

Service Overview

Speaker: Kathy Bates

Sermon Series: Learning To Walk

Message: Learning To Walk In Intimacy

Scripture Reference: 1 John 4: 7-21

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Service Welcome *Speaker: Worship Team*

Welcome to church, everyone. Come on in and find a seat. We're so glad to have you all here today, to meet with each other and to meet with God and to worship God together. I was reflecting earlier this morning, in preparation for today, on some of the lyrics of this first song that we're going to sing.

The lyrics, 'Bring us sorrows and trade them for joy, from the ashes a new life is born, Jesus is calling.' There's an invitation there, a call, that however you're doing, whatever your life has been like at the moment, whether it has been joyous (and let's praise God if it has), or whether it's been hard, that God is welcoming us and calling us in.

We can come to lay whatever burdens we have, whatever sorrows, whatever hardships, at the feet of Jesus, because he is the one who makes things new, who grants us joy, and who gives us peace because, the father loves us deeply. God gave his son Jesus for us because of his love, to bring us into eternal life and to give us hope through that.

And that is just so incredible and so worthy of praise, that I don't think we can ever get over that. So whatever your week has been, however things are for you at the moment, let's come together to sing some songs of praise to God. Let's stand a stand and sing.

Worship Singing

Song: O Come To The Altar by Chris Brown, Mack Brock, Steven Furtick, Wade Joye

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

Song: Living Hope by Brian Johnson, Phil Wickham

Post-Worship Prayer *Speaker: Reuben*

Father, we thank you for what you've done for us. Thank you for the finished work of the power of the cross. Thank you for the overflow, the abundance of your love, that you just keep pouring out on us through your son. So, Lord, we glorify you. We thank you. We just thank you, Lord. Amen.

Introduction, Announcements & Upcoming Events *Speaker: Reuben*

Welcome to PBC. Good morning. My name is Reuben, and I'm one of the pastors here. Welcome also to those joining us online, it's really good to have you with us.

Happy almost spring. And I hope for you this Sunday that the love of God will really overflow out of your hearts as you experience his reality and his truth. Kathy will be sharing a bit more about that this morning. Also this morning, Steve is preaching at Parramatta City Church. And for those of you who don't know, they're in a new space this morning. It's a bigger premises. And, for those who don't know, Parramatta City Church was planted out of PBC seven years ago and they are in the heart of Parramatta.

So do continue to pray for them as they minister to those in the heart of the city.

Also, there will be a church meeting on the 8th of September after the 10:45 service. So, at this meeting, we will be discussing and making decisions about the next steps for the new ministry centre. We will also discuss other ministry related needs around staffing and finances. So more information will be out soon. All are welcome to attend, even if you are not a member, but church members, please make an effort to be there.

If you're new to the life of this church, we're having a newcomer's afternoon tea on the 22nd of September. So please come and see me or any of the pastoral team if you'd like to join. And, we'll be having the second meeting of the neurodivergent carers support group. At the first group meeting, there were 40 women in the basement, so I think that says a lot. There were even people there who were in church for the first time—that's how much how much of a need that is. So this will be on the 19th of September from 7:30 – 9:00PM. They will be meeting in the auditorium, and the topic for the night will be self-care. And they will be exploring why it's important, what makes it difficult and how to look after ourselves better. So, please register on the church website, via the newsletter, or speak to my wife.

New Ministry Centre *Speaker: Reuben + Various (Video)*

Reuben: And how many of you have seen the 2021 video that was played recently with regards to how the new ministry center plans came about? Well, I've got a surprise for you. This morning we have the 2024 version.

--- The 2024 Ministry Centre Video is played (transcript below) ---

We are excited about who God is shaping us as a community of people at Parramatta Baptist Church to be. We desire to be led by God's Spirit, and we are joining with Jesus to see lives transformed. And just about every week we are seeing Jesus touch or change lives in some way over the past five years as Parramatta Baptist.

