

Do Everything Out of Love

by Arno Stegen

Everything we do must be done in love, and if we do it out of love, then no one needs to tell us to do it.

Duration: 47:08

Scripture: Matthew 22:39, John 13:34-35, Romans 13:10, 1 Corinthians 16:14, Galatians 5:22-23, 1 Peter 4:8, 1 John 4:7

Topics: "Love"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of doing everything out of love, as God himself is love. He highlights that without God, our actions are irrelevant. The preacher encourages the congregation to walk in love, just as Christ did, and to have the same love that He had. The sermon also addresses the tests of love, such as being kind, not being jealous, not bragging or being arrogant, and not seeking one's own interests. The preacher reminds the listeners that love does not keep a record of wrongs and encourages them to live a life that is a sweet aroma to God and a blessing to others.

Transcript

Lord, please grant that this which I will share, that it will bring life to us. If you don't breathe life into it, Lord, it will be dead. So, Lord, please add your blessing.

Give us all an ear to hear. Amen, amen. 1 Corinthians 16 and verse 14 Let all that you do be done in love.

All that you do, not some of it, not that which you choose, but all that we do should do in love. Now, we just need to look through our lives and see what we are busy with, and have been busy with, and will be busy with. And the Lord says, everything we do, we must do in love.

Love makes such a big difference in our lives. Love is like the fuel that keeps us going. A Christian without love is like a car without petrol.

It could be the most beautiful car, but without love, it's got no fuel in it. It will get nowhere. It will only move when someone pushes it.

And so are so many Christians. Are the most beautiful Christians. And my, they have so much knowledge of everything that should be done and has to be done.

But they are always expecting everyone else to do it. There is no fuel in that Christian's life. There is no fire.

There is no drive. There is no progress unless you push Him. And when you push Him, He will go as far as you push Him.

And when you put Him down, or stop pushing, that's where He will be next time when you look for Him. He is like a Christian that does not know that overflowing life. There is no freshness, no vitality.

He is just like dead wood. No growth. But once you put petrol into that car, it can fire up and it goes on its own steam.

In fact, it's not its own steam, but that fuel, that godly fuel. The love of God that creates that life. And it's that love that makes a difference in our lives.

That love that we have in the first place towards God. Like God's word says, when someone asks the Lord, what is the greatest commandment? We all know it, don't we? We shall love the Lord our God with all our heart, all our strength, our soul, everything we have. God knows that's the first thing we need as Christians.

We must have that love to Him. And if we don't have it, then everything else becomes just the form of godliness and there is no power, there is no life. But it's that love that brings life to being a Christian.

And that's why the Lord says, the first thing you must do for me is love me with all your heart. Dear friend, do you love the Lord with all your heart? The question is not whether you're serving Him, whether you're working day and night for Him, or actually giving your very life for Him. The question is whether you love Him.

Because we like those people who will get to heaven one day. And when the Lord challenges us about our relationship to Him, towards Him, like those people who said, the one said, Lord, I've done this in your name, I've done that in your name, and what haven't I done for you, Lord? And that's so typical of us when the Lord challenges us, but Lord, just look what I've done for you and what I'm doing for you. But all that we do without God's love and fire burning in our hearts, and us doing it out of love towards Him, it just becomes a noise that we make.

So everything we do, we must do in love. And if we do it out of love and in love, then no one needs to tell us to do it. We do what we do for the Lord out of love, then that life will come from itself.

When that love flows, then as that water flows through the desert, it will bring life to the surroundings and everything will turn into a garden. So often we try and change the desert into a garden. We plant things and maybe they're green when we plant them, when we get there a week or two later, it's dead.

So we try and do things for the Lord even, but it doesn't work. But when that love flows towards the Lord in our hearts, and we start doing things because of this burning love for the Lord, then those gardens will come because of that living water that's flowing. And then we won't just love God, but it spills over to our fellow men as well.

And as it says in Galatians 5 verse 13, that we will then serve each other in love. And when that love is there, it becomes easy to serve my brother. In the first place, it'll be a wonderful experience to be able to serve the Lord.

I'll do the Lord's work willingly and with great joy because I love him. Because it's easy that with time, serving the Lord can become a tiresome thing. We do it, but it becomes a burden.

And that's the great risk, is that we lose the first love. When we first met the Lord, that love was burning. Nothing was a burden.

