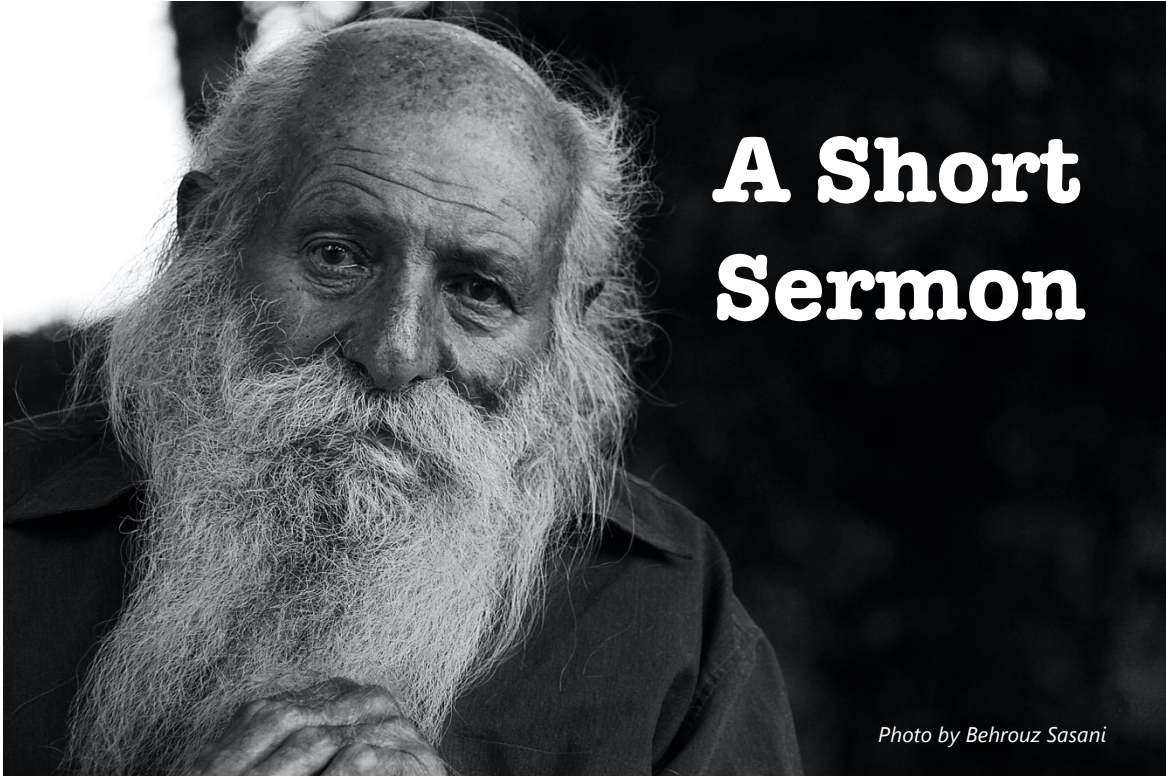


# Welcome to “J-Talk”

Sunnyside Road Church of Christ

September 25, 2022



## A Short Sermon

*Photo by Behrouz Sasani*

When I graduated, my mom gave me this wonderful advice that I have tried to honor in my preaching ever since. She looked at me and said, “Son, no one ever complained about a short sermon.” That must be true, because the greatest sermon ever preached, the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5 - 7) only takes about 20 minutes to read out loud!

In his later life, it is said the Apostle John settled in Ephesus. There he ministered with a very, very busy congregation. One day, they asked John to preach. The old man with long white hair and a flowing white

beard tottered to the front, turned and said, “Little children, let us love one another.” (You might recall John wrote those very words in his first letter – 1 John 3:11, 23; 4:7, 11, 12.) Then he sat down. This was shocking since, in those days, sermons could go on for hour after hour. (Once the Apostle Paul preached all night! Acts 20)

The next week the preacher invited John to speak again, and the apostle preached the very same sermon: “Little children, let us love one another.” The people mumbled a bit, but John sat down.

On the third week, they invited John to speak yet again, and the very same thing happened. The apostle stood up and said, “Little Children, let us love one another.” The hapless preacher didn’t leave it at that this time but prompted the old apostle. “John, you were there with Jesus. You heard so many great things. You were there at the Last Supper. You stood at the foot of the cross. Don’t you have anything else to tell the congregation?”

With a twinkle in his eye, John looked over the congregation and answered, “If you loved one another, I wouldn’t have to say anything else!”

This story doesn’t come from the Bible. Instead, it is a reported incident from early Church history,

but the point is certainly true. Do we truly love one another? How would we know if that is so?

I would like to think, if you are visiting with us, you could feel the love in this place by the warm reception you’ve received. You can see it in our sincere smiles. You might have noticed; we tend to hug each other rather than just shake hands. That’s because we really do care about each other – and we’d like to share that same love with you.

Now I can’t guarantee the sermon will be as short as my namesake’s, but the message will be the same: “Little children, let us love one another!”

*Blessings,*