We've experienced great growth. We've seen many people come to faith across all age groups. We're baptising a number of them, at the moment, which is really exciting. We're seeing an increase in the number of volunteers who are serving. We've taken on more pastoral staff, but we need ministry space for that to take place.

Sundays here at Kids Church has seen a lot of new growth. We've had many new families who've joined us in the last two years, and we've shifted the Year 4s over to a new space in order to make room for those families. And we've had new leaders as well here to lead the kids. But our space has stayed the same. And now we found that we've outgrown it once again.

I oversee our youth ministry, our young adult ministry, and, the evening service here at PBC. I found it an absolute joy seeing the growth across all of these ministries in the last few years, both numerically people joining us, as well as in spiritual and discipleship growth. Particularly on our Friday night, where we run a program for high schoolers, and we see roughly up to 100 people joining us.

And in these young people, we have some who are believers in Jesus, and we have some who've never heard the gospel. And so, we have the privilege of sharing Jesus with them for the first time. And we're seeing so many exciting responses to the gospel happening in that.

On Friday night, we run a program for kids in the 5 to 6, where we seek to cultivate a community of young people to know God. We see about 36 kids each Friday night come together and grow in relationship to God. On Sunday morning, I run a program called Sunday Upper Primary or SUP for short. It's for kids in these 4 to 6. The aim of that program is discipleship and deepening their relationship with God. We see, about 35 kids each Sunday.

And still we continue to grow, and we are seeing God change lives. We're seeing disciples made in this place. And so now we're at another point of needing to continue to build, to see growth again. In 2021, the diaconate looked at the options available to us and finalised a master plan for the site. There were church meetings as well as informal discussions, with the result that the only long-term option that provided the required space and be acceptable to Parramatta City Council was the building of a new ministry centre adjacent to the main auditorium.

The new ministry centre will provide much needed additional space for a number of ministries that are occurring throughout the week. It will provide a large gathering space that connects out to the outdoors, as well as to several smaller breakout spaces. That large gathering space can seat 80 to 120 people. The new ministry centre will also provide a mezzanine level upstairs, accessed via a lift, with new office spaces and open plan spaces for our patrons, volunteers and staff.

The new ministry centre will be physically connected with all-weather access to the existing church auditorium, have new landscaping, whilst also retaining that secure play space for where young kids can be retained throughout ministries through the week, and keeping much of that green space in the centre of our site, recognising that we don't have a lot of green space at all.

Additionally, the new ministry centre will see the car park get amended so that cars can move around in a smoother way, as well as separating more cleanly interaction between cars and pedestrians, particularly as people move between the buildings across the site. In addition, the car park will see a brand-new separated entry and exit onto Kleines Road.

I'm excited about the new ministry centre, because it will just give us more space for our kids to engage comfortably and safely with each other. Being that much closer to the church, it means that those new kids will feel safer coming into Kids Church. And with the number of leaders that we've got coming through, being able to break out into smaller huddles in breakout spaces means that the kids and the leaders can develop a deeper relationship with God. I'm excited for more space. We only just fit in our current spaces right now, and it's tight. And honestly, we just keep getting bigger.

I'm excited about the prospect of a new ministry centre, because of the additional flexibility that it will provide us going into the future. As the church continues to grow in size, it will have to look at how it does things, how it needs to alter ministry, and do things different ways just to cope with the additional logistics around that. The new ministry centre is a resource that would open up a lot of opportunities. Right now we are at capacity. And so the way that we do things is limited to the way that we are doing them. And so more space will actually give us more opportunity to play around.

One of the really key benefits is with more space, we can split groups of 15-20 people, which means that a leader can sit down with 5 kids and have really personal conversations of what it means to follow Jesus. And so relational disciple making is just pushed forward, becomes a bit stronger and more doable with those additional spaces.

