from him.

But we bring an offering of praise. So, Jesus, we give you this time. We pray that you would be glorified. We pray that you would lead our hearts to lift you up. We love you, Lord. We love you, Lord. We love you, Jesus. Thank you for all that you've done and all that you are to us. We worship you in Jesus' name, amen.

This song here is a celebration song. It's really saying lots of things. Some of those things that if we said, you know, what do you appreciate about God? What do you really love about following Jesus? We come out with various things, and this song says some of those things, "Your love will never fail," "You're steadfast."

But in the middle it says something funny. It says, "Love and faithfulness meet righteousness and peace have kissed each other." Wait, where is that from? You might know it's from one of the psalms, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other. That's a bit strange, but it's actually beautiful. Do you think about how can the righteousness God demand righteousness if he has to punish and he has to bring justice for sin? How can there be peace?

Well, ultimately it's in the cross. It's what Jesus has done. Righteousness and peace of Christ. It's just a beautiful little idea. I know this song has lots of those loaded up, so we're just going to get in a bit of the groove and lift our hearts in praise to the Lord.

Worship Singing

Song: Rise by Kirby Kaple, Pat Barrett, Nate Moore

Bible Reading – Words from John *Speaker: Worship Team*

Here's some words from what Jesus said in the middle of the Gospel of John. As we read, it came to a point where he knew from that moment on, he was not just ministering to people, he was heading towards the big thing that God had given him; to go to the cross. Just let's hear the words he says in the story.

“Now my soul is troubled and what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour?’ But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice from heaven came, saying, “I have both glorified it and will glorify it again.” Therefore, the people who stood by and heard it said that it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him.

Jesus answered and said, “The voice did not come because of me, but for your sake. Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out, and I, when I am lifted up from this earth, will draw all peoples to myself.” (John 12:27-32)

Worship Singing

Song: Behold The Lamb by Kristian Stanfill, Melodie Malone, Phil Wickham

Song: Jesus Messiah by Chris Tomlin, Daniel Carson, Ed Cash, Jesse Reeves

Post-Worship Prayer *Speaker: Kathy Bates*

Jesus, we come before you humble today. Humbled and grateful. Humbled that you would give your very life for us. Humbled by the immensity of your love and your grace, the kindness of the father, the gift of the son, and your beautiful presence through your Holy Spirit now.

We're filled with gratitude, and so we sing these songs of praise. Lord God, hear them as sincere expressions of our gratitude for you and all that you have done. We bless you today. Thank you that you meet among us today. Amen.

Introduction, Announcements & Upcoming Events *Speaker: Kathy Bates*

Good morning everyone. Take a seat. So good to have each and every one of you here. Thank you worship team, and welcome to those who are joining us online today as well. It's really good that you're worshipping with us from wherever you are.

So good to be family together, isn't it? To be able to share our lives together as we come together as well? Aren't we blessed to have so many children and young people at PBC? There are so many churches that just say, 'we don't have any young people or kids in our church.' I just think we're so blessed to be a church that is thriving in every generation. And, I don't know if you know this, because we sort of sit in this auditorium, but we use every building, and every room on site gets used for kids and youth ministry on a Sunday morning.

And, for those who may not know kids church, it's the group that meets in the portable buildings on the far left hand side of the site as you come in. And they meet down there, but they are really squashed for space in where they meet and the buildings that they meet in are past their use-by date. And so PBC hopes to replace those buildings, with a new ministry center that is going to create much more space and also a greater connectivity to this building. That way they don't have

to cross the big car park, especially between services, when cars are coming and kids are crossing to have a greater connectivity to this building as well.

And so the development for this new ministry centre has been approved. And now we're endeavouring to raise funds for that ministry centre to be built. You will have hopefully received a little postcard that looks like this either today or, last week. And this is an invitation. We are asking that you would pray with us and that you would join with us.

You know, this isn't just about having more space for kids or people to meet in, but this is about praying that Jesus will transform lives. Because we don't just gather in large numbers, we see a move of God among us, and we see many, many lives getting transformed by Jesus. And so this invitation to pray is to pray into tomorrow's lives that are going to be transformed.

The kids that will continue to come to pay back the space that we will have to continue to grow, and to also pray for an outpouring of generosity and sacrifice in people young and old, and every generation in between, just right across our church, that we would all pitch in toward this new ministry space that Jesus will transform lives in.

