

By Our Love We Are Known Pt 1

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[0 : 00] Wow, look at all the wonderful offspring of the Juan Snatters and Langlois's. That is, wow, what a blessing from God, right? What a blessing from God, right? What a blessing! What a blessing from God, right? What a blessing from God.

It's a testimony of why you guys are, part of why you guys are going to be up here. It's an amazing testimony that both you gentlemen have. We praise God for that.

So just briefly, and then I'm going to invite you up here, John. Just briefly, I want to share a couple things. Yeah, very exciting for this appointment of John and Pete today. This is really, really exciting. I'm so happy for this. Briefly, though, before we start to this, I've got a few things to say. We are still, as John becomes an elder, we still have our full-time pastor, sir, and there's a lot of research going on that's still moving along. There's some candidates, and we're moving forward on that. I just want to continue to inform you on that. But there's a question someone had, what's the difference between an elder and a deacon? So I just want to briefly explain a little bit of the difference. First of all, there's some similarities in the fact that both have good character in the Lord above reproach and honest, godly people that have faith in the Lord. And you can look in 1 Timothy chapter 3 and see the similarities there.

But the difference is, there's a few differences. I just want to point out two of those. The first one is an elder has to be able to teach. They have to be able to come up here and handle the word of God and teach it accurately and clearly and help us to understand the word. That's an elder has to do that. A deacon does not. He could, but he does not have to be able to do that. And the second one is, and this is really an important one, is that an elder is a shepherd and they're going to take on the responsibility of the flock. And of course, we know that Jesus is the chief shepherd in 1 Peter chapter 5. He's the chief shepherd, but nonetheless, elders are shepherds and they're responsible for carrying the load and making sure that we're taken care of as a shepherd would take care of his sheep.

Keep us in the fence. Sheep always want to get out of the fence. I worked one summer where this one guy had a few sheep. I couldn't believe it. This one sheep, man, if there was a little crack, man, he got through there and got out. It was the funniest thing I've ever seen.

[2 : 42] Us sheep, we're strange people. We have lots of problems. So those are the two differences. So I'm going to invite John up here now. I've still got some more things to say.

Just so you don't know what he looks like. Here he is. Sorry to disappoint you. Yeah. No, you're a nice looking man, young man.

Okay. So I'm going to share a few more things about John. A little bit of a bio here, if you will. By God's grace, John first trusted Christ as a junior in high school in suburban Milwaukee and has been serving God at Tri-State Community Church since college in the mid-80s.

He is blessed to meet his wonderful bride, Kathy, through the church ministry. Together, they have four amazing children, three wonderful children-in-law, and nine awesome grandchildren.

With God's help, John and Kathy have led numerous Bible study small groups on marriage, family, and Christian living through Tri-State over the 37-plus years of their marriage.

[3 : 52] John has been helping on the church board of leaders for the past six years and was appointed as a deacon in the fall of 2022. God has deposited in John a fervent passion to help others know and share the unconditional, illogical, infinite, and eternal generosity of our awesome God and creator of the universe, Jesus Christ.

John has been an amazing, faithful brother and friend to me, as I could possibly imagine. I can't begin to tell you how much he has supported myself as a pastor in the last year and a half.

It's been really amazing. I really thank you for that, John. It's super good. God loves this church and is committed to reaching out to people in his community.

His gift of exhortation is felt by all as he expresses encouragement to nearly everyone he comes in contact with. It's been great. He's given me such great words of encouragement. It really feels good.

It's really godly. He prays before and after almost every event. He visits the sick, the dying, the lonely, the hurting, and needy people. John is committed to you and desires all to grow in Christ.

[5 : 06] He loves the word of God. He is humble and puts others first. I'm excited to see what God will do in days and months and years to come.

He meets the qualifications of an elder. Jack and I want to commit him to the Lord for his service of God and the church. It says in Acts 20, so as Paul was doing his reaching out and spreading the gospel, he had four journeys, or three or four journeys.

In his third journey, he stopped by a little town. I can't remember the name of it, but it's near Ephesus. He told all the elders of Ephesus to come.

