

Love Exceeds All

by Basilea Schlink

Basilea Schlink's sermon emphasizes the transformative power of God's love and our need to embody it through humility and sacrifice.

Duration: 29:29

Scripture: Matthew 5:44, John 15:13, Romans 13:10, 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, Galatians 5:22-23, Ephesians 4:2, Colossians 3:14, 1 Peter 3:8, 1 John 3:16, 1 John 4:8

Topics: "God's Love", "Humility in Love"

Description

Basilea Schlink emphasizes the boundless love of God in her sermon 'Love Exceeds All', illustrating how this divine love is a source of refreshment and healing for our dry hearts. She encourages believers to recognize their own lack of love and to seek God's love, which flows freely to those who are empty and in need. Schlink highlights the humility and selflessness of Jesus' love, urging us to embody these qualities in our interactions with others, even those who may be difficult to love. The sermon calls for a commitment to love that transcends personal desires and seeks the well-being of others, ultimately reflecting the kingdom of God. It concludes with a reminder that true love requires sacrifice and a willingness to surrender oneself to God's transformative power.

Transcript

Love Exceeds All, written and in part spoken by Basilea Schlink, is a canticle about the love of God, describing and praising His love, and at the same time, offering us practical guidelines for making this love a part of our lives. Who can truly laud and praise the excellencies of love? For love finds its source in the heart of God, who is love and whose heart is unfathomable. Yes, the love of God is like a river that flows continually, and the love of God is pure and crystal clear like the water of the purest spring.

It has no double motive. It doesn't just love in order to be loved in return, to receive honor and recognition. It pours itself out for one and all.

It refreshes, it quenches the thirst of all who desire it. Loving Father, Loving Father, Father of everlasting love, eternal love. Do we want this love that flows from the heart of God? This love that is mightier than the power of hatred on this earth? Then first, we must see our bankruptcy in love, and the specific areas where we lack it.

For God directs the current of His love only to the dry ground, that in its drought cries out to be watered. The stream of the love of God seeks an empty channel into which it can flow. What a promise for those of us who suffer because our hearts are so parched and dry.

And those of us who have the most dry acres in our hearts, if we implore God for the river of His love to enter us, our prayers will be answered. Above all others, we will experience the stream of love flowing into our hearts. What a comforting thought.

We always think that we have to pump for this love, and exert ourselves to be loving to troublesome and difficult people at work or in the family. But if we humbly acknowledge the hardness, the dryness of our heart, and if we are willing to clear out all the refuse that fills the channel in us, then the stream of God's love will flow into our hearts with power. O fill my heart with the tender love so true, with which I too may show mercy just like you, Lord, love like this give me.

Give me your love, your sympathy with all, filling each sorrow, Lord, O hear my call. Dear Lord, you know me, I lack such tender care. Give me compassion, all grief and pain to share.

Lord, love like this give me. Mother Bessalia shares with us. Today, as in no other time, hatred and lovelessness are gaining more and more dominion over the world.

So shouldn't the Lord answer our prayer for love as never before, by stretching out His hand and pouring out the gift of love upon us? Isn't it our calling to represent His kingdom of love? Yes, our Lord Jesus must not be disappointed as He waits for the day when finally the image of His love is imprinted upon us. We cannot possibly imagine what a joy it would be for Him to see us bearing the fruit of His bitter suffering. But how can we describe this love to which Jesus has redeemed us? This love is the image of Jesus' being.

It embraces a wealth of inexhaustible riches, of which one can only mention a few. In His love, Jesus shows us that a sign of true love is humility. The love of Jesus is so humble.

He became a tiny babe, choosing the very lowest place, a manger in a cattle stall, so that He could love us. To our further astonishment, the Lord Jesus gave thanks for everything, for all the kindness that we show Him. In Scripture we read that He won't forget anything, not even a glass of cold water, that someone gave one of His disciples, a further proof of His humility and love.

An ungrateful person obviously lacks this humble love, for he doesn't notice or remember all the little acts of thoughtfulness and kindness shown to him. Humble and grateful love is forever making presence. When we consider the tremendous generosity of our Lord Jesus, we can only marvel and worship Him.

When we come into Heaven one day, we shall feel compelled to thank our Lord Jesus. We will want to show Him with our love, casting ourselves before Him and praising Him. Our hearts will be filled with deep love and gratitude.

Beauty pales for thee, O loveliness itself, Thou heavenly splendor art, And so my human heart In rapture's love is plunged. Beside thee I will stay, Keep step with thee on way, I'll leave thee nevermore. My love doth make on strain, Close by thee to remain, To work and rest in love.

Blissful the life of grace Sinners may now embrace, Consumed with love for thee. Quenched then ourselves in thirst, In peace each heart immersed, Love cannot lead astray. But what will our Lord Jesus do in Heaven? According to the Bible, He will serve us at the feast, again out of pure gratitude for our

service to Him.

In the same way, He also thanked the disciples that they endured with Him in His temptations while He was on earth, even though the disciples had deserted Jesus in Gethsemane and on the way of His Passion. In Heaven, Jesus will thank us for things we might have already forgotten. In His humble love, Jesus will thank a person who left home and family to serve Him somewhere, perhaps as a nurse or a missionary.

