



FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

“The Last Year of the Life of Christ, Part 55”

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Pastor Darryl R. Curtis

Family Life Baptist Church
909 West Saginaw Street
Lansing, Michigan 48915
Phone: (517) 393-9399
Email: info@familylifebc.com
Website: <http://www.familylifebc.com>

Informed. Insightful. Intelligent.



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The Last Year of the Life of Christ, Part 55

Luke 22:24-27, John 13:34-35

An argument arose among them about who was considered the greatest. So Jesus said to them, **“The kings of the nations lord it over their subjects, and those in authority are called benefactors. But it isn’t to be that way among you. The greatest among you must become like the youngest, and your leader must become a servant.**

For who is greater: the one who reclines at the table to eat, or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.

“I am giving you a new commandment: you must love each other. Love each other just as I have loved you. Everyone will know you are My disciples if you love each other.”

Thank you very much for coming to hear the message for today. Before we begin our next lesson, let us reiterate our reason for attending Church.

We attend Church to obtain the mind of Christ, meaning, to have the Bible illuminated in our minds so that we can clearly understand the principles that Jesus taught and base our daily personal decisions on those principles.

We come to Church because we want to be obedient to the Bible, which is the doctrine of Jesus Christ, in an informed, insightful and intelligent manner.

In the 1979 movie, “The Sting”, the plot was that a ruthless mobster, played by Robert Shaw, controlled a numbers operation in Chicago, and he ordered the killing of a con man that conned one of his numbers runners out of a few thousand dollars which was, as Paul Newman’s character, the hero of the story, said, ‘a chunk of money that wouldn’t support him for two days’. The murdered con man’s partner in crime, played by Robert Redford, enlisted the help of Paul Newman’s character, one of the most experienced con men in the country, to get even with Shaw. Newman out-cheated Shaw in a poker game to get Shaw angry at him. Newman and Redford then set up a phony bookie joint to bet on house races, and Redford persuaded Shaw to put up the money to break Newman by convincing Shaw that he could find out race results before they were reported to the bookies, and Shaw could bet on a completed race, already knowing which horse won. The plan was to bet a large amount of money at long odds to break Newman’s bank.

The climax came when Shaw bet a half-million dollars on a race. After Shaw gave the money to the teller to place the bet, the FBI busted in to arrest Newman. As the FBI was gathering up the suspects, the FBI lieutenant announced that Redford was free to go because Redford was the one that turned Newman in. Newman pulled his gun and shot Redford, and then the FBI



lieutenant shot Newman. Both Newman and Redford were pronounced dead. Since Shaw was not part of the con for which the FBI was arresting everyone, the FBI lieutenant gave Shaw the chance to leave the scene to avoid going to jail with the rest of the con men, and Shaw did so, leaving his half-million dollars behind. But the FBI lieutenant was part of the con, all of the bullets were blanks and Newman and Redford used fake blood to appear dead because their deaths were part of the con as well. The con convinced Shaw that he couldn't get his money back, since he thought the FBI had it. Shaw thought that Newman and Redford were dead, so he couldn't do anything to them to get his money back either.

Shaw was fooled because he believed Newman's reaction was genuine; any mobster would certainly kill the person that betrayed him to the FBI, which is the reason that witness protection exists in real life. Being betrayed stimulates powerful, negative emotions, which is why the betrayal of adultery is the only activity cited by God as a reason to void our marital vows.

As we left our last lesson, Judas was planning to betray Jesus at the conclusion of the Passover dinner. Judas hadn't confided in anyone about his plan, so after Jesus finished teaching the disciples about foot washing, Judas was shocked by Jesus' next utterance, in the lection combining **Matthew 26:21-25, Mark 14:18-21, Luke 22:21-23 and John 13:21-33:**

After Jesus had said these things and while they were still reclining at the table and eating, [Jesus] became deeply troubled and said, "I'm telling you the truth: One of you will betray Me, even someone who is eating with Me!"

The disciples became extremely distressed and looked around at each other, wondering who [Jesus] meant. They began to ask each other which one of them might do this. One by one they asked [Jesus], "Lord, am I the one?"

The other disciples were planning to perform bodyguard duty for Jesus. They thought that Jesus meant that one of them would fail to maintain their post, so they each asked Jesus if they would be the one to fail. Jesus' answer chilled the house, as the lection continues:

Matthew 26:21-25, Mark 14:18-21, Luke 22:21-23 and John 13:21-33:

[Jesus] said to them, "It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping his hand in the dish with Me. Look, the hand of the one who is betraying Me is with Me on the table. The Son of Man will indeed go as it has been determined and predicted in the Scriptures. But how awful it will be for the one who betrays Him! It would have been better for that man if he had never been born."