I want to share something with you. This is important for an elder. Acts chapter 20. In verse 28, Paul is charging the elders.

This is a few things that he said. He said to the elder, Pay careful attention to yourself and to all the flock in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.

[6 : 20] In verse 32, we're going to commend you. Now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, the word of God, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all them that are sanctified.

All right. So, you want to kneel down there? Sure. Our Heavenly Father, we do thank you.

We thank you for John. We thank you for Pete. Father, we ask that as he is now going to be appointed as an elder, we pray that your grace may be abundant in his life, that he, as he is attacked by the evil one, we pray that you would protect him, that you would guide him, and that you would help him to become the man you desire him to be.

So, Father, with us, we ask your anointing upon John. Lord, your filling of the Holy Spirit, and we pray that he would walk humbly with you and lead his people that you have given to him, Lord, that he would lead them with love and with grace.

So, Jesus, we thank you for him. We thank you for his labors in the church. We thank you for the work that you've done in his life to change him. There we go.

[8 : 18] Sorry. Father, you're so great. Thank you for this. Thank you for bringing John to our fellowship and all the years and labor that he's put into serving people and helping people, blessing people.

Continue to help him do that work, Lord, and help him to understand the responsibility of taking care of this people. We sure need it. We need help. Bless him.

Bless his wife, Lord. We pray for Kathy as he comes alongside of her to encourage him and support him and continue to help John love her as Christ loves the church.

It's a very important role of his to continue to love his wife, to be an example of a marriage for our fellowship, that that union would continue to show the love of Jesus. Help him to love his grandkids, his children, and continue to still do that and be an example to them.

Very important role. And, Lord, again, we just give you glory for this morning as he's now laid hands on him. He's appointed as an elder.

[9 : 26] It's exciting, great news, God. We praise you. We honor you. This is going to help our fellowship, Lord. I can't begin to tell you how excited this is for me.

He's going to help carry the load of the church. This is great news, Lord. We're celebrating this with you. Amen. Amen. You can get up.

Do you need help? Oh, praise God. Thanks, you guys. Yeah. Should I sit down now? No. So I'm going to give John a job now.

He's an elder. So you're going to help us anoint Pete to be a deacon. So I'm going to give him a job right away. He's going to have something to say. wow awesome yeah thanks you guys humbling I tell you you know because I know the truth God has a whole lot more to do on me a whole lot more so praise the Lord so yeah why don't we invite Pete to come up and also Deacon Brian Smith there you are Brian's a Deacon as well please come up and join us yeah very interesting very interesting

alright so we're going to appoint Pete as a Deacon I got a handful of things I want to say about Pete so get comfortable no I didn't you don't sit down everyone else you guys just get comfortable alright I tell you what I am so honored and blessed first of all just to serve this amazing church and these amazing people I did want to say that so honored to be able to preside over appointing Pete it's a blessing let's see here so I'm going to tell you a little bit about Pete this is kind of a bio here in the fall of 1983 it's a long time ago Pete's junior year in college God began working on Pete's heart and showing him that he did not measure up spiritually God revealed to him that he was a sinner and not a true believer in Jesus a few months later Pete repented of his sins and trusted Jesus to be his Lord and Savior while still in college Pete was blessed to meet a lovely godly sister in the Lord named Kathy Carnes wave Kathy there she is fortunately for him she accepted his proposal for marriage and today they have been blessed with nine children four daughters-in-law one son-in-law and 23 grandchildren and counting gotta say that they've been married for 38 years in October 2021

[12 : 38] Pete developed COVID pneumonia and was in the hospital for nearly a month he almost died during this time God blessed him and greatly encouraged him and his family during this trial through many fellow Christians who called texted prayed for and supported them in many ways this outpouring of love kindled and ignited the same desires in Pete to lovingly serve God's people who are in need Pete looks forward to continuing to serve the church for many years to come and I gotta tell you I first met Pete actually back in probably 1983 somewhere in there so we were at University of Wisconsin Platteville together and I was in Pete and Kathy's wedding Kathy and I were and they were in our wedding so we go way back we were very close and you know through whatever means you know the Langloises were fellowshiping here they left for a number of years and then this all happened and God brought them back and you know the church and I gotta tell you

