

---

Meditation  
on “**We Love One Another**” (*John 15:9-17*)  
• “*How Shall We LOVE*” worship series •

---

**::: ZERO :::**

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

*“Grace to you and PEACE from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ.”*

*1 Co 1:3. (NRSV)*

**::: Amen.**

**::: ONE :::**

This week I caught myself being really un-kind—unloving.

Some of you may already know, for others it is important to know what I am about to tell you right now, to understand the point I want to make.

---

I like using e-scooters. These cute scooters that—if you park them properly—look neat and tidy and don't hinder anyone.

Instead, they offer you the opportunity to get around the city and the surrounding areas without any complications.

And—you can then change to any other means of transport.

So, last week I was on my way with the scooter, running some work errands,...

when a fellow citizen with his dog...

clearly didn't give a sh\*\*\*—a SECOND THOUGHT to the fact...

that a cycle path

might not be the place...

to go for a walk...

...precisely because people tend to ride bikes—  
or even scooters—on cycle paths.

**::: TWO :::**

But now to the point:

I came along the cycle path on my scooter,  
saw master and dog on the cycle path...  
and decided—on an angry impulse—  
not to ride past the master  
at some healthy distance—nope.

Rather, at a close distance  
that left no doubt that they—master and dog...  
were in the wrong place!

The master promptly sent me—  
who had already moved a long way away  
again—  
a considerably angry message...  
which also left no doubt...  
that he did not appreciate...  
my pointing him to his disorderly behaviour.

### ::: THREE :::

What can I say?

I think I might be right about this:  
masters and dogs don't belong on a cycle path.

Nevertheless, there is also no doubt about this:  
What I did was unkind—unloving.

I need to admit:

Maybe the good man was probably frightened.

And what's adding up to this:

By this unloving, unkind behaviour, I didn't exactly promote more goodwill towards e-scooter users per se.

That's exactly how it is with unkindness, with being unloving.

You may insist on your rights.

You may feel that you are entitled to your actions—and still not DO THINGS RIGHT, because you act unlovingly.

### ::: FOUR :::

*<sup>10</sup> If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.*

*<sup>12</sup> "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.*

*<sup>11</sup> I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.*

---

Jesus is a master at telling us words that make us live a life worth living.

*<sup>15</sup> I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father.*

*<sup>13</sup> No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends.*

It is not simply a matter of following instructions like a servant.

You may lead a life, following instructions, following commandments as if they were orders.

And you might think you've done everything right if you just followed the orders.

But Jesus teaches his disciples that you follow his commandment if you love.

And love means that you are able to look away from yourself and simply can feel, hear, understand what the right thing for your counterpart, this other person—linked to you—is.

**::: FIVE :::**

It is about loving and thus bringing and experiencing joy.

It is about being a friend. Someone who means well for you. Someone who stands up for others..

Not on an instruction, not by order, but out of love.

Jesus tells us, teaches us, that we are so much more than just servants. We belong to God's own family.

And as he brings healing, freedom and redemption, we are to bring this to our world too. We are the ambassadors of God's love because we belong to hi.

**::: SIX :::**

How I felt caught out this on this very day this week, just by myself.

I insisted on law and order. Like someone who makes sure that instructions are followed.

---

Not like someone who acts for the good of others, who stands up for others.

I acted as someone who created trouble, caused anger instead of joy.

But because I, as a follower of Jesus, I **DON'T WANT** to cause trouble, but rather have the good of others in mind.

When I will ever be in a similar situation again, I want to act differently. I want to be careful and caring.

How long have I been travelling with Jesus Christ in my life as his follower... and yet I still have so much to learn - so much to practice.

### **::: SEVEN :::**

I am sure that you might be aware of similar situations in **YOUR** life.

Situations where you might have acted correctly—but not lovingly.

But even if we've been followers of Christ for a long time, we are still learners, students of God's love—and thus trainees in kindness.

---

I don't know if you have realised or followed the General Conference of the United Methodist Church in Charlotte, North, Carolina, USA over the last two weeks a little bit.

With the harmful language the disaffiliations that had been going on since the General Conference 2019, you could barely call the United Methodist Church still United.

But this time with luckily many people who were divide and caused such a lot of harm having left the UMC, this time things were so different.

This time the UMC could agree that we do not agree on all ethical questions—especially towards the acceptance of LGBTQ relationships.

But the center was found again, God's love which is bringing and keeping us together.

And for the first time in years I can say that it is special again to belong and be a member of the United Methodist Church again.

A church could learn what it means to rediscover the path of love again.



And we can do this too—in our every day's life with all its challenging and rewarding encounters.

*"Hold fast to my love!"*

says our Lord Jesus Christ,

*So that my joy may infect you.*

*The joy will fill you completely!*

Yes, that's what I want!

And I hope that I can walk this path with many who also want to learn even deeper TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

::: Amen.