You know, I think it's really easy for us to see a project like this as something that the church is doing, and in a large church, the church can be something that just feels like it's kind of different to 'who I am.' It's that group over there. And yet in reality, the church is who? Us, you and I, every single one of us make up this church.

The church isn't an organisation. The church is a family of people, and every one of us belongs to that family. And so we really do ask that you would join with your family to pray into this, and also to consider how God might have you contribute financially through either a one off gift, or perhaps through some ongoing regular donations, into the building fund specifically. So on that little postcard, there's a QR code that goes through to our building fund.

If you need the details, you can also access that through our newsletter as well. But, you know, I'm so conscious that this new ministry centre, this building project, is so much bigger than just a small number of us can shoulder financially. We actually just need everyone right across the church. Whether your sacrifice can be big or whether you can only afford a small amount, it's just about everyone leaning into this as a family together, pitching in and going, "God, we want to see tomorrow's lives transformed."

So there's going to be a church meeting, where we're going to update on further information. There's some key decisions that we need to make about how we're going to approach this going forward as well. So that meeting is on Sunday the 8th of September at 12:15. We'd love you to mark that in your diary. And just keep an eye on your email inbox next Friday to we'll have more

information about the key decisions that we're going to need to make. In that meeting, we want you to be praying into those decisions as well.

The only other thing I want to draw your attention to on this morning is our upcoming 'Life in the Spirit' course. It's starting Wednesday the 28th of August, and this is just a final shout out. I can't commend this course strongly enough to you. If you would like to explore more of who the Holy Spirit is, but not only just as knowledge, but also in your experience and a life lived with him, then this is a great course to do. And so, you need to sign up for that by this Friday. That's the final cut off, this coming Friday. We would love you to join in 'Life in the Spirit.', and to shift from what we know about the Holy Spirit into a life that is supercharged by him, that is such an incredible privilege and adventure as well.

Prayer *Speaker: Congregation Member*

Good morning, church. We have a privilege. Scripture tells us that we can come boldly and confidently before the throne of grace. Prayers will be answered because Jesus tells us that they will be answered. So this morning, let's get our hearts into a place where we can leave behind those things that trouble us, those things that would interfere with coming to the throne of grace. Just gently let them go and recognise that we are coming before a mighty God, a holy God. A God who desires to meet with us and to answer the deep needs of our own lives, as well as the needs of the world around us. So join with me, please, as we pray for leaders of this country at all levels.

Heavenly father, we thank you for those who have put themselves forward in this country, in the political sphere, to be leaders of this country. We thank you for them at regardless of their political persuasions. We pray that you will speak into their lives and that you will give them godly wisdom in the running of this country. I pray, Father God, that this this prayer will extend to the leaders of the bureaucracies at federal, state, and local levels, those men and women who run the country effectively. May you minister into their needs, Lord, and may you raise up men and women of godly integrity into positions of power and authority. And as you do that, Lord, may we continue to pray for them, to uphold them in all the difficulties that they face. May we be supporters of your work in their lives.

And we look to the wider community, Father, a wider community that does not yet know you. And I bring before you that wider community, not only the local community, but the city community, the state community and the federal community. And we pray that you will raise up men and women to take your word into the communities to meet their needs. I ask you, Lord, to draw into this church and to other churches of your choosing, men and women who are hurting, boys and girls who are hurting, so that you may minister your love into their lives, a healing presence Lord, a building up presence, because we pray our blessing upon this nation.

I bring before you, Father God, the needs of Parramatta Baptist Church, and the needs for the building that we have ahead of us. We thank you that you are no man's debtor. And I rest upon, Lord, the words of Scripture that say, as we sow to the wind, so we reap the whirlwind. A spiritual principle of giving, in order that you may give bountifully back to us. I pray, Lord, that this development will indeed be a victory for you.

And Lord, I now pray for each person watching each person here, because we have needs, Lord, some of which we can express, others that are hidden deep within us. But we need your love to minister to us. So I pray that your Holy Spirit, Lord, will move amongst us this morning, touching our lives, lifting from us fears, anxieties, uncertainties and doubts.

I pray for physical healing. Lord, physical healing for each one of us who have needs that we have yet to express. I pray for the power of Your Holy Spirit to walk amongst us, touch us and bless us. For you love your people, Lord. So, having come confidently to your throne of grace, I have come confidently, Lord, knowing that you have heard our prayers. I am confident, Lord, that you are answering your prayers, your prayers that have been birthed in our hearts. So I thank you in the precious name of Jesus, amen.