Nothing was too much. It was a joy to answer to God's call when he needed something from us. But is it still like that? Or has it become a burden to me? Ah, not again.

Don't people see how tired I am? Surely the Lord should understand as well that one has one's limits. Woe to us if we lose that first love towards the Lord as we serve him. Because then we will no longer be able to serve even the others because of our love.

In fact, we'll forget the fact that the Lord has called us to serve others. Remember how in the beginning you couldn't do enough for the other Christians? You happily served others. But maybe with time it's not so easy anymore to always have to serve others.

Because I've served them for 10, for 20 years. Isn't it about time they also started doing just a little bit from their side as well? We forget that the Lord has called us to be servants and he showed us, he was the best example how one should do it. He even served his disciples, washed their feet, scooped at them and told them that they were not his servants.

Are we still servants? It's easy if there's love. But if there's no love, it's difficult to serve somebody. Even if you want to be a missionary, maybe you want to go to Central Africa, wherever, it's tough there.

It's not easy. One thinks of men of God like Stud and other missionaries who went out there, who gave their lives for it. There had to be love in the heart.

You cannot be God's servant unless you have his love in your heart, towards him and towards your fellow man, that you have a love for those lost souls. Otherwise, you'll get tired very quickly. We'll serve them for a while and maybe they don't repent as quickly as you thought they would.

And you think, no, God is not with them. I'm leaving now. But if there's love, you will also have endurance and perseverance, patience.

May God give us his love. And that it is like in Ephesians chapter five. Therefore, be imitators of God as beloved children and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you.

We should love as Christ loved us. That's quite a high standard of love, the highest there is. And God says, walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

Chapter five, verse one and two. So if we serve God and our fellow man with that godly love, then we become a fragrant aroma, a sweet aroma to the Lord. If we do something without love, it doesn't have a good aroma.

In fact, it leaves a bitter taste. Because if you do something for somebody and you don't do it in God's love, you're actually doing it because you're expecting something back. And that leaves a horrible taste.

God says when we do something for someone, we mustn't expect anything back. He says not even a thank you. But if you do something for someone and you're expecting him to say thank you, and you're quite surprised if he doesn't say thank you, you haven't done it in love.

You've done it for yourself. So we need to have God's love as we serve him. And the Lord says that when people see your love one for another, then they will realize that you are my disciples.

Are you a true disciple of the Lord? People will realize it when they see that you love your brother and your sister with God's love. And love covers a multitude of sins. Can we say we've got love when we're always just noticing what our brother and our sister is doing wrong? And oh my, when someone has no love, such a person only sees the wrong that the others are doing.

He only sees the injustices he's suffering. He's the most persecuted person on earth. Everyone's working against him.

They're just trying to destroy me. No one loves me. That's not the question.

The question is, do we have, do you have God's love in your heart? Now how do I know whether I've got God's love in my heart? Well, there are different ways of testing it. But before we go to that, let me just remind you that God himself is love. So when we do something, God says it must be born out of love.

It must be done in love, born in love, born out of love. In other words, born out of God. Dear brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers, dear children, whatever we do, we need to make sure that what we do is born out of God.

Whatever we do that's not born out of God is irrelevant before God. Without God, we can do nothing. Do something and God's not in it.

It's nothing. In the light of eternity, on judgment day, that will be worthless. So it's vital that what we do, that we make sure God is in it.

Even when I say something, that I make sure God is in it. Otherwise it becomes just idle chatter. If love is not in it, if God is not in it, it's worthless.

In first Corinthians 13, it says if you do something and there's not love in it, it just becomes like making a noise when you're hitting a piece of tin. And it just makes a noise and it can be quite annoying to certain people when you do that. So how do I know whether I've got love? First Corinthians 13 from verse 4, you go home and you do a bit of a bible study, but I'll just go through it quickly.

And the frightening thing is the bible even says, even if you do things for the Lord, you even do things for the poor. If there's no love, and if I do it but here do not have love, it profits me nothing. Love is patient.

Do we have patience when things don't go our way? But someone does something which I thought he should have done differently. Do I have patience? There already is the first test whether I have love. Love is kind.

Are we kind? Blessed are the meek, as we've heard these days. And love is not jealous. Love is not jealous.

And how easy it is to be jealous. When someone has got shoes that I haven't got, someone's got a car that I haven't got, do I have the love to bless them? If God blesses him, then I want to bless him too. Or am I jealous? I can even be jealous in church.

