

# What Is Love? the Root of Self-Seeking

by Brian Long

---

*True love is selfless and seeks the good of others, rather than one's own interests.*

**Duration:** 41:29

**Scripture:** Matthew 22:39, John 3:16, John 15:13, Galatians 5:22-23, Ephesians 4:2, 1 John 3:16

**Topics:** "Love"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a story about Scottish soldiers who were forced to work on a jungle railroad by their Japanese captors. One day, a shovel went missing and the officer in charge became enraged. He threatened to kill everyone if the shovel was not produced. Eventually, one man stepped forward and the officer beat him to death. It was later discovered that there had been a miscount and no shovel was actually missing. The preacher uses this story to emphasize the importance of focusing on lost souls and sharing the love of Jesus. He then references 1 John 3:16 to explain what love looks like, highlighting virtues such as patience and kindness. The preacher challenges the congregation to apply these principles in their own lives, particularly in being patient and waiting on others.

---

## Transcript

Turn with me, if you would, to First Corinthians, Chapter 13, a very familiar passage of Scripture, but something that was like an arrow to my heart on Friday morning, the Holy Spirit brought some of this so fresh and alive to me in First Corinthians, Chapter 13. Many of you know it as the great love chapter. And my message this morning I'm bringing is in the form of a question.

And that question is, what is love? What is love? First Corinthians, Chapter 13. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I've become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains, but have not love.

I'm nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. Love suffers long and is kind.

Love does not envy. Love does not parade itself, is not puffed up, does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil, does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth, bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.

But whether there are prophecies, they will fail. Whether there are tongues, they will cease. Whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away.

For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. When I was a child, I spoke as a child.

I understood as a child. I thought as a child. But when I became a man, I put away childish things.

For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I am also known. And now abide faith, hope, love these three.

But the greatest of these is love. And there is no chapter break, brothers and sisters, in the original manuscript. Notice what he says next.

First Corinthians 14, 1. Pursue love. Pursue everything we just read. Pursue love.

Thank you for those words, Pam, at the communion table. It was straight from the heart of God and from your heart. And I praise God for him.

And one of the things you heard her say over and over again was this pursuit. She was speaking mostly about pursuing holiness. You've heard that from this pulpit over and over again, this pursuit of holiness.

And I amen all of that. Brothers and sisters, unless we pursue also love, our holiness will be a counterfeit. It will be a counterfeit holiness.

Pursue love. In other words, go hard after this. Go after this.

Pursue it. But my question this morning is, what is it? What is love? Matthew chapter 22. There was a Pharisee and he was also an expert in the law.

And he came to Jesus and he came to test him. And he asked him this question, testing him. What is the great commandment in the law? Do you remember Jesus's answer? You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, with all your strength.

This is the first and greatest commandment. What? To love God this way. But what does it mean? What does it mean to love God that way? What is love? He goes on to say, and the second commandment is like it.

You shall love your neighbor as yourself on these two. Jesus said on these two commandments, all the commandments, all the law and the prophets hang on these two. Keep these two commandments and you've kept them all.

Love God with all your heart. Love your neighbor as yourself. But I ask you, what is it? What does that mean? What is this thing called love? Jesus said in John chapter 13, a new commandment.

I give you that you love one another as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this, all men will know that you're My disciples. If you have this love for one another.

Love one another. That's His commandment. Husbands, love your wives just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her.

Ephesians 5.25, love your wives. What about the wives? Titus 2.4, older women were called to teach the younger women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be keepers at home. But what does it mean, husband, to love your wife? What does it mean, wife, to love your husband? What does it mean, church, to love one another? What does it mean to love your neighbor? What does it mean to love God? What is love? 1 John chapter 4, verse 7. Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God.

And everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God. Verse 20.

If someone says, I love God and hates his brother, he is a liar. He's a liar. For he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And that commandment, and this commandment, we have from Him that he who loves God must love his brother also.

And then Jesus takes us further. He stretches us more. Not only does He command us to love God with all our hearts, to love our neighbor as ourselves, to love your wife, to love your husband, to love one another in the body of Christ, but now He says, you have heard it said of old, you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy, but I say unto you, love your enemies.

Love God, okay. Love my neighbor. Love my brother, my sister in the body of Christ.

Love my wife. Love my husband. I can understand, but love my enemies? That's what He says.

What does it mean? What does it look like? What is love? We come now back to 1 Corinthians 13, and He says very clearly that unless we do this, everything we do means nothing. Even if I speak, if I could preach with the tongue of an angel, but have not love, the message has a hollow ring to it. It's like clanging brass and cymbals.

There's nothing there without love. If we, church, had faith, so much faith, that this morning we could move mountains, any problem that stood in our way, we had the faith to remove it in Jesus' name. But had not love, we've done nothing.