Worship Singing

Song: Be Thou My Vision by Eleanor Henrietta Hull, Mary Elizabeth Byrne, Russell Mauldin

Bible Reading:

1 John 2: 28-29, 1 John 3: 1-3, 11, 16-19, 21-24 + 1 John 4: 4-6 (NIV UK)

1 John 2:28-29: ²⁸And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming.

²⁹If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born of him.

1 John 3: 1-3: **See** what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ²Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears,^[a] we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. ³All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

1 John 3: 11: For this is the message you heard from the beginning: we should love one another.

1 John 3: 16-19: This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. ¹⁷If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? ¹⁸Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

¹⁹This is how we know that we belong to the truth and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence:

1 John 3: 21-24:²¹ Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God²² and receive from him anything we ask, because we keep his commands and do what pleases him.²³ And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us.²⁴ The one who keeps God's commands lives in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: we know it by the Spirit he gave us.

1 John 4: 4-6:⁴ You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.⁵ They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them.⁶ We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognise the Spirit^(a) of truth and the spirit of falsehood.

Sermon: Learning To Walk in Love *Speaker: Andrew*

Kathy: I want to introduce Andrew here this morning. Many of you know Andrew because he worships in this congregation among us and has done for a couple of years now, but I know many have joined our church family this year, and you may not know Andrew. Steve and I have been friends with Andrew for a number of years now. He's been a colleague in ministry, and he's pastored churches in the UK and also here in Australia as well. But now he's part of our PBC family and we really love that. So thank you, Andrew, for bringing God's Word to us today.

Can I pray for you? God we do want to pray just your Holy Spirit to anoint Andrew as he speaks from your Word. Jesus, we position our hearts to receive from you that which you would want to speak in today, through Your word and by Your Holy Spirit. God, help us to catch hold of those things that you are wanting to say to us for our encouragement and Lord God, that we would ever be aligning our lives with Jesus. Amen. Thank you.

Andrew: Well, good day. Nice to see you here today. My name, as has been said, is Andrew. I now work for Baptist Care. For the last two years I've been chaplain at Dorothy Henderson. So, hello, Dorothy Henderson, they watch our service each week and it's really good to be in my home church together with you all today.

So if you've got your Bibles handy, it would be really good if you got them out because it's really good to ground what is said, and just check that I'm not making up verses, you know. It is positive to see that we value the Word of God. This is a wonderful passage today before us. It's a long passage, so that's why we've shortened the reading, but it's all there for you. It's a great passage because it not only builds on what's gone before over the last 2 or 3 weeks, but it speaks of three important things for us today. Children, love and truth.

It not only talks about Christians being children, but children of God. Children of God. If you're a Christian, say with me, "I am a child of God. I am a child of God." I say it as I mean it. I am a child of God. That's wonderful, isn't it? What a privilege to say I am a child of God.

But this passage does more than that, this morning. It reminds us that we're loved. And this passage, I hope, will remind us of the depth of his love for us. Can you say with me, "I am loved?" Don't look horrified. You're a child of God, if you're a Christian, and you are loved. This is pretty amazing stuff, and I haven't even started yet.

But also, there's something else this passage talks about. It talks about truth. Truth seems to be very flexible these days. So flexible that your truth is your truth. And my truth is my truth, and everyone's truth is right. No, that's not what John is saying here. He is saying God's truth leads to the righteousness of God and comes from the righteousness of God.

So if you don't remember anything else from this morning, remember that you're a child of God, if you're a Christian, that you are loved, and you're called to truth. I guess I could go home now and you've learned it, so that's good. But each of these areas or characteristics, John encourages us to walk, to grow, to mature, to strengthen our belief and our relationship in father, Son and Holy Spirit.

So let me just pray. Heavenly father, as we gather here today, may we grasp something of your great love for us as children, children of you, and may we continue to walk in love, building on the truth that you have shared with us in Jesus' name, amen.

So if you've got your Bibles handy, do look at the first verse that we've got in 1 John 2: 28. Do you notice that John writes with real warmth and understanding? "Dear children," he says. In this passage he refers to children nine times, so we can obviously tell this passage has a lot to do with being a child of God.