And He will thank all those who suffered persecution and imprisonment for His namesake. So let us tell Jesus today, What is yours is also mine, Lord Jesus. Let your humble, grateful love be mine too.

I won't let you go until you give me this love. And our Lord Jesus possesses the love that hopes all things, as we read in 1 Corinthians 13. To Him, no one is a hopeless case.

How patient He is with us! Yes, it is inconceivable that God the Father and God the Son both wait thousands of years before allowing judgment to fall upon mankind, who has long deserved the wrath of God. But God the Father waits with our Lord Jesus to see whether yet another person will repent and be converted. He looks to the Christians to see if they will avert God's judgment through their prayers, their stepping in the breach, that is, through intercession for their people.

Even when God Himself sees no sign of improvement, He grants yet another year of grace. That is the exact opposite of our attitude. We're so quick to lash out and say, That's enough, no more.

But the long-suffering love of God has the same root as His gratefulness and generosity, and that is humility. The humble can wait. The proud can't.

Just think of certain rulers and tyrants in the history of the world who couldn't wait a single minute. If their desires and orders were not fulfilled instantaneously, they flew into a rage. But a humble person can wait because he is convinced that he deserves nothing better.

He always gives the other person another chance. He truly respects the other person, always expecting good of him. Could we say the same of ourselves? What is our attitude at home or at work? Another aspect of true love is that it's friendly.

It possesses the qualities of a real friend. Love welcomes each person as a friend and rejoices to see him. So love has a friendly smile for one and all.

Love excludes no one. Even if it has an enemy, it attempts to treat him as a friend. Thus our Lord Jesus could say, My friend, to Judas, even after Judas had betrayed him.

Yes, love answers a cold glance with friendliness and kindness. Such love can really do us good if we experience it. Blessed are they who shall mercy for love.

They shall have themselves sons of our Father above, for he is the source of all mercy. To continue, the Apostle Peter speaks about love in his first letter, saying, All of you, have sympathy, 1 Peter 3. Feel with your neighbor, yes, suffer with him, even if he is, humanly speaking, unsympathetic and by nature not the loving type. But how do we respond? Don't we let feelings of resentment and aversion towards others mount up within us, taking control of us? Even in Christian fellowships and congregations, feelings of dislike are allowed to reign.

Yet not once do we stop to think about it. We don't consider it evil. But according to the Bible, disliking people is an enemy of love and makes it impossible for the kingdom of love to rule in our midst.

And Jesus so yearns for this kingdom to be established. I think of the different people who live in our little land of Canaan. We all pray that we may manifest Jesus' love here.

But there's a price to be paid. If love is to be sovereign, there must be a daily struggle in our living and working together. How many times has a note been slipped beneath a neighbor's door just before sundown? Please forgive me.

I'm to blame for the tension today. Could we make a fresh start tomorrow? But the kingdom of love can also be destroyed by the other extreme, that is, by emotional bondages to people. If another person fascinates me in a purely emotional sense, then I can't love him with the love of Christ.

Then I'm bound to my ego. For in this type of love, I'm actually seeking my own pleasure and satisfaction. In such cases, it's necessary to fight an intensive battle of faith, The love of Jesus must triumph over bondages of the soul, which, despite their appearance, have nothing to do with love.

In addition to its other attributes, true love is characterized by a divine, passionate ardor. It cannot rest when it sees the troubles and difficulties of others. It seeks ways and means, cost what it may, so that others can be helped.

This sort of love is not confined to the bounds of duty or to what society or etiquette demands. No, it must always do its utmost and highest, anything less, and it has no peace. So indifference and laziness are just the opposite of true love.

Love simply can't ignore a person in distress. It's deeply concerned and moved. It seeks every possible way to help.

How heartless, how cool we are by nature. Love, however, as the Apostle Paul writes in Romans 12 and Philippians 2, is heartwarming, affectionate. For example, we come across someone who is extremely rigid and bitter because he's had so many disagreeable and upsetting experiences.

Then the love of Christ within us should reach out to him, making him happy and relaxed. Surely we've all had the same experience. Perhaps we've been feeling dismal, and then we meet someone who greets us warmly and affectionately.

All of a sudden, it's as if the sun's come out and we begin to feel joyful again. Such power love has. So let's beg for this love, making it our firm aim of faith.

We're redeemed so that we can love. Mm, mm, mm, mm, mm, mm, mm, mm, mm. I am redeemed.

To love you set me free. I am redeemed. You won the fight for me.

Redeemed from heartless envy, pride, and self-display. The foes of love must flee now far away. I am redeemed.

I am redeemed to offer love aloud so that bright rays of your great love are shown. I am redeemed to spread abroad your walks and light, your rays of wondrous love that shine so bright. I am redeemed.

Mother Basilia shares with us some of the many characteristics of love. Love has so many different characteristics, yet the greatest and most significant one is to be found in 1 John, chapter 3, verse 16. By this we know, love, that He let down His life for us.

And we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. True love shows itself by its readiness to die. Martyrdom is not the only thing meant here.