Pete Kathy and their family have been such a blessing to this church to all of us to the leaders to everyone they've been so encouraging and such a blessing and I just very much appreciate them nine kids nine kids I think most of them are here and I have to tell you I know most of them and they are some of the most wonderful people you would ever meet and they've chosen some of the most wonderful people you'd ever meet as husbands and wives too so I really thank the Lord for you guys the ones that I know I don't some I don't know but and I think that's more more a testimony to Kathy than Pete I think right that's not true it's both of them and they're such a blessing so again I'm just really honored to be able to talk a little about Pete and they've become very close to us we were close years ago and we're close again so that's about all

I have to say I think about Pete so I guess we're going to make you kneel down now too sorry there's four of us to pray so get comfortable there alright Father I do just thank you so much for this man thank you for his wife for his family thank you for your love that just emanates from them just just so clearly the unselfishness the care you know just even I know it's amazing because different people have had issues and I see Pete jumping to help them he just has this this sense of needs and of helping thank you so much for that we do just we just ask you to bless Pete and anoint him with your Holy Spirit I know he's filled with your spirit Lord I just pray that you would work through him continue to work through him and bless him and use him for your work continue to use him for your work protect him from the enemy

Lord thank you so much yes father continue to thank you for this blessing Lord of a servant in Acts chapter 6 they appointed the deacons to help meet needs of needy people that was a very important part of deacons meeting the needs of needy people and freeing up the elders for prayer and studying the word thank you that Pete's doing this these things already bless him and his family help him to as John help him continue to love his wife as you love the church and help Kathy to come alongside and continue to support him and let their marriage grow and also be an example to the body we put all the events and the things that Pete already does in your hands he's a great music leader and does so many other things bless him in those things and that blesses our church thank you father our heavenly father how grateful we are lord to be a part of this today and from the day that I married

Pete and Kathy I knew they'd run you could see their heart and their love for you years later after many many children John calls it nine it seems more like 90 but what a blessing they are and it really speaks of the husband and wife and how they nurtured their children and trained them to love the Lord and so father it's a real joy to see Pete come forward today to be made a deacon and as

he continues to serve as he always has Lord we ask your blessing upon him we ask you to give him the spiritual strength needed to do the things that he's doing and we thank you for him and his family and all the support and love that they have showed towards us we love them all dearly and ask your blessing upon them as they serve you for we ask it in Christ's name amen let's help him up all right there we go applause applause

[18 : 41] God bless you thank you thank you what's that children may be released for Sunday school well it's a real privilege to be able to share with you again and I'll give you a little bit of a bio on how this church came to be and how how God has just blessed us time and time and time again after my time in the service I came home and I got the worst beating in my life for serving and of course the nation was against the

Vietnam War at that time and they all didn't appreciate what we'd done anyhow after that I drank every day to shut off the inner pain etc and after a year I come to the end of myself and I cried out and I said God I don't know if you're real or not but if you're real help me because I'm really messed up and God met me right where I was at and I gave my life to Christ that night and everything started to change I can't explain what God did it within myself but he met me where I was at and a couple days later I ran into a guy and he came up and asked me if I were to die today do I know I'd go to heaven and I said well I hope so and he said hope so and he shared the gospel with me and I said that's what I needed to hear

I said I prayed and I asked God to change me so I don't know if I got saved the night I cried out from my heart with the little that I knew or if it happened that day when I did the gospel prayer but anyhow I wrote down the Romans road that he shared with me and started sharing that with everybody that I would everybody that would give me an ear to listen and you'll have to excuse me I'm not nervous I'm just shaky but at any rate there was a waitress I shared with everybody I could and I got a job at Dubuque Bank and trust and I would go out after I got done working which I was working after the bank closed and