It's linking the relationship of the believer with the love of God, and our childlike dependence is highlighted so that when Christ appears, we may be confident and unashamed. Wouldn't that be lovely to be confident and unashamed of our relationship with the one true God? Because if we are confident and unashamed, then we can face any and every situation.

No, I don't know what you're going to do tomorrow. I don't know what you're going to do after this service. But imagine facing it confident and unashamed. And John writes to encourage us to continue to walk in love and walk in knowledge of God. John writes to build us up. He knows our human condition of sin. He knows that we are sinners. And he reminds us how God has dealt with us in Christ. He tackles the disciples' view of the fear of unworthiness at the coming of Christ. Straight on. You, he says, can be confident and unashamed at the coming of Christ. Time and again he talks to us as children.

Now just this past week at Baptist Care, we have been celebrating International Youth Week. I should say Baptist Care works mainly with aged care folks, so we've been encouraged as staff to do this: put a picture of ourselves at a young age and a recent picture next to each other. And I worked hard to find a photo for me in the early days. And then I had to find one with a kind of a red shirt as

well. But there is a huge contrast, isn't there, between the two. And we saw this in all of the pictures displayed this week. Some were in black and white and then in colour, others were a bit grainy and some were really clear. And of course, the huge difference, the obvious difference, is the age difference and the size difference. The contrast has been marked.

John draws the contrast between the children of God and the children of the devil. We know them by their actions, he says. We know them by their actions. He says anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God. Guilty? I might as well get down now because I'm a sinner. I've done things that are wrong, and if you're honest, that's all of us. And yet, this passage reminds us to be confident and unashamed of our faith in Christ. And how can we do that? How can we do that?

Well, John reminds us. He writes to us and says, *"This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are."* The challenge is to live out our faith for him every day, knowing that Christ has paid the price for our sin.

Now, last week Ben said something like this; that there's a difference between committing a sin and continuing in a sin. John goes on to say, is this message, *"You have heard from the beginning, we should love one another."* We need to look beyond the obvious and to look with Christ's eyes of compassion.

Take a look at this picture to the right. Can you see an old person in this picture? Put your hands up when you see an old person in this picture. All right, hands down. Can you see a young person in this picture? Put your hands up if you can see one. If you can't see anything, put your hands up.



This picture is a lovely picture and here's some of the theory behind it. Oh, interestingly, this picture is 100 years old. And you know, we often have to make choices between 1 or 2 things, and what we look at and how we see things.

But imagine seeing this next image to the right. This is a little more difficult. Hands up if you see an old woman and an older man. But what else is in that picture? Life is more complex than it seems. There are huge things going on in our world and complex things going on in our world, and we need to navigate them as children of God who are loved by God, but who walk in the truth.



And so the initial picture is quite simple. An older and a younger woman. But in that second picture, you first see older woman and an older man, but as you look at it, you'll find there was much more there. So when in verse 18, John writes, *"Dear children, let us not love with words or speech, but with actions and in truth,"* what does it mean? How can we dig deeper to better understand what it means then and indeed now? How can we apply this to our lives?

As children of God, and that is what we are, if we are of Christ, we are heirs of Christ. That's what it says elsewhere in Scripture. In Ephesians 2: 4-5, it says, *"Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ, even when we were dead in our transgressions. And it is by grace you have been saved."*

Such assurance is very important for living Christ in a hostile world. As John says in 1 John 4: 4, *"You, dear children, are from God, and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world."* Be confident, be unashamed, as a child of God.

And so we come to the heart of this scripture, walking in love, walking in love. In John's Gospel, remember it says quite clearly, *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son."* He also said in John 15: 12-13, *"My command is this: love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that they lay down their lives for their friends."* John 15: 17 says, *"This is my command; love each other."* John 19: 30, *"It is finished."* With that he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

And so John, in 1 John here, commands us to continue to love, love one another again and again. Five times in this letter he says this and reminds his readers of Jesus's command to love one another. He wanted to make sure that way they understood that love is not an optional extra. None of the two that can be laid down. Love is the distinguishing mark.

And the way we live should continually be us learning to live in the way of love. Love is such a overused word, isn't it? We could say, "I love my dog." You might say, "I love the Eagles." (Obviously not more.) I would probably say, "I love chocolate, I love cheesecake, I love a good book. I love the beach. I love my children."