What excites me about the new ministry centre is the opportunities that it gives for us to not only increase the space that we have for our ministries, but also the space that we have for developing and raising up leaders for tomorrow. That's really exciting. That's fabulous.

So what is needed to make this new ministry centre a reality? You are needed. You are needed to pray. Pray to our Almighty God for his direction, for his wisdom, and for an outpouring of generosity into what is a really big project for our church. Consider the ways that you can contribute financially to seeing the ministry centre become a reality.

Thank you to those who have given already. The reality is, there's still a long way to go. And so would you be led by God's Spirit in knowing what you can give toward this? It may be that you want to make a one off gift, or alternatively, pledge regular payments over a longer period of time. We hope and pray that you will participate, that right across our church family, we will join together in seeing a new ministry centre, that we might see tomorrow's lives transformed.

Reuben: I really have to say that was done so well. It's really hard to be natural in front of the camera. So much work went into that. I mean, we take that for granted, you know, the video just appears. So thanks to the team that put it together. It's also a sensitive topic, right, and so we want to do it well in a way that honours God and each other. There's so much that goes on behind the scenes, so I'm really thankful for that.

Prayer *Speaker: Reuben*

I got woken up early this morning with a just remembering a verse from 1 Corinthians 4: 20, and it says that, *'For the kingdom of God is not just a matter of talk, but of power.'* And so, can I pray for us as we as we prepare ourselves for the word today?

Oh, loving father, we just thank you so much for where you've positioned us and what you're doing in our lives in really transformative ways. Lord, I just ask that you reveal more and more of your vision for this community, that really leads us forward as we as we trust you and your Word, as we are guided by your spirit to really be full of your love in exceeding ways.

Lord, we just pray this morning as you continue to work in our lives, that you'll anoint the words of Steve and Kathy. As we remain receptive and responsive to your word, we pray that as you open our eyes increasingly, you will lead us forward to partner with you in what you're doing in lives around us beyond our ability. So Lord, won't you help us and lead us forward to be truly led by your spirit?

You anoint our words, the way we are with the people around us, as we love each other, as we express your love in new ways constantly. Help us to grow, Lord. And so we bless your name, Lord, because we love you. Amen.

Bible Reading: 1 John 4: 7-21 (NIV UK)

⁷ Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹ This is how God showed his love among us: he sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. ¹⁰ This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹ Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

¹³ This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴ And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world. ¹⁵ If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God. ¹⁶ And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.

God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. ¹⁷ This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: in this world we are like Jesus. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

¹⁹ We love because he first loved us. ²⁰ Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. ²¹ And he has given us this command: anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.

Sermon: Learning To Walk In Intimacy *Speaker: Kathy Bates*

Good morning everyone. So good to have each and every one of you here. I'm Kathy, I'm one of the pastors here. I wonder whether you have ever owned a pet that was a bit of a slow learner, ever had that? Steve and I used to have a cat called Trinity, and she was the most affectionate and lovely cat. But she wasn't the smartest cookie in the jar.

And at first, when Steve used to comment on her intelligence, I used to defend her until one particular winter's day. We were gathered in our lounge room with a group of people, and we had a little oil heater there, and Trinity was there with us sitting next to the heater. And I don't know what possessed her to do this, but she turned and licked the heater and yes, she obviously burnt her tongue, and you would think like she would make the connection between the heater and the burn. But no, having done it once, in front of everyone, she did it a second time and a third time.

So I had to concede to Steve that maybe Trinity was a bit of a slow learner. But in her defence, can I suggest just maybe, we are all slow learners at times, especially when it comes to things of God? Suddenly, John seems to think that we're slow learners. Because when you read through his first letter, he keeps coming back to the same challenges over and over. Have you noticed this? So he's talking about our lives being characterised by obedience to God, our love for others and our right beliefs about Jesus and the passage that we're going to look at today is no different.

