

# The Goal of our Instruction

by Alan Martin

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of loving others with a pure heart, good conscience, and genuine faith, as outlined in 1 Timothy 1:3-5. It delves into the goal of placing supreme value on one another, reflecting God's love, and highlights the need to eradicate hypocrisy and critical attitudes. The message stresses the significance of living in love, kindness, and forgiveness, as demonstrated in Colossians 3:12, and the command to love one another as God loves us, as seen in Romans 13:8-10. The sermon challenges listeners to grasp the depth of Christ's love and to abide in love to fulfill the law and reflect God's character.*

**Scripture:** 1 Timothy 1:3, Colossians 3:12, Romans 13:8, 1 John 4:7, 2 Corinthians 5:14

**Topics:** "Love", "Genuine Faith"

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## Description

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## Transcript

First Timothy, first verse, first chapter, just the first couple of verses. First Timothy chapter 1. I'll start in verse 3. First Timothy chapter 1 verse 3. As I exhorted you when going to Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus so that you may command certain ones not to teach different doctrines, nor to pay attention to the things being said and endless genealogies which give rise to mere speculations, rather than to furthering the stewardship from God which is by faith. But the goal of our command is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and an unhypocritical faith.

Some strength of these things have turned aside to fruitless discussions. Let's focus our attention this morning on the goal of this command is love from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a faith without hypocrisy. Picture it as the goal because once we come to the to the end of the goal, we reach the stage where we are complete in love, everything will be as God desires.

That's the goal. That's where we're going. And to have a pure heart, in other words, if there's anything in any of our hearts other than the love of God for someone, it's not pure yet.

You're not at the goal yet. If you have an attitude here towards someone else here, you're not at that goal yet. The goal is for our heart to be pure love like God loves us.

To love one another like God loves us. And a good conscience. A good conscience would be you know you haven't said anything about anyone else here, you're not harboring an attitude towards anyone else here, you don't have anything to be ashamed about.

Before God, your conscience is clear. You have nothing towards anybody here but pure love. The love of God.

And it's unhypocritical. You're not putting on a mask. I know we all know how to be polite, don't we? Hi, how are you doing? Wearing our mask, but we really don't feel that way.

We don't feel the love of God towards it. We can do that. So our goal is none of that.

No hypocritical, we're just going to be nice even though we don't like each other. None of that. A clear conscience and nothing in our heart but the love of God.

That's the goal. Let's look with turn with me to Colossians chapter 2. You know we get dressed for church. Most of us get dressed for church.

Did you get dressed for church today? No. Okay, you got dressed for work because you're going to work afterwards probably. We have a habit of taking off the clothes we wore yesterday or the clothes we might wear to work sometimes if we're not going to work and dressing ourselves in the church.

Listen to this passage in Colossians chapter 3 verse 12. So as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion. Put on is the Greek word for put these clothes on.

This is what you want to get dressed for church. Here's how to get dressed. Put on compassion, a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, bearing with one another and graciously forgiving each other.

Whoever has a complaint against anyone, just as the Lord graciously forgave you, so you should also and above all these things, above the compassion you're putting on, above the kindness, above humility, above gentleness, and above patience, above all of that, put on love which is the bond of perfection. Love is the way to attain perfection in the eyes of God. In the Greek language, perfection means this.

It means to be able to function the way something was designed. So in our sense, in the spiritual sense, being perfect is living as God intended for us to live. Being everything that God desires us to be.

Love is the key to achieving the goal which is going to be made perfect through love. Love is the bond of perfection. And let's look at this a little bit further.

If you will, if you have your Bible still, turn to Romans chapter 13. I want to get to a place where we define love perhaps in a way that you have not heard it. The idea of it is still fairly new to me.

So some of you may be like myself and this may be new to you. Romans chapter 13. I'm going to start with verse 8. Romans chapter 13.

Verse 8. Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. There's another one of those fulfillment. Complete.

Doing it as God intended. If you are loving your neighbor, you will be fulfilling what God desires. Now the question is, what is this love? Because some of us think love is some kind of feeling and you wonder why.

I don't have any feelings for this person. I don't even know them. So it's probably not a feeling.

We can't, we don't want to get our definition of love from the world. The Greek word that's written or translated love here is the Greek word agape or in the verb it's agapao. I'm gonna, I'm gonna get this definition.

To place supreme value upon. To place supreme value upon. So let's read verse 8 again with that understanding.

Owe nothing to anyone except to place supreme value upon one another. For he who places supreme value upon his neighbor has fulfilled the law. Verse 9 for this, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not covet.