Remember why Shaw believed that Newman shot Redford. Betrayal is about the worst thing that you can do, and deserves the worst punishment. We will find Judas in the hottest, most miserable place in the pit of hell. Since Jesus



did not name the disciple whom He was warning about the consequences of betrayal, Judas decided to ask if Jesus was actually talking about him. The lection continues:

Matthew 26:21-25, Mark 14:18-21, Luke 22:21-23 and John 13:21-33:

Then Judas asked [Jesus], “Rabbi, am I the one?”

“You have said it yourself,” Jesus replied.

To the Jewish mind, this answer was as direct as a “yes”. Since Jesus was warning Judas directly, Judas hesitated as he considered the condemnation that Jesus prophesied for him. Meanwhile, Peter was planning to stop the betrayer to protect Jesus. As the lection continues:

Matthew 26:21-25, Mark 14:18-21, Luke 22:21-23 and John 13:21-33:

One of Jesus’ disciples—[the Apostle John], the one Jesus loved—was reclining next to [Jesus]. So Simon Peter motioned to [John] to find out from Jesus who He meant. [John] leaned closer to Jesus and said, “Lord, who is it?”

Jesus answered, “It’s the one I give this piece of bread to after I have dipped it in the dish.” After dipping the piece of bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, son of Simon. Judas took it, and immediately Satan entered into him.

Even as Satan entered the garden to convince the man and woman to disobey God, Satan entered Judas to convince him to disregard Jesus’ warning of Judas’ eternal damnation. And before John could tell Peter about Judas and Peter could act to stop him, Jesus intervened. The lection records:

Matthew 26:21-25, Mark 14:18-21, Luke 22:21-23 and John 13:21-33:

Then Jesus said to [Judas], “What you’re doing, do quickly.”

When Satan entered Judas, Jesus sent Judas quickly on to his eternal damnation. It is best for us to listen when the Lord or the Word warns us about sin. The lection continues:

Matthew 26:21-25, Mark 14:18-21, Luke 22:21-23 and John 13:21-33:

None of those at the table knew why Jesus said this to him. Some thought that since Judas had charge of the money bag, Jesus was telling him to buy what they needed for the feast or that he should give something to the poor.

Immediately after Judas took the piece of bread, he left. And it was night.

So Judas was gone, Jesus was left with the eleven disciples that were going to carry the gospel. Ten of the eleven will initially forsake Jesus, but after the Resurrection, they will become bold witnesses, so much so, that they will give their lives to spread the Gospel.

The eleven disciples are sinners as are we all, but the Lord Jesus Christ mercifully provides us with a full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, with forgiveness of sins, and cleansing from all unrighteousness. The lection continues:



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Matthew 26:21-25, Mark 14:18-21, Luke 22:21-23 and John 13:21-33:

After [Judas] had gone, Jesus said, **“Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in Him. If God has been glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself—and He will glorify Him very soon.**

“Little children, I am with you for only a little while longer. You will look for Me, but just as I said to the Jews, ‘You cannot come where I am going,’ so I now say it also to you.”

Jesus was making the solitary trip to the Cross in order to glorify God and, in so doing, to glorify himself. God has a plan for each of our lives, and we glorify God when we follow His plan and achieve the outcome that He has in mind for us. This week, the Sporting News glorified Coach John Wooden, naming him the greatest athletic coach of all time, because Wooden, during his tenure as head basketball coach at UCLA, was able to influence his players to follow his instructions and win the college basketball national championship more often than any other coach in history. God is our coach, but we are the players, and since we have the ball, we can deviate from God’s plan and play our own game if we so choose. And glorifying God means that we yield our wills to His will voluntarily to achieve His objective, just as Kareem Abdul Jabbar, Bill Walton and others yielded their wills to that of John Wooden to win ten national championships for UCLA.

Jesus Christ yielded His will to glorify God as He completed God’s plan to show His love for us by pardoning us for our sins, as **John 3:16-17** tells us:

16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

In the original Passover, God used the blood of lambs to select the Israelites to be the people to whom He showed His love. **John 3:16** tells us that God is augmenting His selection. As well as the Israelites, now anyone can choose to receive God’s love by accepting Jesus Christ. The choice to accept God’s favor or not is now ours. The Passover is obsolete, the blood of animals is no longer necessary, so Jesus instituted a new ceremony, as **Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25 and Luke 22:19-20** records:

As they were eating, Jesus took the bread and blessed it. When He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples. “Take it and eat it,” He told them. “This is My body, which is given for you. Do this to remember Me.”