Love can be so misunderstood. Love too often is thought of as a sentimental feeling or a shallow emotion. But love, especially Christian love, is much more. Here, John uses the Greek word *'agape'*, agape love, and it's often considered the highest form of love. It embodies selflessness, sacrifice, and unconditional care for others. This profound concept is rooted in Scripture and in knowledge of God, and it transcends mere feelings, emphasising the action and commitment that is needed now.

We often use the word love in different contexts and meanings. I do love chocolate. I love you, I love my significant other. I love a favourite food. I love a friend. All of them are different. However, English doesn't lend itself to making the distinctions clear. However, the Greek language often used in the Bible does make those distinctions, even though the Greek words for love are all translated

into the same English word in most instances, they have different meanings for the different Greek speaking readers. Elizabeth Barrett Browning, an 18-19th century poet English poet, said this: "Love doesn't make the world go round. Love is what makes the ride worthwhile."

As we look at 1 John, and particularly this passage, agape love differs from the other types of love in the Bible. It is the highest and purest form of love as a choice, not out of attraction or obligation. Agape love is beautifully described in 1 Corinthians 13. This differentiation can help us to think about what love means, especially when discussing this highest form of love. This agape love is used 14 times alone in 1 John, and only 92 times in the rest of the New Testament.

Here in 1 John 3: 16, we read, *"This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us."* Now, if you were fortunate enough to be here last Sunday night, you would have heard two wonderful testimonies from two of our young people. One of them said something like this, as I quickly tried to write it down, that he came to an understanding of who God is and was given greater depth of that understanding as he acknowledged the truth of Jesus in his life.

The challenge then, and indeed for us, is to be willing to lay down our lives for others. Verse 18 goes on to say, *"Let us not love with words or speech, but with action, and in truth."* This is really hard, this teaching in Australia. We don't often have to risk giving up our lives for the Christian truth. We know in the world at large, it is a real thing. But we still have people in spiritual need here in Australia and indeed in physical need. The ministry that this church has run for many years is a brilliant testimony to the folk and the history of this church.

But further afield, the situation in the Sudan is barely making the news at the moment. 26 million people near starvation. I spent an evening going through the news this week, and I couldn't find it anywhere in the news. 26 million people are on the edge of starvation, and it's hard to comprehend. Baptist World Aid and other organisations are crying out for help. I don't wish to make you unnecessarily uncomfortable. Take a look at the Baptist World Aid website about the crisis, remembering verse 18, *"Let us not love with words or speech, but with action and truth."* You can find the website there or you can just Google it.

John continues to write and outline what biblical love is like. Jesus' love is in a different category from anything we've ever come across before. It is love which takes all the initiative in making us, his children, a love that gives lavishly and freely to those who are utterly undeserving. When we think of our shame and our sin, we begin to grasp John's wonder that he should even bother with people like us.

Yet God's love delights to change rebels into children and children into family. Not only does he give us the name Children of God, verse 1, but he gives us the status. Now we are children of God. Once you were this, but now you are this: children of God.

When I was 19, I went on a holiday camp for teenagers, I guess, and I went as an assistant leader, (very mature at 19), and we were given groups, and I had a very old man come and talk to me. He was about 35 (haha) and it was a beautiful sight. You can see it there on the slide. And if you're very clever, you can see me in the picture there, but I'm not pointing that out.

But it was on this site in about 975 A.D. that the first Christian chapel was built, that became Milton Abbey. And I talked to this old guy, and we walked around, and he said, "Do you know that God loves you?" I've grown up in a Christian family. I've been to church, I've been baptised, and I said, "Yeah, I know that God loves me." And so we walked a bit further. And he said, "Andrew, do you know that God loves you?" "Well, yeah, I know that. Yeah, I know that."

And these are called heavies, by the way, for the very reason that they seem to go on and on and on. And I think about an hour afterwards that we'd started walking, he said, "Andrew, do you know that God loves you?" And I have to say that I knew it in my head, but the experience, the heart was not there. And so he prayed for me. He prayed for me. And God's warmth blew through me.

And it's really from that point I began to feel called to the Christian ministry. Admittedly, I didn't have the belly. I did still have hair. I grew a ponytail. I became a youth worker. And that was over 30 years ago. But it was knowing that I was loved, really love lavishly loved, deeply loved by Jesus. That was one of the pivotal, changing or moving points in my life.

