

that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.

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Preacher: Duncan MacPherson

[0 : 00] Good morning everybody and welcome to our morning service today. Welcome to any visitors who are with us today. I know there's one or two coming in the door. We have tea and coffee served in the room next door at the end of the service to which all are welcome.

There's no service here in this building tonight. We're meeting over in Scalpey in the community centre with the Scalpey Church. It's their communion services this weekend. So we'll be going over there for 6.30pm is the evening service.

And that will be followed by a fellowship meeting to which all are welcome to attend as well. Meeting as usual through the week. The Ladies Bible Study tomorrow night at 8pm.

Road to Recovery on Tuesday at 8pm and the prayer meeting on Wednesday at 7.30pm. The services next Sunday at 11 and 6pm will be taken, God willing, by the minister.

He is away this weekend preaching at the communion services in Kyle. Noted before that the West Niles Presbytery is looking for a youth discipleship support worker.

[1 : 05] Copies the job description at the door. There's booking forms available for the Presbytery Junior Camp. He mentions there about contacting Marian Campbell. But I was noticing Stuart with those leaflets in his hand last week.

So you can speak to him as well if you haven't got one already. Looking forward to a week on Tuesday. Adam, the missionary, will be speaking in Scalpey.

Tuesday, the 25th of September. He's well worth listening to for his experiences. And one final intimation. There are new cleaning rotors at the door.

So please pick one up on the way out if that applies to you. Let us pray. Lord our God, we come before you this morning to worship you again as our creator.

The one, Lord, who sends the sun, the wind and the rain. The one who causes the grass to grow. The one who feeds the animals and who feeds us.

[2 : 15] Who provides for all our needs. We bless you and we thank you, Lord, that you created a world and you created it good. That, Lord, you might provide for us.

We praise you, Father, that we have so many blessings this day. And we thank you, Lord God, that the chief blessing that we have is the ability to praise your name through the Lord Jesus Christ.

We thank you, Lord, that even though we sinned and rebelled and turned away from you. And that, Lord, we brought disaster upon ourselves and upon this world.

Yet, Lord God, your grace and your mercy come to us in the Lord Jesus Christ. Lord, we thank you, Lord, that even in this broken world of sin, you reach out to lost sinners and you lift them out of darkness.

And bring them into your kingdom of light. Lord, you provide a way of escape from judgment for lost sinners by providing the Lord Jesus Christ as the one and only saviour.

- [3 : 27] The one and only mediator between God and men. And we thank you that we come in Christ's name today. Aware very much that even our prayers and our worship are imperfect.
- That we are in this world and yet Christ takes them and makes them perfect before your throne so that you, the holy God, who cannot bear to look upon sin, can look upon us.
- And not merely look upon us, but look upon us with delight and rejoicing over his children who come into his presence. Lord, we thank you that you are a great and awesome and a holy God.
- A God who is worthy of praise. A God who is wholly just. A God who is wholly righteous. A God who loves with a love beyond measure. Father, we bless you that as we meet today, we meet with other members of the body of Christ who have joined with us.
- We pray, Lord, for visitors here today that they would know the fellowship of being in Christ and the privilege of praising with another part of your body.
- [4 : 35] We thank you, Lord, for the fact that there are countless numbers of believers meeting today across the world to stand before their own societies and cultures and declare that Christ is Lord.
- We praise you, Father, for them. We praise you, Father, for them. And we pray that you would continue to bless your church. And that you would make her pure and holy. And that, Lord God, you would build up those who are weak.
- And you would humble those who are taking pride in themselves rather than in Christ. And that, Lord God, each and every part of the body would work together for your glory.
- We remember today, once again, your church, which suffers in many places. And we pray, Father, that your hand would be at work.
- We remember the countries of the Middle East where Christians are being severely persecuted at this time by ISIS and by others. And we pray, Father, that you would cause your people to stand united together.
- [5 : 40] And, Lord God, that you would bless your truth. We pray, Lord, for those who are persecuting the church today, like Paul of old did, that you might meet with them.
- That you would crush their rebellion and that you would turn them around to be great preachers and teachers of the word of God and great disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- We remember your church suffering in North Korea. Lord, we know so little about that place. And yet, Lord God, you have a people there. We thank you for them.
- We pray that as they lift their hearts in praise to you, whether they can do it in private or together with a few friends, we pray, Lord God, that you would strengthen them.
- And that you would hasten the day of bringing down a regime that teaches that it alone is divine. Father, we pray for your blessing there.
- [6 : 38] And in China, where your church continues to grow and is undergoing persecution once more, we pray, Father God, that that great rock that is filling the earth would continue to fill the country of China.
- And that, Lord, we would see a day when the leadership would declare that Christ is Lord. Father, we pray for your blessing here in our own midst.
- We thank you, Lord God, that we have a minister who preaches and teaches the truth. We pray that you would bless him as he preaches in Kyle.
- And we pray for your blessing upon the services in Scalpe today and in the Church of Scotland where they have communion services. And we pray, Lord God, that you would bless them with your presence.