I'd get down around 2 or 3 in the morning and I'd go out to country kitchen and go from table to table sharing with people that I knew that had come from East Dubuque and the long and short of it is I had some pretty good opposition from one of the waitresses there I would leave a table and go to the next to share and she would go to the table I just left and she says don't listen to him he's a hypocrite and she was right from her perspective because she knew me before I came to Christ and so she didn't understand what went on and after a few weeks I got fed up with her telling everybody about me and so I confronted her on it and she says well I knew you then when you were this way I said since I came to Christ I'm not that way anymore long and short of it is she got saved on October 20th 1974 we got married in 1976 well a couple of years is enough and I knew her well enough then that I could see her heart and so we got married and we started we got back from our fishing or our hunting honeymoon we went to a fishing lodge and I found out that the only reason she went fishing with me during our if you will the dating season or whatever was because she wanted to be with me she did not like fishing at all so I took her to a fishing lodge for our honeymoon and we spent a fair amount of time fishing and she endured that when I found out she hated fishing

I thought boy I've really got a woman here because she endured all that well time went on and as I said we got married we got back from our honeymoon we started a bible study in our apartment that we were renting and then we started a church and we started this church around 1980 or so but it really grew out of that bible study and then we started one up in Potosi along with a couple other guys and that's Potosi Bible Church it's still going today and got involved with Pete and John and some of the others up in Platteville and when we closed that because it was getting a little bit too much to be running in circles those gentlemen came down with us with some others and continued to labor with us for many many years and so it's been a delight this morning to be with them but what the Lord has really laid on my heart and he's been doing this for some time

[25 : 51] God says in 2 Peter 3 9 the Lord is not slow about his promise as some count slowness but is patient toward you not willing for any to perish but for all that come to repentance and so we made that our goal to share and share and share and one day I asked the Lord to teach me how to love if he loved and he brought some very interesting characters into my life at that point that really stretched me that I thought was about as far as I could go but every time I felt that way he gave me the grace to keep on loving and that's what I really want to share to you in the early church as they got together Tara Tullen who was one of the early church fathers when he reported what made the

Christians who were really growing by leaps and bounds back then he said

I don't know what they believe but oh how they love one another one another Jesus didn't say that he'll know we are Christians by our doctrine he didn't say he we'd they'd know we are Christians by the church we attend he said they'll know you're my disciples if you have love one for another that's my challenge today that we would learn to love one another and beloved I don't know how much time any of us have left you know the Lord could come back tomorrow and if you're not saved you're gonna miss it but today is an opportunity and it's an opportunity not only for those that know of Christ and those that claim to be

Christians and I don't know anybody's heart God does but this I do know the time is short and Christ is coming back and all the signs are multiplying day by day and you're gonna see more and more animosity towards the Jewish people until all the Muslim nations in China and Russia march upon Israel that's coming and you can bet on it because God said so and everything God said so in the Bible I have found to be true and if you wanna know anything if you have questions about it ask me and if I don't have an answer I'll find it for you but I've searched out many of the things that people say well Jonah couldn't have been swallowed by a whale well when I found that out I thought well if God said

Jonah swallowed the whale I thought it either had to be a little one or God had to open his mouth wider but I didn't have a problem with that because now you're looking at things that God can do that you don't understand but by faith you accept it and you might look around and those of you that are regulars here I would challenge you how well do you know one another because we're commanded by God to first of all love our wives John mentioned that second of all we're to love one another how will they know that we are true followers of Christ it's not by our doctrine it's by our love do they see that in our lives that would draw them in a missionary to Russia that I knew some years ago he said this he said he talked with a

Russian person that was a Christian and he says how do you as a Christian witness in a land where it's forbidden and the missionary said we live in the Russian person said we live in such a way that people are drawn to us to ask us what makes us so different are we that different in our workplace in our home in the church how well do we love one another another and if you don't know somebody here you're missing out what God told you to do he said love one another how can you love one another if you never go and get to know him at all and that would be true anywhere that we're at he told us to love one another he gave us 58 different one another's in the new testament love one another prefer one another honor one another serve one another a lot of one another's and