This time, John is zeroing in on love, and it's the third time in his letter that he's addressed this issue. So maybe he knows we're slow learners. Or maybe it just highlights how important love really is. A few times recently in our PBC gatherings, I feel like the Lord has just been giving me little tasters of his love for people. And now I have to say, it's actually been quite overwhelming in my emotions as I've experienced that.

So my prayer today is that the Holy Spirit might take this truth from the book of John about God's love, and deposit it like a little taster in every person's heart here. I think sometimes when we talk about familiar topic, it's really easy just to kind of glaze over and go, 'Yep, I've heard all this,' but may the Spirit of God deposit this like a little taster of his love.

Ultimately, John wants us to know that as followers of Jesus, we are to love one another. Well, but this isn't a 'do it because God said so' message. John wants us to know he's earnest in this, that our love for others is to be an overflow of God's love for us. 'We titled this series Learning to Walk in Intimacy' because it's not just knowing about God's love, it's walking in an ever-deepening reality of it. So how about we pray? Lord, we echo Paul's prayer in Ephesians 3, that we might have power to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ. Holy spirit, would you open our hearts right now, that we might wade a little deeper into the love of God today? That we might indeed have that little taster today? And that in turn, we might become better lovers as a response to you. Amen.

Well, today I want to pick up three points about the entwined nature of God's love for us, but then our love for others and these two are really intertwined with each other. The first begins in verse 8, where it just says, *'God is love.'* And John says it again in verse 16, *'God is love.'* So I just want you to pause and consider this statement for a moment. God is love.

It's not just saying that God acts in loving ways, or that he chooses to love, but it's saying love is intrinsic to who he is. It's the essence of who he is. It's one of his permanent attributes, just like God is holy and he cannot be unholy. So he is love, and he cannot be unloving because it is part of the very essence of who he is. So he doesn't just choose to do loving things, he *is* love. And so if you step that forward, every person then who invites God into their life has his love come into their life as well.

It's like we are coloured by God's love when we give our lives to him. Has anyone ever had a washing machine incident where your clothes have come out a different colour to how they went in? Yes. I remember a number of years ago, I was doing a white wash and, you know, kind of, I call it the 'delicates' wash. And so, I put all those clothes in, and then I had had this top that I'd bought in Thailand that was, well, it was bright orange, but it fitted the delicates category, so I threw it in as well.

And then like half an hour later, I lift the lid of the machine and like, everything, and I mean absolutely everything in there, had been dyed pink. Business shirts, socks, undies, just everything. Everything was pink. It wouldn't it be wrong to say that God's love is like my Thailand top, right? His love colours or becomes part of everyone who gives their lives to him.

John says in verses 13-15 that when we put our faith in Jesus, the Spirit of God comes to dwell in us. And we know that part of the essence of who God is is love. And so his love becomes part of us. We become dyed pink. 2 Peter 1: 4 describes it this way. It says, when we're saved, Peter says, *'We become participants in the divine nature of God.'* We participate in the very nature of who God is. That's a little mind blowing, yeah?

God is love. We participate in his nature. His love is in us. We are dyed pink. We become loving like him. So then it makes sense when John says in verse 8, *'Whoever does not love does not know God.'* You know, because obviously, if we're in relationship with him, we have his love in us. But if we don't love, then obviously God does not dwell in us. Does that make logical sense? Verse 16 says, *'God is love, and all who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.'* John is just repeating it over and over.

Having God dwell in us means that we will love others. Do we do it perfectly? Absolutely not. But should our love for others be growing? Yes. So the first thing that John says about the entwined nature of our love for God and God's love for us and our love for others is that we love because God, who is love, dwells in us.

The second thing that John says about God's love is that his love caused him to act. So it wasn't just a warm feeling that God had toward us. We know the ultimate revelation of God's love was the sacrifice of Jesus. Take a look at verses 9-10, it says, *'God's love was revealed among us in this way; God sent his only son into the world that we might live through him.'* The Greek word for 'only' here is the same word that is used of Abraham when he went to sacrifice Isaac as his only son in Hebrews 11:17. It's the same word that Luke 7:12 picks up with the widow of Nain. You know, when she's on her way to to bury her only son.