If there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, you shall place supreme value upon your neighbor like you place supreme value upon yourself. That's the key. Placing supreme value.

Because look at what, verse 10, love. If you place supreme value on someone, you do them no evil. Not a word, not an unkind word will come out of your mouth about them.

Not an unkind thought will be entertained in your head about them. If you love, in other words, if you place the same kind of value upon others that God does, nothing unkind, nothing evil, nothing harmful will come from you towards them. The entire law of God will be fulfilled because you value them in the way God values them.

You see that? To see it a little bit clearer, let's go to 1st John. Turn with me to 1st John chapter 2. 1st John chapter 2. Let's start in verse 7. 1st John chapter 2 verse 7. Beloved, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning. What do you think the old commandment that they had from the beginning was? Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength, and love your neighbor as yourself.

That's the old commandment you had from the beginning. But verse 8, on the other hand, I am writing a new commandment to you which is true in him and in you because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. I believe the new commandment he's referring to is the same commandment that Jesus gave at the Last Supper.

A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another as I have loved you. Now let's put the word supreme value in. A new commandment I give unto you.

You place the same kind of supreme value upon one another that I place upon you. You value one another highly like I value you. See that's not about feeling is it? That's not the world's idea of feeling, of love.

Verse 10. Now let's see, it's verse 9. First John chapter 2 verse 9. The one who says he is in the light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness till now. Now being in the light is a condition of you're in God.

You're in the presence of God. You are with God. You are walking in the light as God is in the light.

If you're claiming that you have some relationship with God and you hate your brother, you're in the dark. You are not in the light. You are not with God.

God is not with you. But what is this word hate? I don't think there's a single person here that thinks they hate anyone else here. I wouldn't think so.

But I don't think you understand the biblical word here, *miseo*. It's a word of comparison and it is the opposite of *agapao*, to place supreme value upon. So what would the opposite of placing supreme value upon be? To place a lesser value than you.

Where you're more important than them. How you feel is more important than them. What you think is more important than them.

What you want is more important to them. The biblical idea of this translated hate is to value less rather than place supreme value. So now let's look at that scripture again, verse 9, in the light of death.

The one who says that he's in the light, he's in the presence of God, because God is light, and yet you're placing lesser value on others? No, no. You're in the darkness. You're in the dark.

You're not in the light. Verse 10, the one who loves his brother, the one placing supreme value upon his brother, he abides in the light and there is no cause for stumbling in him. What do you think he means by that? The one who's in God's presence, who's placing supreme value upon every other person, there's no cause for stumbling in them.

And I see something in this. You know why we make other people stumble? Because we value them less than we value ourselves. And as long as you have that in your heart, when you value them less, you look down on them, you're gonna make them stumble.

You're gonna be critical. You're gonna give your opinion. You're gonna show them your countenance.

Even if you don't say anything, you're gonna give them that look. You're gonna avoid them. You're not gonna honor them.

You're not gonna pray for them as much, because the real key is you don't esteem them in your heart. You don't value them. You're not living in love.

You're not abiding in the love of God. You may know about it, but that's a danger. There's a danger about knowing about God and not knowing Him.

A person who's placing a lesser value on his brother is in the darkness, and he walks in the darkness, and he doesn't know where he's going. You know where the darkness is? The darkness is in his own mind. He can't see the person as God sees them.

You know what he sees? He sees their faults, and he thinks he sees accurately. He sees what they're doing, and he's critical, and he thinks less of them, and he's darkened in his own understanding, because he's not seeing them with the eyes of God. He doesn't have the heart of God.

He's just seeing with his natural eyes, and he goes in the dark, and he's not even aware that he's not seeing. It's a pretty scary condition to be in. If you're still at First John, and I hope you are, turn over to chapter 4. It's probably going to be on the other page.

First John, chapter 4, verse 7. First John 4, 7. Beloved, let us love one another. Let's place our definition there. Beloved, let us place supreme value upon one another, because supreme value comes from God.

That's how God looks at his creation. God places supreme value upon people. Love is from God, and everyone who is placing supreme value on others is born of God, and he knows God.

The person not placing supreme value upon others does not know God. Now, is it possible to know a lot of things and not know God? The Pharisees and the Sadducees knew the Bible better than any of us, and Jesus over and over said to them, you don't know the Father. You don't know me, and you don't know the Father.

Why? Because the Pharisees had this attitude. You remember Jesus said about them, they were like the man who stood in the temple praying, thank you God that I am not like these other lowlifes. That's kind of an exaggeration, but they thought so highly of themselves that they looked down on others.

