Today, we’re kicking off a series of messages with a very simple theme. The world needs a whole lot of love, now more than ever, and that’s a tough challenge for a lot of us. But I believe we’re up to it!

On the night that Jesus would be arrested, having finished celebrating Passover with his disciples and having washed their feet, he gave them a whole new purpose for which to live the rest of their lives...

**John 13:34-35 NLT**

I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.

There are so many things we think are important and so many things Jesus could have said…

- You’ll be known by your awesome worship services.
- You’ll be known by your fiery, passionate sermons.
- You’ll be known by the way you dress and act.

But instead... you’ll be known by your love!

This is a BIG challenge - to love our neighbors as ourselves, to love each other fully and completely. In fact, it’s impossible to pull off without the intervention and grace of God at work in us.

To obey Jesus’ new commandment, we need to believe two things...

**1. You ARE loved.**

God IS love - he DEFINES love...
**1 John 4:8 CEV**

God is love, and anyone who doesn’t love others has never known him.

We are only capable of love because God first loved us...

**1 John 4:19 NLT**

We love each other because he loved us first.

God PROVED his love for us with Jesus’ death on the cross.

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**2. You CAN love.**

Jesus showed us the way!

You can love when you’re **intentional** about it. When you **seek out people** who need to be loved and you **choose to love** even when you don’t feel like it.

You can even love the people who are **hard to love** when you’ve encountered the love and grace and forgiveness of God yourself.

We’re going to talk in the next few weeks about what love really is and **HOW** to love people well. But today, I have two big questions for you...

1. Do you **believe** God has loved you? That he gave his Son for you on the cross and that you can receive him as your Savior and Lord?

2. Do you **believe** God can use you to love others?