With those human stories, I think we get a taster of just how precious an only son is. Like every child is precious, right? It's not like you've got backups, but an only child. You know, if you lose an only child, there's something very, very significant about that. And so, we get this impression, God sent his only son. And this price of no greater gift was possible on God's part. He takes the most precious thing that he has, his only son. There were no others. And he gives Jesus as a sacrifice for us.

He gave such a precious gift that he paid such a high price for. Verse 9 says it was so that we might live. In verse 10, it says we needed an atoning sacrifice, and both the father and the son agreed that Jesus would become the sacrifice for sin that was needed.

So the Bible says that sin leads to death. It's actually freesia time in my garden. I love freesias, and I love cutting them. I love bringing them inside. I have bunches of freesias right now all through my house, which is probably why I have allergies. But, you know, from the moment you cut a freesia, it begins to die. Sin is like cutting a freesia from the plant.

We don't die straight away. But the cut of sin just at that point means that death, in the eternal sense, is inevitable. Our only hope is to be grafted back into the source of life, who is God. Because all of us have sinned, we were all cut from God. When Jesus died on the cross, he covered our sin. That's what atonement means; covering of our sin. He took our sin, and in doing so, we were grafted back into to the life source, grafted back into the plant, if you like, into the vine of Jesus, who is life. And so now all who acknowledge their sin, all who repent, all who choose to follow Jesus, are grafted back into the source of life, who is God, and are given eternal life in him.

That is such good news, isn't it? You know, God didn't have to give us his only son. He could have left us under the old covenant, but he chose to do it. Why? Because he loved us. As Andrew said last week, the word that the Bible uses for love here is a Greek word. Agape. It's a kind of love that is self-sacrificing. It's a love that gives at the cost to one's own self. Sending Jesus cost the father dearly. The father had the heartbreak. Can you imagine him watching his only son be humiliated and be tortured to death?

The son paid this incredible price as he stepped down from heaven, a place where he had all honour, all glory, and he stepped down onto the face of the earth. And he suffered accusation and humiliation. And then his precious father turns his face away from Jesus for a moment in time, while Jesus takes on all of the sin that he didn't even commit. And in doing so, he goes through incredible agony on the cross. How could there be a greater demonstration of love?

But really, I just want you to just pause for a moment. Just take that in. Jesus died for you. God loved you that much that he would give his only son for you. No greater gift was possible. I think sometimes we struggle to really lay hold of the extent of God's love for us. I know for me, it took me a long while to really get this, and I think I'm still getting it. But I used to think, you know, how could God love me when he sees the things that I do?

And for me particularly, I had a seven year period where I was caught in a particular cycle of sin that I hated, but I kept going back to. And so knowing my struggles and my failures, I would weigh up my worthiness, as if God's love depended on whether I was deserving enough. It literally took me years to lay hold of the truth that God is love, and Jesus has already died for my sin. And so he wasn't deciding day by day, action by action, whether I was worthy. In fact, it wasn't about me at all. It was about him. And the truth is, he is love. And Jesus has already died for every sin that we could ever commit. Next time you're tempted to doubt God's love for you, just fix your eyes back on the cross of Christ. This was the ultimate demonstration of God's love. And so the second reason, really, why we're to love others, is that it's a response to the love that has been given to us.

The third thing that John says about the intertwined nature of God's love, and our love, like, quite frankly, blows my mind. And it's in verse 12 and it says if we love one another, God lives in us. And get this, this blows my mind a bit. His love is made complete in us. So this verse, in the context of the passage, says the most outrageous thing. It says God's love reaches its perfection as we love others.

Now, I don't know about you, but I look at what Jesus did on the cross, and I think, 'like, surely that is the completion of God's love right there, right? You know, that is the pinnacle of God's love.' But no, John takes it one step further and he says, the love of Jesus is actually made complete not just there on the cross. It's made complete as we go on to love others, as we express the love that was given there through us, to other people. I think that's mind blowing.