And that, Lord, you might bring souls into your kingdom as a result of the preaching of your word. Lord, we remember those who can't be here today because they are ill or because they are caring for other people or doing essential work.

[7 : 44] We thank you especially for those in Harris House and all the work they do to care for the elderly. And we pray, Father, for your blessing upon each and every one.

We ask now, Lord, that you forgive us for our many sins and that you'd enable us as we go through this service to look continually to Christ, to praise his name.

And in so doing, Lord, we would bring honour and glory to you. If we can turn back to John chapter 17. Many people today ask, what is true love?

And they look for it or try and see examples of it in different situations in life. Many are looking for that perfect relationship where they find one individual whom they can love for the rest of their lives.

But sadly for many, what they find is that the outcome ends in betrayal or failure or at the very least a great amount of hurt involved.

[8 : 45] Others would look to the way that some people are willing to die for their friends or their comrades. There are many stories, history of soldiers in battle, for example, who would carry an action that resulted in their death that enabled their friends and their fellow fighters to escape.

And they would look at that and say, what love that person must have had for those friends. But sadly for those who survive, that love then is nothing more than a memory because they have lost the one who died for them.

Prince Harry's wedding, I don't know how many of you were watching that, I saw bits of that. But the wedding sermon there, the minister talked a great length about love and what love could do.

But at no point did he ever attempt to define what love actually is. And that's a big problem in today's society because people at the end of the day are very much clueless as to what love is if it is not defined.

The Apostle John writing in his first letter, 1 John 4 and 10 said, I think it's a good starting point for us today to take John's definition of love as we go forward.

[10 : 14] And I want to explore God's love in the context of verse 26 in our reading. John 17 and verse 26, Jesus said, I have made you known to them, that is to his disciples, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.

So first of all, I just want to look at the, I want to look very much at the second half of that verse. But before we actually go into looking at the three different elements in that second half of the verse, I just want to draw your attention to the references within this prayer that Jesus has to glory.

In verse 4 he says, I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. In verse 5, And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

And then down in verse 24, Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

So immediately before verse 26, we have this linkage between God's love and God's glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

[11 : 43] I just want to leave that thought in your minds and ask you to keep it there for the moment. And we'll come back to it at the end of the sermon. But I want to look principally first of all at the Father's love for the Son as our first point.

Jesus said, He will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them.

Speaking to the Father, God the Father, the love you have for me. I wonder how often any of us actually sit down and think, Well, what is this love that God the Father has for God the Son?

And what are the characteristics of it? I just want to give a few thoughts here just now as I meditated upon this passage. I won't pretend that they're comprehensive by any manner of means.

But if we think of that love between God the Father and God the Son, I think the first thing we can say is that it is an eternal love. There was no beginning to that love and there will be no end to it.

[12 : 51] Living in eternity, God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit had this reciprocal love between them continually. It is an infinite love.

God, as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, was completely satisfied in and of himself because of that relationship between the three persons of the Godhead.

They could spend eternity exploring the infinite perfections of one another without the need to create a world like ours.