In the same way after the supper [Jesus] took a cup. When He had given thanks, He gave it to them and said, **“Drink from it, all of you.”** And they all drank from it.



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Jesus told them, **“This cup which is poured out for you is My blood of the new covenant, which is poured out on behalf of many people for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you the truth, I will not drink again from this fruit of the vine until the day I drink it fresh with you in the kingdom of My Father.”**

The bread represents the body of Jesus Christ, the wine represents the blood of Jesus Christ, and our voluntary eating and drinking of them represents our internalization of the thinking and teaching of Jesus Christ.

Believing in Jesus Christ, as **John 3:16** references, is more than accepting the historical truth of that which Jesus Christ has done; it means that, through the power of the Holy Spirit, we actually internalize the plan of Jesus Christ for our lives into our thinking. In other words, when we believe, we obtain the mind of Christ, and the Bible is illuminated in our minds so that we can clearly understand the principles that Jesus taught and base our daily personal decisions on those principles. Believing in Jesus Christ means that we are making a commitment to be obedient to the doctrine of Jesus Christ, which is the Bible, in an informed, insightful and intelligent manner.

In order to actually commune with Jesus Christ and to internalize His ideals, we have to change our perspective so that the devil cannot enter us as he did Judas, and we have to resist the temptation to take the shortcuts that the devil proposes that we use to reach the will of God, because the devil's shortcuts will not take us where we want to go, but will rather get us lost. Jesus gives us an example, in **Matthew 4:1-4**:

1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

2 And when Jesus had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry.

3 Now when the tempter came to [Jesus], he said, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.”

4 But [Jesus] answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’”

The Holy Spirit sent Jesus on a fast, and the devil tempted Jesus to break the fast. But Jesus indicated that obtaining the things that we want should be secondary to following the plan of God. The definition of sin is when we make obtaining the things that we want more important to us than following the plan of God. The entire passage that Jesus quoted passage is found in **Deuteronomy 8:1-3**, which says:

1 “Every commandment which I command you today you must be careful to observe, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers.

2 And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these



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forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. 3 So [God] humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.

Although Jesus desired food and could provide it for Himself, Jesus chose to remain on the fast until the Holy Spirit released Him. The satisfaction of our desires offered by the devil leads to a dead end, as the desire for money did with Judas. Having the mind of Christ means that we must be willing to suffer to devote ourselves to the mindset of God rather than take a shortcut to personal satisfaction, and be willing to suffer as was Jesus.

The next lesson is our text for today, which shows us that Jesus required the disciples, and probably us, to change their thinking in order to follow Him. **Luke 22:24-25** tells us:

An argument arose among them about who was considered the greatest. So Jesus said to them, “The kings of the nations lord it over their subjects, and those in authority are called benefactors. But it isn’t to be that way among you.

Listen carefully to the change that Jesus wants us to make, in **Luke 22:26-27 & John 13:34-35**:

The greatest among you must become like the youngest, and your leader must become a servant. For who is greater: the one who reclines at the table to eat, or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.

“I am giving you a new commandment: you must love each other. Love each other just as I have loved you. Everyone will know you are My disciples if you love each other.”

This is about competition. The disciples missed the lesson when Jesus washed their feet. Footwashing was a duty generally delegated to a slave, and so the disciples argued, meaning that they, competed, to decide which of them was the leader and should be exempt from washing feet, and which of them was the least and should wash feet in the future. But Jesus is changing the paradigm with the purpose of fostering love, which is His commandment, rather than competition, which is the commandment of the devil.

When I began playing basketball, I could not get anyone to pick me to play on their team in a game until I could run and dribble at the same time. Once I developed these skills, I began competing. Initially, I lost in competition, so I practiced to improve my skills because, on in my neighborhood, winners played, while losers had to get off of the court to let the next team play. Almost every competition has similar rules, as the function of competition is to produce winners and losers. Girls that compete in swimsuit competitions must have certain



physical dimensions, and those that most match the desired dimensions win the competition. The girls that lose will try to enhance their dimensions before the next competition, either by wearing padded clothes, having surgery, or positioning their body parts to make them appear to have dimensions similar to those of the winners.

Competition almost inevitably arises whenever people are in the same place doing the same thing. Competition is not gender specific nor is it restricted to athletic or intellectual skills. People compete in everything from the way they look to the way that they do anything that they do.