Perhaps the front end of verse 12 gives us the reason why it says, *'no one has ever seen God, but if we love one another, God lives in us and he's made his love is made complete in us.'* In other words, our love makes the love of God visible. We have a whole world who don't know the love of God, and who may never see the love of God unless we make it his love, that lives in us, visible through what we do.

Can I just say this again? Because I just think this is huge. God's love is not perfected through our perception of it, or even our experience of it. God's love is perfected through our expression of it. Let me say that differently. The degree to which we love others is the extent to which God's love is made complete.

God gave everything to love us through Jesus, and now he looks to us to complete his love by the way that we love others. He looks to us to be his hands and feet that serve others, his mouth that that cares and encourages and shares truth with others. His wallet that provides for needs both individually and for kingdom projects. He looks to us to be his chauffeur, his texter, his letter writer, his gift giver, his encourager, his grace giver.

Like all of those things, loving others isn't just how we feel about them. The agape love that Jesus gave was expressed through action at a cost to himself. Everything in our culture right now pulls us into the vortex of being me-centred. We know that, don't we? All of the messaging says, 'go after your dreams. Do what's right for you. Pursue self-fulfilment.' But John says, as followers of Jesus, you and I have a higher calling. We are to make the love of Jesus through his death complete by the way that we love others. And can I just say that the level of love that we have right now, that you and I have right now, today, should not be the same as this time next year.

We have a phrase around here that we use often, and we just say we're learning to live and love like Jesus. Can I just highlight the word learning there? And learning to love others is not about acquiring more and more knowledge. Learning is about finding more and more ways to live this out. Learning to love the hard people. Learning to love when it hurts. Learning to love at great cost to ourselves.

The good news is we have a brilliant teacher. Verse 13 says that we have been given the Holy Spirit and I love in Galatians where it talks about the fruit of the Holy Spirit in us is love. That's the first fruit that wells up as we walk in step with the spirit. Galatians calls us to walk in step with the Holy Spirit. And I used to think this was perhaps very mystical, you know. What did it mean to walk in step with the spirit? Who is the spirit? Until I realised just how everyday and ordinary it is to walk in step with the spirit.

I was thinking about that on the day I wrote this message. Let me just paint a picture of the morning that I had had. So, as best I understand it, this is what walking in step with the spirit looked like on that morning when both of my cats pooped in the kitty litter. Rather than turn a blind eye to that and pretend I hadn't seen it, and therefore let Steve clean it up, I felt the spirit in me going, 'No, you serve, you clean it up.' And so, of course, I did.

When I sat down to pray and my mind was wandering, I allowed the spirit to lead me and land me on those people that I needed to lift up in prayer that day when I went to the hairdresser and sat for an hour as women do (men don't). You know, rather than scrolling through my phone in that

time, it just felt like the Spirit of God was just leading me to people that I could just text to encourage or to send texts of care to people, just to use that hour really well.

When I had an interaction with someone in my life who's difficult to love, someone who's part of my life but not part of this church at all. Not even a believer, but, but someone who's hard to love, and there's been so many interactions. But rather than go to judgment, I just allowed the spirit of God, just to rise up within me because I know she's hurting and so I allowed the spirit to lead me toward empathy rather than judgment.

Like, it's just incredibly every day and really practical to be led by the spirit. I'm sure you've got your own stories as well. I have not perfected loving like Jesus by a long shot. There are plenty of times when the selfish me wins. But you know, I've just been asking for God's help the past few years to love as he does.

And I'm so aware, like just over time, he's just putting his finger on different parts of me. Like he's been chiselling away some of the hard edges, some of those places of judgment in me, he's just been stripping those back. And then most recently, he's just been welling up with these, as I said it before, like little tasters of his love as I've prayed for people, it's like he's just given me this intense kind of 'here's how I (God) feel toward them.'