Why can so and so lead the singing? I could do it better. Why does so and so always get asked to do a certain thing? So and so always gets the privilege of doing that. Why don't I get asked for a change? And that usually goes together with pride.

It's because we think we could do a better job. How stupid would we be if we've played in a football and a soccer team and the goalie gets jealous because the striker gets a goal in? It's unfair. It's not fair.

As members of the body, the hand says, what's the nose there for? It's not fair. Why can the nose always be so prominent or whatever else? We could use so many different examples. Love is not jealous.

Love does not brag and is not arrogant. We so like to be noticed. And if we think we're not getting the attention we deserve, we start bragging and we show off.

We try and show people, well, you know, I'm also here. Don't forget to notice me too. Love does not act unbecomingly.

It does not seek its own. It does not seek its own. And it's not provoked.

It does not take into account a wrong suffered. It does not take into account a wrong suffered. When we suffer, when someone does something wrong to us, then we sort of make a note of it.

And we say, okay, you owe me. It actually says it's a wrong suffered. In other words, you've suffered wrongly.

But if you take it into account and you hold it against that person, that's not love. And love does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things.

If you have love, you can bear so much more. If there's no love, the smallest thing can bowl you over. But if you have love, we can bear so much more.

It can bear all things. Believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. It seeks the best.

So we can test our love in many different ways. Remember when the Lord challenged Peter about love. Peter, do you love me? Do you love me more than these? Do you love me more than anything else? Said Peter, tend my sheep.

If you love me, that's what you'll do. You'll get involved in God's work. You'll have a love for God's work and you'll get involved somehow.

If we love the Lord, we'll also love His work. And the natural thing for us will be to be involved in one way or the other. And we'll be looking for an opportunity to do something for the Lord.

The Lord's work won't be at the bottom of my list of priorities. It will be at the top. See, that's the natural result of love for God.

And you might say, but how do I get this love for God? That love for God comes once we've realized He's come to set me free, to save me from my sins. The Lord said, he who much is forgiven, he will love much.

Well, you say, well, I haven't got big sins, so how can I then love much? You don't have big sins.

Have you never said an evil thing about your brother? And you say, and if you have, how can you say you haven't got a big sin? The Lord says, that's like murdering him. You're a murderer. You've got blood on your hands.

But our problem is we always think we don't have big sins. We like that wonderful Pharisee who prayed and said, Lord, thank you that I'm not like this terrible sinner here. Thank you that I'm such a good man.

Lord, you're actually so privileged to have me on your side. And in God's kingdom, we are irrelevant. But the one who realizes that he's a sinner before God, and that it's but by the grace of God alone that I am what I am.

Like John Bunyan, who said when he saw himself, he says, when I, John Bunyan, saw John Bunyan as God sees him, I did not say I was a sinner. I said that I was sin itself, sin from the top of my head to the soles of my feet. Have we ever seen ourselves like that? When you stand in God's holy presence and you see that you are lost.

And then you see Jesus, and then Jesus comes and says, my child, I'm prepared, I've given my life, I'll forgive you if you come to me. When you've had that experience, you'll know what love is. And then you'll say, Lord, I owe you my life.

What can I do for you? And that love will breathe life into your Christian walk. That love will make your being a Christian a sweet aroma to God and to your fellow man. You'll become a blessing to others.

When you do things, all things in love. And may God grant us that in this year that lies ahead of us. That we will walk in love as Christ did, and that we will do it, have the love that he had.

Then our Christian life will become glorious. Then for me to live as Christ. And it becomes a fountain of life from within.

A sweet aroma to God's glory. Let us close our eyes and pray. We thank you Lord for all we've heard today.

We've heard that it's the first Sunday of this year. We've heard much and benefited much when we hear about your love. Help us Lord that if we didn't have this love in our hearts, that we will seek it till we find it.

As we've heard Lord, we can do everything, even doing things for you. If we have no love, it's in vain. We can sing, we can preach, we can work for you, but if there's no love, we're just like a clanging cymbal and noise.

We're just making a noise before you. Lord, we pray that you'll fill us with your love. In this time that we live, we need your love.

While the love of many grows cold in this time Lord, we pray that at the beginning of this year, you will revive us with new love. As many others fall in love with many other things in this time, our Lord grant us that our love for you will be renewed and that we will love you and serve you with all our heart. That your work will not suffer because of us in this time.

We ask all this in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

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