[31 : 39] Tim you let me know when my time's up because otherwise I'll go to noon but Jesus tells us in John 13 verses 34 and 35 Jesus gives this command commandment he says a new commandment I give unto you that you love one another even as I have loved you that you also love one another this will all men know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another so if a stranger comes into our church do we honor them with love do we meet them with love will they only meet one or two of you or will they meet an abundance of you going up and saying welcome to tri-state you see your love as it was in the early church that is what will draw people today we get so hung up on doctrine and the way this church is versus that church and whether you gotta wear a suit or whatever

Jesus said come come as you are just the way you are in first Peter he says since you have an obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brother of the brethren fervently love one another from the heart fervently that's with real passion and you say well they're hard to love or I don't know them they're different than me so what every person I've ever shared with is different than me every single person you'll ever meet is different from you different likes different dislikes some of might be agitating I give candy out wherever

I go and those of you that come here know that but it says in Proverbs that a man's gift makes room for him and with our mailman with our with those that are neighbors and everything else the best impact you can make is by loving them and serving them and you give a gift to somebody that is somewhat standoffish or whatever I run bottle of water out to my garbage man garbage men every week when I possibly can and I do that for the mailman as well why because it will make room for me and I have gotten to know quite a number of them just through doing little things a bottle of water like this costs you about 17 cents if you get it on sale you can get it cheaper how much is that worth to you what's the value of the soul of another person you only have one life to live and if

you're a

Christian you're going to stand before God and he's going to ask you what you have done not to get into heaven that's done through faith in Christ as we know but what have you done with what I have enabled you to do it's not a gifting there might be those that are more outgoing than you that are more sensitive to you but you are to love one another no ifs ands or buts it applies to every Christian no matter where you're at no matter what church you're going to and if you're here in this church you need to make a decision to reach out to people you don't know in this church when we greet one another we generally greet the ones that we already know so how do those that we don't know ever feel the love of

Christ in Matthew 5 43 to 44 and verse 46 Jesus said you have heard it said you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy but I say to you love your enemy and pray for those who persecute you if you love your enemy how can you do that it's about a choice everything you do is by choice if you got a bad habit and you want to change it you have to make a choice not to go to a bar where you if you're struggling with alcohol you need to put that pack of cigarettes away if that's doing it you need to put that case of coke that you're drinking every day aside and I had a friend that drank a case of coke in those little bottles every day one whole case and he said coming off that was to him was just as bad as coming off heroin!

[37 : 43] think about it no matter who they are love your enemies and pray for those that persecute you love your neighbor as yourself love your neighbor as yourself who's your neighbor well we see that in the parable of the good Samaritan the priest walks by he sees this man laying along the roadside beaten and the priest walks by and he doesn't do anything and then another I can't remember exactly another gentleman Jewish gentleman walks by and he doesn't do anything and then a Samaritan now the Samaritans were viewed by the

Jews as half breeds! because God told them not to mingle with those of other nations etc. and so the Jews and those from elsewhere like Samaria were looked down upon even at the woman at the well she says how is it that you being a Jew ask me to do this for you she was surprised that Christ would say give me a drink because the Jews wouldn't normally talk to her and what was he doing he was loving somebody that was viewed as an enemy one that no one else would have anything to do with and he demonstrated that again and again and again if you read through the gospels you'll see the love that he showed in

Matthew 22 verses 37 to 39 he says and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart with all your soul and with all your mind this is the great and foremost commandment in the law and all of these if you want the Old Testament verses that apply to this again if you let me know I can give it to you I'm somewhat limited on but I want to beg you on behalf of the glory of Christ to make a commitment to him to reach out of your comfort zone and reach out to people to let them know about the love of Christ for God so loved the world John 3 16 says for God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son imagine as a father giving your only son to go and go through the beating that he went through that made him unrecognizable and the father knew this ahead of time but yet he sent his son so that his son could come to earth and stand before men and walk before men that men might believe in