So although they knew a lot of scripture, although they knew a lot of information, they did not know God, because they didn't place the same kind of value upon others that he did. And there's a danger. There's a danger about knowledge, and Paul mentioned this in 1 Corinthians chapter 8. The danger of knowledge is this, that knowledge does something.

What does it do? Puffs up. And if you puff up this big, big balloon that's tied to a gondola with ropes, you puff it up enough, what does it do? It rises, right? And of course, if it rises, then what do you do? How do you see others? Well, as you go higher, what's your view of others? You have to look down on them. And the higher we think of ourselves, the more we look down on the other poor ignorant people who don't know their Bible and don't know scripture and don't know this and don't know that.

And the real problem is we think so high of ourselves, we don't even see we're looking down on others. Knowledge puffs up. Love, placing supreme value upon others, builds up, because love doesn't look down on others.

And that's not saying love approves of everything they do. The Bible says love must be sincere. We hate what is evil.

We cling to what is good, but we, love does no wrong to his neighbor. Love places such supreme value upon others that it, that love edifies. No one verse, I'm gonna read verse 11, 1st John 4, 11.

Beloved, if God so, well, I'm gonna back up to verse 10. Let me read verse 10 of 1st John 4, 10. And this is love.

Not that we loved God, but that he loved us. Let's place the definition there. This is love.

Not that we place the supreme value upon God. No. God placed supreme value upon us.

So much so, he valued us so much that he sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God placed such supreme value upon us, we ought also to place such supreme value upon others. And let me ask you this question.

Everyone, would you look at me? I don't want anybody going to sleep on me. All right. When did God demonstrate the supreme value he placed upon us? After we became a Christian or before? Before.

While we were still sinners. While we were ignorant. Now think about this.

Some of us have become Christians and we haven't even learned that we're not loving others the way God has loved us. Yes. Because he placed enough value upon us while we were still sinners that he sent his son to die for us and redeem us.

And if that's the way that God placed value upon us, this is the way we're to place value upon each other. And that means regardless of who it is that walks through that door or that door, it does not matter. Wherever they sit in this pew, regardless of who they are and what they have done, I and we are to place the same kind of value upon them that God placed upon us.

Amen. And we are not to look down upon them. We are not to think less of them.

Because if we do, I'll say this, if we do, in that moment, we do not know God. Yes. Because God placed so much value upon the world that he sent his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him would not perish but have everlasting life.

And that's what God has called us to do. That's how we are to relate to one another. We are to place the same kind of value on each other that God places upon us.

And this is what Jesus said. You want to, let's remind ourselves of it. Turn with me to Matthew chapter 5. Matthew chapter 5. The end of the chapter there.

I'll start in verse 43, Matthew 5, 43. You have heard that it was said, you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. Now that in the Old Testament, that was kind of one of the things that the people of the Old Testament kind of live by that law.

They place supreme value upon their neighbor. But those that weren't Israelites, they thought less of. And that was natural then, but Jesus overrode that.

You heard that's the way it was. And so I want to say this for us Republicans and Democrats and Libertarians, whoever you are here, no longer think that way. You love everyone in either party the same way.

You respect everyone in either party to the same degree. You place the same value on either party and speaking evil of someone else because they're on the other side just shows you're still living in the ignorance of the Old Testament. You're not living in the grace of Christ.

We've been caught up in the world and in the world's rhetoric, in the world's divisiveness, in the contention that's in this society. And somehow we are blind. We don't see it because it's so normal to have your strong opinions about them and those people.

And we even, even comes out of our mouth, those idiots, those fools, those, it just shows out of the overflow of the heart. The mouth speaks and none of those words should ever be in our mouth. You know why? Jesus said the person who calls someone else a fool is in danger of hell fire because he's devaluing someone God sent his son to save.

The word stupid, fool, idiot have no place in the mouth of a Christian about anybody, period. That's the way the world talks and thinks. It is not to be our communication at all, ever.

In home or here, it's not even to be a conversation in your head, not while you're driving your car, not while you're watching TV, nowhere, not at any time. We value others in the way the Lord values us. Jesus goes on to say, that's what you've heard it said.

But he, she says, but I say to you, you place supreme value upon your enemies. You love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you that you may be sons of your father who is in heaven. For he causes his son to rise on the evil and the good and sins reign upon the righteous and the righteous and if you place supreme value only upon those who value you, what have you done? That's the way the world does.

They value those who value them. What have you done? If you only respect those who respect you, if you only, they have to be some kind of playing for you to really give them full respect. That's nothing.

