Gospel of Mark
Lesson 54 “Baptism of Love”

I. Introduction - We are continuing our series on “The Gospel of Mark” this morning.

A. Review - This series comes from **Galatians 2:20**. It’s now Christ living in us so in order for us to understand how He lives in us, it’s helpful to study how He lived on earth.

B. Before we get into our passages in **Mark** today, I’m going to ask you a question where the answer will shock you. It will jar you:

1. Under the New Covenant (***Acts*** to ***Revelation***), how many times does the Bible explicitly command us to love God? Zero. How many times do these passages say explicitly loves us? About 20! Am I saying we shouldn’t love God? Of course we should, but the new covenant changes the emphasis of where this love comes from….**1 John 4:19** *we love because He loved..* To extent we have received His love is the capacity we have to love Him back.
2. Under the New Covenant (***Acts*** to ***Revelation***), how many times does the Bible explicitly command us to love others? About 30. So how do I know I've really received God's love? **It will show up in the way I love other people. And I can’t love others, I might have a love deficiency.**

II. Baptism of Love - Last week we baptized. They are all dry now. Why? They didn’t stay immersed. This same principle goes for the love of God. It’s not just a one time experience, it is an ongoing lifestyle.

A. **Mark 12:28-34** (Tuesday of Passion Week)

1. A scribe (Pharisee) asked Jesus a question about what the great commandment is in the law (***Matthew 22:36***) and Jesus quoted ***Deuteronomy 6:4-5***. You love the Lord **your** God with all **your** heart, all **your** soul, all **your** mind, and all **your** strength. **Emphasis on your!**
2. Jesus then quoted from ***Leviticus 19:18*** about loving **your** neighbor as yourself.
3. The scribe actually agreed with Him (shocking) and then Jesus made an interesting statement: You are not far from the kingdom of God! **The idea is you are getting close, but you aren’t there yet!** Ex: We aren’t far from Walmart, but we aren’t there.
4. **Romans 3:19-20** The law’s purpose was to show our sin, not make us righteous.

B. **John 13:34** (Thursday night of Passion Week)

1. This is Last Supper where Jesus meets with the disciples in the Upper Room.
2. Notice, a new commandment I give to you. How is it new? It’s about loving people, right. The way it is different, is love them as I have loved you!

3. The entire emphasis shifts from Old to New. In the Old, the focus is about us living God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength and in the New it as all about how much God loves us!!!! **The focus shifts!**
4. The previous verses illustrated this:
    a. At the beginning of the chapter, Jesus washed all the disciples' feet… including Peter who denied Him and Judas who betrayed Him. Washing feet is the task of a servant, not a king. Peter didn't get it. **John 13:5-7 - Sometimes we have to experience something before we can understand it. Ex: kiss**
    b. Andrew Wommack's testimony reveals God's love. On March 23, 1968, Andrew was at a prayer meeting, frustrated because someone else was doing all the praying. He wanted to pray. He wanted people to see how spiritual he was. In that moment, God began showing him what was really going on inside him. He saw pride, self-righteousness, legalism, and the wrong motives behind the good things he was doing. Andrew thought God was going to kill him. But instead of judgment, he encountered love.
    c. God poured His love into Andrew in a way he had never experienced before. At the time, he didn't understand what had happened. He just knew he had encountered God and experienced a love he knew he didn't deserve. This forced him into the word to discover if what he experienced was true! He spent several years studying the Word to understand what happened that night. The experience changed him, but revelation gave him stability.
5. Jesus then went on to celebrate communion/passover with His disciples… including Peter and Judas. All of them ate. Even the betrayer. This is what God's kind of radical one way love looks like.
    a. Peter then went on to say he would die for Jesus (focus is trust in self).
    b. Jesus said, "Peter you will deny me three times before the cock crows. But don't let your heart be troubled (because you blow it), I go to prepared a place for you - Meaning your failure doesn't determine your destiny.
    c. Over the next several hours Peter denied Jesus and ran. He totally failed Jesus, but the encounter seeded the ground for his restoration. In ***John 21*** he told the others he was going fishing (back to his old way of life), but then Jesus appeared and made them fish breakfast and afterwards sought out Peter to restore him.
    d. Some years later he understood this when he wrote **1 Peter 2:24**. Experience led to revelation.
6. Who was the disciple who stayed with Jesus at the cross when all others scattered? John—the one who knew he was loved. **John 13:23, John 19:25-26.** John had greater revelation of the love of God than any of the other 12. **His focus wasn't on how much he loved God, but rather how much God loved him.**

III. Conclusion - Last week God immersed people in water. This week, I believe He wants to immerse people in His love. **This experience will change us and cause us to look into the word to find revelation stabilizes us.**

A. Pray Closing Prayer for experience and revelation