And so I just feel like as a as I've prayed this prayer intentionally, 'God help me to love as you do', that is the best prayer you could ever pray, right? Because that's exactly what he's wanting to do, that the love of Jesus would be made complete in the way that you and I love others.

And so we keep growing in this. With the Olympics having just finished, I have an image of the Holy Spirit being like a coach. And a coach doesn't just sit on the sidelines and, you know, kind of passively watch the athlete, the coach is all in, the coach is cheering the athlete on in how they're going. And the coach helps tweak the performance so that, you know, it just kind of reaches its perfection. Should an athlete kind of mess up, the coaches, they're picking them out and setting them in the right direction.

Again, the Holy Spirit is like our coach when it comes to love, like he's the one who's just all in on this, just kind of cheering us on, prompting us in the direction of loving, encouraging us, picking us up when we get it wrong and pointing us in the right direction again.

Will you posture yourself to pay attention to what the Holy Spirit is doing? Because the Holy Spirit is wanting to make Jesus known, and he's wanting to bring glory to Jesus. So that's what the what Scripture says is his role. And so the way that that he's able to bring glory to Jesus on the face of this earth is by perfecting the love of Jesus that he did on the cross through the way that we love others.

It is my prayer that we would say yes to more of this journey, and I know that some of you are well on that journey already self-sacrificing love. So my prayer is that we would just continually be saying, 'yes, God, I want to know more of your love for me and yes, God, I want to love others better than I do right now.'

Post-Sermon Prayer *Speaker: Kathy Bates*

Oh Lord, I just want to say thank you. First of all, thank you for your incredible love for us. Lord, we receive your love. I pray that you would clear away any things that that might be a barrier to us receiving more of your love.

But I just want to pray for healing in our hearts, for those parts of us that perhaps just keep us a little bit closed off in aspects. And Lord, I pray for those who just perhaps feel a little bit stretched right now. Those who have been loving others and just giving and giving self sacrificially. And Lord, perhaps they just feel very, very empty right now. Lord God, I want to pray just a fresh feeling by your Holy Spirit with the love of Christ, that your love may well up in the stretched, in the dry places.

Lord, I pray that you will renew us. Lord, for all of us, renew us with your love, and may it be our joy to love others well, because we know that we're making this incredible act of sacrifice on your part, Jesus, complete, as we love others. So Lord, do what you need to, to have us embrace more of your love and to live more of your love to others, to complete your love in this world. Amen.

Worship Singing

Song: Love On The Line by Aryel Murphy, Brooke Ligertwood, Scott Ligertwood

Post-Worship Prayer *Speaker: Reuben*

Lord, I pray that we will step into a greater awareness of your love that is within us, that surrounds us, that just overflows abundantly more than we can actually understand or imagine. So today, Lord, we just say yes in increasing measure that we will understand how deep, how wide, how long your love is for us. Show us, Lord, the extent of your love for us, that it transforms us as we are led by your spirit.

Lead us on, that we may see your glory in our in our circumstances, in our communities, Lord, when you move in power in our lives and in those around us, Lord. Give us more faith. Lord, as we rely on you to see transformation. Lord, we want that breakthrough in every area. Lord, you have paid the price and so we just stand before you with open hands.

We receive your love and we say, yes, Lord. Come, Lord Jesus, come. Move in us and among us, Lord. Thank you. Thank you for this beautiful gift. And send us out in your power, that we don't live just by talk, but that we see the power of God move through our lives and those around us. So would you fill us abundantly in Jesus' name, Amen.

Conclusion *Speaker: Reuben*

Thanks everyone. We'll have the prayer team up front to stand in agreement with you, this completion of love. We'd love to just stand and pray with you. And that if you don't know Jesus, we'd love to introduce you to him. But yeah. Come on down and we will pray about anything. Bless you all and see you soon.

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.*