It's not spiritual. You don't know God. That's not Jesus.

Even the tax collectors, they do that. And if you greet only your brothers, in other words, you know, you greet them because somehow you consider them your equal. These are my peers, not those over there.

What is that? Sinners do that with sinners, don't they? Gentiles do that. And then he says, therefore, you be perfect. And I don't mind saying that.

I'm saying those sitting before me, you be perfect. You be perfect in your thoughts. You be perfect in your speech.

And you be perfect like God is perfect. You place the same value upon others that God does. And don't fall less than that.

No unwholesome speech out of your mouth, no arrogance, no pride, no being puffed up, no critical spirits. You be just as considerate and loving and caring about others as God is. That's exactly what the Lord Jesus said, right? That's exactly what he says.

And I do not understand how anyone in church leadership has ever allowed it to be any other way. And so I can say this as your pastor. I don't care how long your habit has been of being critical and running your mouth about other people.

You stop it now. And you never speak that way again. You've been a Christian already long enough.

You don't need any more time. What you need is discipline. You need someone to bend you over their knee and give you a spanking.

There is no place for that in a Christian's life at all. It never should have been allowed. And I don't want to answer to God for not just speaking that truth to us.

And this is where we need to come together. This is, that's why I did say, remember, I did say the goal of this command. Okay, there's a goal.

It may be a process for us to get there. But the goal of this command is this kind of placing supreme value on one another. Because Jesus said this by this, by you placing supreme value upon each other in the same way I place supreme value upon you.

That's how the world is going to know you're my disciples. That's, that's the identifying mark. And that's why that's what that's what we need to work together for.

There needs to be a solid commitment to we all help each other. None of us lends an ear anytime someone is put is demeaning someone else. We're talking down about them or speaking about them and you can tell they're not, that's not a high value placed upon that person.

We have to root it out from among us. There can be no place for that in our midst. This is what our Lord said.

How in the world do you do that? If you've been used to running at the mouth and you say, well, I just say stupid because it is. I just call him a fool because that's the way he's acting. And somehow you have it connected to know you're blind.

You're blind. That's not right. If God treated you the way you deserve, where would you be? Right? You don't want to treat others the way they deserve.

That's not what God did to you. Second Corinthians chapter five. How do we do this? Paul gives us all gives us this answer.

Second Corinthians chapter five verse 14 for the love of Christ controls us. Having concluded this one died for all, therefore all died. Remember what the definition of love is to place supreme value upon for the value that Jesus Christ placed upon us.

Everyone, actually, that is what controls us because Jesus Christ valued everyone so much. What did he do? He died for them. And regardless of what some other person is doing or not doing, saying or not saying, regardless whether they're a Republican or a Democrat or pro-choice or pro-life or pro-second amendment or anti-second, whatever.

Whatever they are, what should control the way we think, what should control the way we speak is Jesus Christ died for this person. And he died so that that person could be reconciled to the father and God forbid that some attitude or something, something less than that, less than God's love for them would come out of us and cause someone else to stumble. Because we devalue them because there are those who at one time were in a church and they're not in a church.

And you know why? Because someone there devalued them, caused them to stumble. Pretty scary. Jesus said it's inevitable that stumbling blocks should come, but woe to the man through whom they come.

It'd be better for a millstone to be hung around his neck and cast into the sea, drowned in the sea, than even cause a little one to stumble. But remember what we read in 1 John. If a person is living in love and living in God, they're genuinely esteeming others, placing the same kind of value upon others that God has placed upon them.

There's nothing in them that will make that person stumble. Because love, that kind of love does no harm to his neighbor. If I value you so much, if I value you even if I see you doing something that's not wise, I'm

going to be very careful how I speak to you about that, aren't I? I'm going to be very careful.

Because I value you. And I care about you. And I'm not just going to spout my own irritation.

I'm not going to spout my own frustration. I'm going to treat you as God has treated me. This is the law of the prophets.

If we were to live this way, the entire law of God would be fulfilled. So, can we live this way? Paul goes on to say, therefore from now on we recognize no one according to the flesh. You know what recognizing others according to the flesh is? That means we're relating to others just according to our own natural human frailties.

And if you squeeze the toothpaste in the middle and not from the end, buddy, come on, what kind of idiot are you? Who taught you? That's a silly example, but you know what I mean? The flesh, out of the flesh is division, strife, conceit, pride, envy, confusion, division. When we know people according to the flesh, the things that they need grace and mercy and help with, bring irritation and frustration and aggression out of us, rather than the love of God. So Paul says, from now on, we don't know anyone according to the flesh.