This dying is more in reference to our everyday life, in regard to giving up something that means joy and life for us. Dying to our favorite wishes, to the fulfillment of our plans and our will, so that others may have joy and life. For this love is the very essence of God's nature.

God the Father gave up His Son, who was the entire joy of His heart, delivering Him to death so that we could live. Shouldn't this inspire us to follow the little path of dying in everyday life, out of love and gratitude? When we come across the different characteristics of love mentioned in the New Testament, it would be a help for us to write them down sometime. Then we could use them to truly worship the Lord Jesus, for in Him we see them all.

We should thank Him that He has really gained this love for us in all its fullness. Jesus has promised us in the Bible that He will make it our own, and we may hold up this promise before the Lord, reminding Him of it continually. What we say to the Lord Jesus repeatedly that He will also fulfill one day.

No one has ever brought Him a prayer request made according to the will of God, which then wasn't fulfilled. Even if there seems to be no change in us for a long time, we must remember with God nothing is in vain. Faith is always followed by a fulfillment of God's promises, even if it takes a long time.

But to believe in Jesus' redemption, to believe He has attained this love for us, is not enough in itself. We must allow God to prepare us to love. His message is threefold.

First, we must take up the battle of faith, reckoning with Jesus' victory. Then we must commit ourselves to the path of chastening, so that everything in our lives that hinders love may be destroyed. Lastly, we have to have the right attitude, taking the right practical measures against sin.

For this shows God that our prayer to be changed and redeemed is in earnest. God's promises come true Whatever He says, He'll do My heart no doubt can hold About what He has told I know Your Word is sure It is a rock secure What You say comes about Of that there is no doubt His help He may delay On dark or dreary way But then He will impart Faith to my fearful heart So I from day to day In love and trust will pray And in my heart perceive One day I will receive All I believed What does this all mean in practice? Well, I know someone who prays a great deal and fights a real battle of faith that he might receive this humble love. He therefore immediately tears up complimentary letters, for he knows that such praise would only increase his vanity.

This is the correct measure to take in the battle of faith, the battle against sin. Of course, this move in itself isn't sufficient to free us from our sin, but it gives the Lord a sign of our willingness that we want to become free at any cost and claim His redemption. Jesus has done everything necessary for His love to enter our hearts, but if the stream of God's love is to flow into our lives, then we must be prepared to let God remove the barriers.

That is, we must let Him chasten us, which is a painful process. When a person wants to attain love, God steps into action. So let us be grateful for everything that helps us reach this goal.

Often it's the people who create difficulties for us, wrong us, hurt or disappoint us, who help us to attain love. Figuratively speaking, they shoot arrows at the hard and selfish spots in our hearts. But when the hard places are riddled with holes, then Jesus can pour in His love.

However, it is also essential that we declare and praise the victory of Jesus day by day, claiming His blood and name for our inability to love. We need to endure and persevere in faith. In other words, we must be utterly enraptured by Jesus and His victorious might.

Again and again, we must turn our eyes away from our poisonous condition and fix our gaze upon our Redeemer, proclaiming, Jesus, you are truly victor, the final victory is yours. With strong bondages or deep bitterness and grievances, a long battle may be necessary. But if we fight to the point of shedding blood, we shall experience Jesus' victory over our weakest points as well as the strongest bondages of our character.

Also, it is necessary that we hold fast to the victory of Jesus, really expecting something to happen. This is why Holy Scripture shows us so clearly the specific traits of love and at the same time distinguishes all that opposes love. We should avoid having a hazy notion of love that includes everything and therefore nothing.

This is extremely dangerous. No, the Bible gives us an exact standard. The Holy Spirit holds this standard before our eyes, showing us our true position and state.

Then we must struggle for this love. We must hold fast to the Lord, continually bringing Him this plea. This love, your love, Jesus, I must have, no matter what it may cost.

This love isn't meant for our sakes alone, but it's also meant to pave the way for the coming of His kingdom, a kingdom of love. To the extent that love has become a reality for each one of us, taking form in us, to the same extent will represent His kingdom. Then the power of love, peace and joy of this kingdom will shine out into a world that's destroying itself in hatred and strife.

Jesus, the image of God's eternal love, calls to us now, You have been redeemed to love. This love will make you and others happy. Come, all you who lack this love the most.

Come with empty hands, for the stream of love, divine love, can flow into a heart that is like an empty channel, a heart that knows its inability to love. Whoever clears out all the refuse and becomes like an empty channel will experience, more than anyone else, the stream of the love of God filling him until love has become his entire being. For love is the greatest thing there is in heaven and on earth.

Love exceeds all. Sacrifice you came to offer, I give myself anew. Grant me the grace to surrender, that many in me may see you.

Bind me to you, my dear Jesus, I then will give you all. Gladly my tithe shall surrender, even those I love most of all. Sacrifice now my life, shelp me, my strength and time, my all.

My life I give you entirely, yield everything when you call. Dear Lord, let me become like you, bring love in me to birth, spending my love upon others, the love that makes heaven on earth. Love that would be self-denying, that seeks no right or claim, giving all, clinging to nothing, lest then my all brings him shame.

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