God what a sacrifice but it was a sacrifice of love Matthew 24 12 says because lawlessness is increased most people's love will grow cold you know we can get discouraged when we love one another sometimes people don't respond in like kind but as Pete and John and Brian and Tim will learn people are different and everybody responds differently and they will as they minister to people but we don't give up and we don't let our love grow cold because we're going through difficult times or because of people's responses to us okay you agree with that we got to guard our heart says in

Proverbs 4 24 that we guard our heart with all diligence to guard is to garrison your heart it's to put that fork if you will around it to protect the enemy from getting in and discouraging you from stealing your love for Christ to make your heart grow cold so I beg you this morning to love everybody to really make an effort in that area you know if we all made that effort this church wouldn't be able to contain them and why because people in the world are looking for answers they're looking for love they're looking to be accepted I heard one Baptist preacher say there was a young man that came in he was full of ear piercings and nose piercings and everything that could be pierced and the preacher said when he came in before the rest of the people he said good night man what did you do fall into a tackle box and the young man left and I thought he'll stand before

[43 : 45] God for that what if he would have accepted him and said come on in be a part of our family give me a couple more minutes here Luke 6 27 but I say to you who hear those who hear love your enemies do good to those who hate you Luke 6 32 if you love those who love you what credit is it to you for even sinners love those other sinners and love them you see we're to love the others that everyone else rejects we're to show them the love of Christ and if you're a Christian Christ didn't give a suggestion he gave a commandment and we'll stand before him and hear how we did it's my prayer that you would hear welcome home good and faithful this is a thing of faith you move forward in faith and you share your faith you share the gospel with people that don't know it you show love towards those that come to church and towards those that are in your neighborhood my brother-in-law lived right down the street from some people that were often times in the newspaper in a specific section if you get my drift and he showed kindness to them and did a lot of different things to help them at times and they would have these big beer bashes down there and he would always go down and have one beer with him and then go home and I said why do you do that and he says

I'm the only one in the neighborhood that hasn't had things stolen from him why because he showed some love towards him it might not be the way you would show it but nonetheless because he would go and show kindness and stuff to them and accept them and trust that God could change them he never had anything stolen he could leave anything out his car is unlocked and he still does and he never had any problems Jesus says in John 14 15 he says if you love me you will you will keep my commandments in 14 21 he says he who has my commandments and keeps them is the one who loves me so if you say you love Christ then that means you keep his commandments love to love one another to love your wife to love one another and to love your enemies in other words anybody and everybody again I mentioned a parable of the good Samaritan before he was someone that was hated but yet he showed love towards the Jewish people and he was probably put down quite a bit by Jewish people in the past but you know that act of kindness can change a person's life and last of all in closing before I pray I would like to ask you I would like to ask everybody to close their eyes and bow their heads and I want to ask you if you'll commit yourself to start loving others and reaching out to people that you don't know people that come to this church that don't know neighbors that you might know somewhat but don't know well and people that are downcast and outcast by society will you reach out to them and show them the love of

Christ if you will I would ask everyone to keep their eyes closed yet and those that are willing to make a commitment to follow Christ and love others as he has commanded I would ask you to stand up it's a big choice choice but it's a very rewarding choice and God never commands us anything that he doesn't give us the authority and the power to do and I can tell you my life has been so much freer even though in some ways I'm held captive in this body with some of the things that I've got going on those things might be a hindrance but they don't slow me down they might be a hindrance but they don't stop me from reaching out to people and whatever you're going through in your life it won't stop you either so you make a choice this day and you don't have to stand up to make that choice but I ask you to stand just to get a feel for where people's hearts are so father I ask your blessing I ask your blessing upon each and every one here I pray for those that are guests today that their hearts would be challenged father to love others as you have loved them as you continue to love them and love each and every one of us so father change our hearts help us to become the people that we ought to be that when people talk about church they could say I don't know what they believe out at Tri-State but oh how they love one another and so father I thank you I ask your blessing upon those that stood and those that didn't stand but for those that stood I ask that you give them grace and that you would empower them Lord to live in a way that honors you for it's in

[51 : 05] Christ's name we pray amen thanks thanks