We know them according to the Spirit. And here's the key to that. In Ephesians chapter 3, this is why Paul prayed what I pray for all of us, and I pray for me first.

Me first and you with me. And here's what Paul prayed. I pray that out of God's glorious riches, we may be strengthened with power through His Spirit in our inner man.

So that Jesus Christ can dwell in our hearts through faith. And we, with Jesus Christ dwelling in our hearts through faith and being empowered by the Holy Spirit, will become rooted and established in love. This ability to place supreme value upon everyone.

And we become rooted and established in this. We will have power together with all the saints to be able to grasp just how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ. And this is where we miss it.

This is where we miss it. Every single one of us wants to know how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ for me. I'm not talking about that.

I'm talking about discovering how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ for others. Where I can place supreme value upon everyone like God does. I can see them like God sees them.

I can speak like God speaks. I can bear with them like God bears with them. I can be kind as God is kind.

I can be merciful as God is merciful. Because I am beginning to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is His love for others. Even me.

Even me. And what happens when you're able to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge? You're filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. All the fullness.

When you and I are filled to the measure of all the fullness of God, let's just say He fills the tube and puts the lid on it. Filled to the measure of the fullness of God. So we have this tube and it's filled to the fullness of God.

So what happens if you take this tube and you take the lid off and you squeeze it suddenly? What comes out? What comes out if you squeeze the tube all of a sudden? The fullness of God comes out. What if you throw it on the ground and stomp on it? What comes out? The fullness of God comes out. You see, when you and I are filled to the measure of all the fullness of God, the flesh is not what comes out.

The spirit is what comes out. We stop reacting in our old manner. And we start loving like God is love.

I mentioned this before. I hope you'll hear it again. God is love.

So it's natural for Him. So when you are filled with the fullness of God, you're being filled with love. The love of God is being shed abroad in your hearts.

And you know what love is? You know, I mean, most of us know 1 Corinthians 13. What is the first thing love is? Love is patience. Love is.

Then ask yourself, why are we impatient with others if love is patience? Because we are not filled to the measure of the fullness of God. We lack love because love is patience. So you're impatient with others.

What should you be before God? God, forgive me. Fill me with your love. I have fallen short.

I am not loving them as you are. God is love. God, love is patience.

God is patience. Love is kindness. So how does love respond? With kindness.

Are you having a difficult time being kind to others? What you lack is love. Because love is kind. What if most of the time we do well, but now and then we just, I can't stand it anymore.

I am, we use those terms, I'm fed up. I am, I'm done. I've had it up to here.

Oh boy, that's a whole lot in your tiny little frame. You suffered so much. You know, we, we, we, we, we, we try to make ourselves so noble, you know, I finally can't take it anymore.

That's what we kind of tell ourselves. But you know what love does? Love bears all things. Love believes all things.

Love hopes all things. Love endures all things. Love never fails.

So if I'm full of the fullness of the love of God, if I have, if, if by Christ willing in me, by being strengthened with power to the Holy Spirit, and I become rooted and established in how much God loves everyone, it doesn't matter what they do. I'll bear it. I'll believe it.

I'll endure it. I'll hope it'll never fail. But love is what will come out of me.

That's called Christ in us. This is called living by the Holy Spirit. This is called, though we are just a common earthly vessel, we have a power, the all surpassing power is in us.

Amen. Power to love others like God loves us. Yes, that's it.

That's the goal. That's our goal. So we meet together, we work together, and I'm, there are some of us here that may not be perfect yet.

Okay, a few, maybe just a few. Maybe me and a few others. Okay.

In case we have difficulty with one another, and you might this week, you may have it today, you may have had it on the way here, I don't know, you may. You may have difficulty with each other. Once again, it manifests itself in.

The first thing you'll recognize, if you're not careful, is that you will think, and if you're not careful, you will speak in a way that is less than placing supreme value upon each other. And what is it revealing? What is it revealing to us? That we are not full of the love of God. So what do we need to do? We don't need to be condemned.

We need to simply cry out. Let's draw near the throne of grace and receive mercy. And what do we find at the throne of grace when we receive mercy? What do we find there? Grace to help us in time of need.

And what do we need in a time of need when we're in that time when we're failing to be as God is towards other? We need His power. We need His Spirit. We need His love shed abroad in our hearts, clearing out the darkness.

And we need it till we are being towards others exactly like God is being towards us. That's the goal. And that's where I want us to help each other meet.

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