The disciples are competing with one another because they are all doing the same thing, training to be preachers of the gospel, and they are all in the same place, following Jesus. Jesus, however, tells them not to compete, but to love one another. If competition is a function of people being in the same place doing the same thing, how can the disciples avoid competition?

Well, it's obvious. Since competition is inevitable when people doing in the same thing in the same place, and the disciples are all doing the same thing, Jesus' plan must be that they will be doing it in different places, which is why Jesus told the disciples, in **Matthew 28:19-20**:

19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

In this lection, the admonition to love one another is placed directly after the admonition to avoid competition, because it is difficult for love and competition to coexist. One of the most destructive things to a marriage that a married couple can do is to compete with one another. God does not tell a man and woman married to one another to become a team, or to work together, but to become one. **Genesis 2:24** says:

24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

The disciples dispute is about which of them is the greatest. The disciples exhibited the behavior that occurs when people work together or become a team; arguments ensue between members of a team because teams have stars. The star is the person with most desirable role, and if the team has a star, other members of the team will eventually want to be the star, which creates competition within the team.

But when two become one, neither of them is the star, just as when you use your two legs to walk, neither of them is the star, but they are interdependent upon one another to get the job done.

My mother was a beautician. When I was five years old, she sold her interest in the beauty shop that she owned so that she could be at home full time to take care of my two brothers and me. She had a few loyal customers whose



hair she did in the basement and she took up catering parties for people because she was a great cook, but her predominant job was to be our mother. It would never have dawned on me, or anyone else, to imply that she didn't work because she did not have an office and she didn't leave home to go downtown. Her work was to take care of me, my two brothers and my Dad, and her contribution to our well-being was just as great as that of my Dad, who worked two jobs so that she could be at home to take care of us.

My son and I were discussing his future family plans a few days ago, and I told him, "The best thing that you could do to make your life better is to construct a family in which your wife's major responsibility is to take care of you and your children as opposed to working outside of your home. When both you and your wife are in the workforce, you are two people doing the same thing living in the same place. That inevitably creates competition, and the last thing that you want when you come home from work after having competed all day is more competition."

"Think about it this way", I told him, "Once you get married, each day you have three things to do. First of all, you will have to work to support your family. Secondly, you will have to meet the emotional needs of your wife. Thirdly, you will have to meet the emotional needs of your children.

"Your wife will also have three things to do. She will have to take care of your home. She will also have to take care of your emotional needs. In addition, she will have to take care of the unique emotional needs of your children, and remember, that when your children are growing up, their emotional needs cannot be scheduled, so she needs to be available to meet their needs when they have them, not when she has time.

"So each of you have three things to do every day, and your limiting factor is time. By limiting factor, I mean that time is the thing that you only have so much of and you can't get more of it.

"Of course, you have to prioritize your activities. But, understand what that means. We prioritize because we don't have enough resources, meaning time, to get everything done. Suppose I go to Wal-Mart to buy milk and eggs. Which one do I have to get first? It doesn't make any difference, because Wal-Mart has both of them, and Wal-Mart is open twenty-four hours, so I can get each of them anytime. Suppose, however, that your mother wants a certain supplement along with the milk and eggs, and they only sell it at the Health Food store, which is closing for the day in an hour. I will need to prioritize, to get the supplement first, because the Health Food store is closing and Wal-Mart is not, and my limiting factor is time.

"Now, you want your wife to take care of her three responsibilities, your house, your children and you, and her limiting factor is time. Now, add a job outside of the home to her schedule. What will this job require? Time. Since she can't get more time, she will have to prioritize to try to get everything done. Since



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she has four things to get done, the house, the children, you, and now the job, guess which one won't get done if she doesn't have enough time? She has to go to work to keep the job. She has to take care of the children, because they're immature, and can't take care of themselves. She's not going to want to live in a messy house. That only leaves one thing to cut back on, and that is you.

"When you get prioritized down, you will become dissatisfied, and what will happen when you try to discuss your dissatisfaction with your wife? The discussion will become competitive, because competition inevitably arises when people are in the same place doing the same thing, and you are two people living in the same place doing the same thing. Why is your job more important than hers? Why can't you do her job and do more around the house, since she's doing your job working? Which of you is the star? And it is interesting that when wives compete with their husbands and when wives don't have time for their husbands, other women magically come along don't want to compete and do have time. Married men have affairs for one reason: there are so many women that want to have affairs with them. The other woman may not be as good as the wife, but a man that needs female affection may not care; a hungry man will eat out of a garbage can rather than starve to death.

