

“Jeter”
1 John 4:7-21
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By Rebecca Enney

Jesus calls us to love one another. And we can do this because God has first loved us. Now, the problem we encounter is how to show God’s love. Sometimes, to show God’s love, it means to give up what YOU want or need to do and to do what the OTHER person needs.

Last week, you may remember, Ken, the hired babysitter was with Barabas and his dog Jeter in the playground when there was a fire across the street and when all the excitement died down, Jeter was missing! And because it was 6:00pm, Ken said “Sorry kid, Uncle Floyd said to bring you home at 6:00. Time to go.” Ken could see that Barabas was very upset about Jeter. But Ken wanted to go to the Senators ball game with his friends. Ken was unwilling to give up what HE wanted in order to show love to Barabas.



Barabas stood in the kitchen while Uncle Floyd (who was exhausted from a long day and looking forward to a quiet evening at home) paid Ken and then he went back to his phone call and cooking supper. “Yes Pastor Ed, I reckon they must have left it in the Gathering Space. Do you want me to check it out?” When Uncle Floyd looked at Barabas while Pastor Ed was talking on the other end of the phone, he saw that Barabas was starting to cry. He caught Barabas eye and gave a questioning nod as if to say silently “Is it important? Do you need me right now?” and Barabas bit his bottom lip and nodded “yes” and put his hand to his face.

Immediately, Uncle Floyd said “Excuse me Pastor, but I have to attend to Barabas just now. May I call you back later this evening?” And he hung up the phone and went to Barabas. Between the tears and the sobs that flooded from Barabas, Uncle Floyd figured out what happened at the playground, how there was a fire and lots of fire trucks and fire fighters and all the excitement and when it all died down, Jeter was missing! “Ken and I looked everywhere!”

Uncle Floyd turned off the stove, took off his apron and they quickly went to the playground and searched for Jeter. They called and called “Here Jett! Jett!” There was no response. “Maybe Jett followed the fire trucks to

the fire house.” Barabas said. So he and Uncle Floyd went to the fire house. The fire fighters were still cleaning up their equipment from the fire. Uncle Floyd asked if there might be a dog that followed them back to the fire house. “Heck yes, there certainly is. Let me bring him out to you!” said the fire fighter. Barabas’s heart was pounding with excitement as the man went to the back of the fire house and came back with a dog . . . a little white dog. Barabas’s heart sank. It was not Jeter. “He’s gone. It’s hopeless.” Barabas closed his eyes to keep the tears from spilling out.



On the walk back home Uncle Floyd explained that Jeter was a smart dog and most certainly would find his way back home. And the moment they got home, Uncle Floyd called the Animal Shelter to let them know that Jeter is missing.

After a very quiet supper, Barabas went up to his bedroom. Uncle Floyd called Pastor Ed back and talked just a few minutes. When Uncle Floyd went up to Barabas’s room, the lights were out and Barabas was already under the covers. Uncle Floyd loves Barabas very much. He showed that love when he dropped everything to search for Jeter. It breaks Uncle Floyd’s heart to see Barabas so sad. Uncle Floyd laid down beside Barabas and stayed there until Barabas fell into a sorrowful sleep.

Because God loves us first, we are filled with love. God asks us to pass that love on to the people around us. We don’t keep that love for ourselves. We pass it on. That is what Jesus commanded. That is what Uncle Floyd did.

THE END