And going into the eternity to come, there will be ever more to be explored there. An eternal and an infinite love between the Father and the Son.

We can say also that that love is perfect. We are so used to imperfect love in this world. But between the Father and the Son, there are no failings in that love, no betrayals, just that continuous enjoyment of the perfections of the other person and of the Father and his great love for his Son.

[14 : 02] And therefore, it is a secure love. We noted that it would not come to an end. It is perfectly secure because nothing is going to break that bond of love between Father and Son.

It is a just love. It's not one that twists love in order to escape justice. So often in this world, we hear of people who will hide a family member from the law in order to protect them from the law after they have committed a crime.

But the love that is between the Father and the Son, first of all, has no need for that because none of them has been breaking any law.

It's a selfless love. The love that the Father has for the Son is one that thinks very much of the other, promoting the other's good, the other's glory.

And in the Father and the Son, there is this perfect alignment of wills as God the Father and Jesus the Son have the same aim and the same purpose.

[15 : 11] They do the same things and will only do what pleases the other, a selfless love. And that selfless love was one, from the Father's perspective, that sent Christ into the world.

What would have been perfect and best for God himself would have been just to keep Christ in glory. And yet he was willing and selfless and being willing to send Christ to this world, of which we will speak more later.

And it's a love in which the Father delights in the Son. There's a lovely proverb in Proverbs 23 and 24.

It says, The father of a righteous man has great joy. He who has a wise son delights in him. Anyone who has a wise son or a son or a daughter that brings great glory or honour or does great things to the family delights in him.

They are really pleased with him. And the father of a righteous man has great joy. It always breaks a parent's heart when their children are doing all sorts of wrong things, breaking all kinds of laws, acting dishonourably.

[16 : 31] But where you have a son that grows up and acts in an honourable manner, who keeps the law and makes good their way in life and brings great joy and pleasure to their parents.

But God the Father, his son, was and is righteous in a way that no one on this earth could ever possibly be righteous. And therefore the joy and the delight that God has in his own son has to far exceed the joy and the delight that any parent in this world could have in their son.

And it's important at this point to take into account the fact that this kind of love and this kind of relationship is only possible in a Trinitarian God.

A God who is three persons and yet one God. because if God was only one person he would be alone in eternity, unable to have a relationship with anybody else and unable to be close and to be loving to anyone.

You will hear plenty of people say today that all religions are the same and that we are worshipping the same God. If you ask a Muslim do they think that God loves them they would be pretty shocked because from their point of view God merely tolerates them because God is so far apart set apart that he could not possibly love human beings.

[18 : 09] Love is only possible where you have more than one person. And it's a love between the father and the son where the father wants the son to be magnified to be glorified to a great degree and we see very importantly that that love is reciprocated from Christ.

In John 14 and verse 31 in the encouragement that he was giving to the disciples Jesus said the world must learn that I love the father and that I do exactly what my father has commanded me.

A love from the father to the son that is reciprocated from the son to the father. That brings us on to our second point now. We've been speaking about the father's love for the son we now think on the father's love in his people.

Jesus goes on in that verse 26 to say that the love you have for me may be in them speaking of his disciples. Christ wanted God's love to be in his people.

he wanted the same love that God had for himself to be in all believers and we see here the father's and the son's will completely aligned in their desire for their love to be in God's people.

[19 : 38] Let's just think then if we think of what we have those aspects of God's love that we thought was being shown between the father and the son and apply them to ourselves us.

If we think of that eternal love we can see quite clear in Ephesians 1 and verse 4 Paul wrote for he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight in love.

He chose us in eternity before the world was ever created to be his followers and we will continue as we enter into eternity to know that love and to have it in us as believers.

Each and every one of us can love greatly in this world. We can surround somebody else with our love. Wonderful parents will surround their children with their love.

We can set our love upon somebody else and that may or may not be reciprocated but none of us can actually put our love inside another person.

[20 : 52] But what we have here is Christ saying the love you have for me I want it to be in them in all believers and that eternal love is in believers for eternity.

that infinite love that we spoke of in God's context think of it for ourselves it is a love that cannot be plumbed we cannot get to the bottom of it and it's a love that will never run out.