"Did you know that, when you look at the numbers, the skyrocketing divorce rate in our country coincided with the influx of women into the workforce in the 1980s? Why? The limiting factor is always going to be time.

"So, son, pick a wife the same way that you would pick someone to be the vice-president of your company. You don't want someone to compete with you. You don't want someone that wants your job, but rather, you want someone that wants the job for which you are hiring. You want someone to be your wife, and the mother of your children, to take care of your house, your children and you, and to be available to meet emotional needs when you and your children have them. If you fall in love with a woman that wants to be the President of the United States, vote for her, but don't marry her. If you do, you'll have a President, not a wife, and you'll have someone to take care of the United States of America, but not you and your children and your house. Now don't misunderstand me; I'm not saying that women shouldn't have careers if they want them. I just want you to understand that if you marry a career woman, after the wedding, there is an excellent chance that you will still need a wife. "

Genesis 2:24 tells us:

24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

One of the most destructive things to marriage that a married couple can do is to compete with one another. God does not tell the man and the woman to become a team, or to work together, but rather, to become one with one another. Jesus tells the disciples, in **Luke 22:24-27** and **John 13:34-35**:



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“The kings of the nations lord it over their subjects, and those in authority are called benefactors. But it isn’t to be that way among you. The greatest among you must become like the youngest, and your leader must become a servant. For who is greater: the one who reclines at the table to eat, or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.

“I am giving you a new commandment: you must love each other. Love each other just as I have loved you. Everyone will know you are My disciples if you love each other.”

Ephesians 5:22 says:

22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

Wives should always submit their husbands. This is because men register their wives submission as love, and a lack of submission as a lack of love. If my wife ever argued with me, not that she ever does since she’s perfect; I would not register it as it as love, but as being competitive. Submission is how women tell men that they love them; you may think that there are other ways, but using other ways to tell men that you love them is like saying ‘I love you’ in Lithuanian. You may be saying “I love you”, but the man will never know it unless you say it in a language that he understands.

Now, men speak straightforwardly to make it easier for women to submit to their requests. But I have found that generally, when I ask my wife a direct question, she does not give me a direct answer. The other day she was working on a project, and I asked her if she needed my help. Rather than answer my question straightforwardly with a yes or no, she told me the details of what she was doing. So I asked her again, and she gave me some more verbiage about the situation. Now, there is a reason for that. **Ephesians 5:25** says:

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

Husbands are not instructed to submit to their wives, but to love them. My wife didn’t tell me what she wanted because wives don’t register men’s actions as love when men follow their instructions; wives register men’s actions as love when men take the time and the concentration to interpret obscure hints to figure out what their wives want. My wife feels if I take the time to figure out what she wants from the hints that she drops and act accordingly, I love her. That is also why wives occasionally change their desires without warning; they are checking to see if their husbands are still paying attention. Since man is the leader, our text says that he must serve his wife by figuring out that which she wants and giving it to her. Brothers, it does no good to complain that you can’t understand what your wife is saying; she wants you to take the time to read the clues that she is giving you and figure it out.

God purposely did not give men and women the same brain and different genitals, as the unisex crowd would have us think, but God made us to think



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differently. Two people doing the same thing in the same place will inevitably compete, and God does not want us to compete with one another, so God gives us different abilities and different roles so that we can become one and love one another.

We love Jesus because He has different abilities than we, and He plays a different role on God's program than we do. In the great marriage of heaven, Jesus is the husband, and the church is the bride of Christ. Jesus is the head of the church and the Savior of the body.

Jesus Christ died on the Cross, giving Himself for us. We didn't ask Jesus to save us by His sacrifice, but He spent the time to figure out what we needed to be saved and, like a good husband, Jesus gave us, His Bride the Church, that which He knew that we needed.

In the Revelation of the End Times that he received from God, John, the beloved disciple, tells us, in **Revelation 7:9-14:**

9 After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, [Jesus Christ] clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands,

10 and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

13 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?"

14 And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Jesus Christ is the Lamb, and His Blood shed on the Cross of Calvary is that which makes us, as His Church, His Bride, eligible to sit before Him. And Jesus gives His Bride an instruction to which He wishes Her to submit in **John 13:34-35:**

"I am giving you a new commandment: you must love each other. Love each other just as I have loved you. Everyone will know you are My disciples if you love each other."

John, the beloved disciple, tells us, in **1John 3:18:**

18 My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.

So let us not compete with one another, but let us love one another as He has loved us.

Pastor Darryl R. Curtis
Family Life Baptist Church