We are called to walk in love, walk in love. As I'm running out of time, I will just truncate what I'd like to say to this third point about truth. In a world that teaches that almost anything goes, this passage commands attention because there is indeed a tension here between love and righteous truth, and indeed sin. The situation back then was that Gnostics were teaching that you could do what you want with your body, because it was the spirit that mattered. Steve and Ben and others have talked about Gnostics, so I don't need to go into that.

But this higher form of knowledge said, 'I'm better. I'm better.' Some suppose that their possession of knowledge made them perfect. Others maintained sin did not matter because it could not harm them as they were enlightened. And that's not the case. The first view is blind to sin, denying its existence. The second understanding is indifferent to sin and denies its gravity.

You see, sin really does make a difference. What do you notice as you look at your Bibles? Verse 19, "*This is how we know that we belong,*" and he ends in verse 24 with the same words, "*And this is how we know that he lives in us.*" He is offering the underlying assurance we have in coming to Christ, outlining our belief in the name of the father, the son, and the Holy Spirit.

And it gives us the challenge to love one another as he has commanded us. Love and truth, you see, go hand in hand. They cannot be divorced from each other. John is quite clear. Verse 4, "*For everyone*

who sins breaks the law. In fact, sin is lawlessness." But you know the adverts that end with the words 'conditions apply'. And so it is here that Jesus has paid the price of our sin.

John here in this passage says, walk in the way of love. Come as children of Christ, discover the depth of love that Christ has for you and for others. Live in Christ. Live and walk in Christ, love in Christ, and walk in the truth of Christ. Let us not love only with words and speak, but with actions and in truth. Let our lives ring with the truth of the gospel, as shown by the example and practice of Christ, which is only possible through the way of love shown to us in Jesus Christ. Let's pray.

Post-Sermon Prayer *Speaker: Andrew*

Heavenly father, thank you for this time that we've spent. Thank you for this whole service. As we have worshipped together and as we have journeyed together, speak to us afresh. We pray that we might indeed walk in love with those around us and indeed those further afield. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Worship Singing

Song: How Deep The Father's Love For Us by Stuart Townend

Post-Worship Prayer *Speaker: Kathy Bates*

Oh, God. We just want to thank you. We want to thank you that this love that we've spoken of is way more, as Andrew has said, way more than knowledge that this is the reality. Oh, Lord God, I pray that you would help us. Reveal to us the reality that we are loved, how deeply we are loved. And Lord God, I pray that we would embrace your love and in response to your love that we would love others well, and that we would love you well. Amen.

Conclusion *Speaker:*

So I pray that this week, we would each go into our weeks, into our sent places, posturing ourselves in love, just looking and allowing ourselves to be led by the Holy Spirit, responding to where the Holy Spirit is saying, "Would you love this person in this way? Would you love this one over here?"

In this way, you know that we would be people who live with this responsiveness to the love of God that he has placed in us, that we would then go and be vessels who carry that love really practically to others in all of the different contexts through our week.

This morning, if what we have spoken about, in as we've spoken about God's love, if that's a new thing for you, if perhaps the Bible is a new thing for you as well, we just want to issue an invitation that you are welcome to explore more of who God is and more of what the Bible says about him. We would love to have further conversations about that. We would love to read God's word, the Bible, alongside you and help you discover just the depth of God's love.

So if you would like to do that, we would love to do that. And I was just thinking too, as we talk about this love, I love the way Andrew talked about we can know about God's love. But, it's actually when we really know it in our hearts that it begins to change everything. That's where we find peace and purpose. If you recognise for yourself that you just go, "I know, I know this knowledge, but I actually still feel like I need to embrace that as an experience." Now, a prayer team are going to be along the front this morning wearing lanyards. We would love to pray for you into that space, that you might encounter and experience the love of God.

So, there are the invitations. Let it be prayed for in in that space. And please enjoy morning tea with us as well. Be blessed. Thank you, Andrew, for all that you've brought today.

Online Outro *Speaker: Kathy Bates*

Hey, thank you for joining us online today. We pray that you have been blessed and encouraged. And if there is something from today that you would like us to pray into with you, don't hesitate to let us know.

If we haven't met you, we'd love to hear from you. And you also welcome to come and join us in person as well. To know more about our church, please go to our church website and you can also find more details about who we are through our newsletter. And you can subscribe to that through our website as well.

God bless you and may you have a great week.

**Names have been changed to protect privacy.*