It is absolutely infinite so therefore it's a love that is far greater than any love that we can have in this world and it's a perfect love. Any love in this world may fail as at some time the person we love or a person we love may leave us but God will never fail us and he will never leave us and it's a just love no hiding the fact of no hiding of criminals in God's kingdom God sent his own son to the cross in order to deal with that problem of how you reconcile God's love and God's justice 2nd Corinthians 5 and 21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us so that in him we might become the righteousness of God and more than that God loved the unlovely Romans 5 and 8 but God demonstrates his own love for us in this while we were still sinners

Christ died for us what a demonstration of the love that God has by loving the unlovely with that love that he had for his lovely perfect son the Lord Jesus Christ and it's a selfless love and there's nothing we can bring to God nothing to benefit him whatsoever and yet he still sent Christ into this world God the father and God the son working together for the salvation of his people and just as God the father delights in God the son God the father delights in his children his believing people here on earth Romans 5 and 5 Paul wrote God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit whom he has given us he pours out that love it's not something that he gives us in drops but he literally pours it out into our hearts that then brings us on to our third point when we mention about pouring out his love in our hearts by the

Holy Spirit the third point is Jesus saying that I myself may be in them so what we have here in this point is Jesus in his people and this is an absolutely astounding statement that Jesus the son of God Jesus who is 100% God and 100% man could actually come to live in his people today today Jesus in his body is in heaven as the perfect man and the perfect God and yet he dwells in his people by his spirit as he promised in John 16 and 7 I tell you the truth it is for your good that I am going away unless I go away the counsellor will not come to you but if I go I will send him to you here we are promising the spirit coming and we have that trinitarian perfection of God the father the son and the holy spirit all working together and

[24 : 49] John Owen in writing on the person and the work of Christ sum things up very succinctly by saying God loves Jesus executes and the holy spirit applies Jesus puts that plan into action and the holy spirit applies it and in 1 John 4 15 to 17 John writes on this if anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the son of God God lives in him and he in God 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 him and this way love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment because in this world we are like him Jesus prayed that he himself would be in us as believers of course and we have

God the Father the Trinity working together for our good everything that we have comes to us in Christ God the Father Son and Holy Spirit working together and giving a certain order in the way things come to us his grace first of all comes to us through Christ and in Christ Ephesians 1 and 6 to the praise of his glorious grace which he has freely given us in the one he loves the Father loves the Son and he gives us his grace in Christ his love comes to us in Christ when he was speaking to the disciples shortly before he prayed in John 15 verse 9 Jesus said as the Father has loved me so I have loved you now remain in my love as the

Father has loved me the driving force there was the Father's love for the Son so have I loved you and Christ's holiness our God's holiness comes to us in Christ as we're reading in John 17 and verse 19 Jesus said for them I sanctify myself that they too may be truly sanctified we are made holy righteous in God's sight because of Christ and these things come to us in Christ and the purpose of all of this is that each and every one of us who is a believer might become more like Christ God that Father who rejoices in his perfect Son rejoices in seeing Christ in us in his people Jonathan Edwards was a great theologian in the United States back in the 18th century and he used to go out of an evening for a ride on his horse to get a bit of exercise and to think things through and he would take this little notebook with him and scribble down wee points and one of the many things he thought about was heaven and glory and what it would be like to be in glory and he pondered this question in his heart of how is it that someone who is more holy more like

Christ on this earth could actually enjoy heaven being with people who are less holy less like Christ because even though you perfected there would still be less of Christ in them in heaven or less visible and he came to this conclusion he kind of turned our logic upon its head and he said the fact is that anyone who is truly like Christ the more we are like Christ the more we can see Christ in other people and the more we can see just the tiny speck of Christ that tiny bit of holiness in someone who is perhaps very weak in their faith and that is what God is like you know Jesus talked about having that faith as small as a mustard seed that is all you need to get into heaven into glory that faith as small as a mustard seed because it is taking hold of

Christ and even if there's only a little bit of Christ seen in us that is enough for God the Father to take us to glory John 17 and 20 is a key verse for each of us here today because Jesus prayed there my prayer is not for the disciples who are living today alone he said I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message Christ Christ at that point was going through great trouble in his spirit he spent time comforting his disciples he was about to be taken away about to be arrested and taken to the cross yet at that point he was praying for each and every person who would believe in him down through history so he was praying for each and every believer who is in this room here today and that's an amazing thought that demonstrates to us just the love that

[30 : 29] Christ has for us as believers that he could look down the ages to ourselves today even when he was about to go to the cross when he was about to be made sin for us and he links his love for us to our unity and then onwards to his glory verses 22 and 23 I have given them the glory that you gave me that they may be one as we are one I and them and you and me may they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me you see that link of him as believers to his love and to demonstrating that in the world John 15 and 9 as the father has loved me so

I have loved you now remain in my love and verse 17 this is my command love each other if that wonderful love that the father has for the son is in ourselves and that needs and ought to be shown in the life of believers loving one another I think each of us needs to ask ourselves how much of that love is actually in our hearts today if we don't love our brothers do we really love God or if we only love our brothers a little bit do we only love God a little bit love love and Jesus there in verse 21 said that his glory had already come to us all of them may also be in us that the world may believe that you sent me I have given them the glory that you gave me verse 22 that they may be one as we are one the commentator

Hendrickson when looking at this aspect said when believers are in Christ then Christ is in them this is their glory how often we want to get glory in this world from different things from doing great achievements and yet the reality is that if Christ is in us if his love is in us then this is our glory and what we have is if we think of the outworking of God's love in his relationship with his son and in the lives of believers it will inevitably lead to a desire to glorify the other the father delighting in the son got such a love for him he wants to see his name magnified the son delights in the father he wants to see the name glorified and therefore if we as believers delight in

God and we delight in Christ we should want to see God's name glorified those wonderful verses in Philippians 2 we speak of these things and so often we'll read from verse 5 but if we read in verse 1 it says if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ if any comfort from his love then verse 5 your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus who being in very nature God did not consider equality with God and then went on to become obedient to death even death on a cross that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the love in his son's life and the outworking too that

God's love should have in our lives I just want to close by leaving everyone with a few questions do you know this love of God the father for the son do you have that in your life if you don't have that to do the obvious thing to ask is why not why would you not want to have such a love instead of chasing after all the wrong things in the world if you have this love in you today as a believer what are you doing with it are you loving yourself too much and Christ too little the problem for most of us in fact for all of us in this world is there's this competition on the go between loving ourselves and loving God and the more we love ourselves have in us and the less Christ has seen us and the less glory we bring to God the more that we love

[35 : 38] God the less we love ourselves and the more honour and glory we bring to God through our actions and the more that other people will see Christ in us how much do we love God today and are we willing to put to death the sins of this world all those things that are holding us back are we willing to crush the love that we have for ourselves that we might know this perfect and true love in all its fullness and so bring glory to God the Father I feel one of the biggest issues today for the church is that each and every one of us if he wants to see and we quite happily sing that God will be glorified but are we actually willing to love God enough are we willing to let God's love pour into us and through us and out of us and the way it's poured into Christ and out to the world that the world might actually see that love and be drawn to him many questions for us to think about but this love is definitely something that needs to be thought about meditated upon and it should draw each and every one of us to praise

God the Father God the Son and God the Holy Spirit let us pray Lord we thank you for this wonderful love of which we can barely grasp the extent and the meaning of it we thank you for what you have revealed of it to us in your word and supremely in sending Christ to die upon that cross for us Lord we thank you that you are not willing to give us a second hand love or a lesser love but it is that love with which you love Christ that you love your people that you have put it into our hearts and Lord we pray that you would forgive us for our willfulness and our sinfulness and that Lord you would enable us to delight in your love to rejoice in it and in so doing to honour and glorify you through Jesus

Christ our Lord Amen May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ the love of God the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all Amen Amen Amen samen again to leading October