We've done nothing. And even if we came together and said, let's give everything we have to the poor. Empty your pockets.

Go home. Empty your bank account. All the money that we have, let's give it to the poor.

No, let's go further. Let's be martyrs. Let's lay our lives down.

Let's be burned at the stake. But if we have not love, even that prophets us nothing. Don't you think that something so important in the sight of God, something that we are commanded by God in Scripture over and over and over and over again, and yet something that has been so twisted and perverted and misunderstood and unknown by the world.

Don't you think this thing called love, we ought to know what it really is. We ought to know what it really means. We ought to know what it looks like.

I think so. Something so great that God says without it, it doesn't matter what you do, it's worthless. Don't you think we ought to know what it is? Well, what is it? How do you define love? How do you define love that knows no end? The love of God that we just sang about.

How do you define something that is vast as the ocean? That is deeper than hell? That is higher than heaven? That is farther and wider than the east is from the west? How do you define love? In one sense, you can no more define love than you can define God. Because the Scripture says God is love and no one will put Him into a little neat box. So how do you put this thing called love? How do you put it into some neat little definition? In one sense, we could never do it.

We could never plumb the depths of what the love of God really is. What it means. What it's all about.

But God does give us something about it in this chapter. He tells us what it does. He tells us what it looks like.

You know, I think of it this way. Love is like light. If you hold up a prism and you let one ray of that sunlight shine through that prism, the light of the sun is white light.

But let white light shine through a prism and it breaks apart and you get to see all these beautiful elements of the white light. And you get to see red and blue and yellow and purple and orange. All the beautiful colors of a rainbow as that ray of sunlight shines through the prism.

In the same way, God, in a sense, is holding up this prism. Shining a ray of His love through it. And we get to see all these elements broken apart.

All these virtues. What is love? Patience. Kindness.

All these different virtues. But there's one that He gives us here. These are the elements.

Verse 4. Love suffers long. It's kind. These are the colors of the rainbow, if you will.

It's patient. It's kind. It does not envy.

It does not parade itself. It's not puffed up. Does not behave rudely.

Does not seek its own. It does not provoke. It thinks no evil, which literally means it keeps no record of evil.

It keeps no account of evil. Does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth. Bears all things.

Believes all things. Hopes all things. Endures all things.

Love never fails. He gives us all these virtues of what the love of God is and is all about. But something happened to me Friday morning.

As soon as I woke up. And it was as if the Holy Spirit took the light of God's love and made it into a laser beam. And pierced my heart.

And brought the focus down to one thing. One thing about the love of God. And if you're like me this morning.

It will be enough of a definition of love for you to chew on for a long time. It will be enough for us for a while. That one laser beam.

That one virtue of love that really encapsules all the other virtues. Is found in verse 5. Love does not seek its own. What is love? At least in part, this is the definition.

Love does not seek its own. Love is not selfish. There is nothing selfish about love.

Lust? Oh yes. It's all about me. It's all about the individuals who's calling, crying and craving it.

But love? There's nothing selfish about love. Love does not seek its own. It is not self-seeking.

There's so many different translations. But I just want to give you a few of them. And how they have interpreted this.

The NIV says that love is not self-seeking. The New Living Translation says it does not demand its own way. Love doesn't do that.

Love doesn't demand its own way. Holman Christian Standard Bible says love is not selfish. It does not seek its own.

It does not seek its own. One commentator said it so well. He said, pure selfishness and you've just replanted the Garden of Eden.

Think of that. Pure selfishness and you've just replanted the Garden of Eden. What took that paradise of God, the Garden of Eden that Adam and Eve lived in and walked with God in the cool of the day? What turned that beautiful, perfect paradise into a cursed ground? Into a whole cursed world? What happened? Sin entered in.

But what is at the core of all sin? Selfishness. At the root of all sin is simply this. It's a it's a it's a man or a woman saying not God, let your will be done.

But let my will be done at the root of all sin is let my will be done. Give it to me my way. Let me have it my way.

Let me let me look to my own interest. Selfishness is at the root of all sin. The sin is at its core is self-seeking.

But love at its core is selflessness. What is love? Love does not seek its own. And I pray, brothers and sisters, that if you could get even a piece, even just a part of what the Lord did in my heart Friday morning with this.

It's all I need to hear. This is what you need to know, Brian, about love. Love does not seek its own.

Get a hold of that and you will see every other virtue of love. Come forth. It is not selfish.

It is not self-seeking. But I tell you, you know this. It is so rare to find that.

It is so rare to find that true love, true love that doesn't seek its own. So rare to find. You will not find it in this world.

You won't find it in the world. Why? Because we're all born naturally selfish. You put something in a baby's hand and what's the first thing he does? He grabs it.

Not only physically, but spiritually. We are born grabbers. Give it to me.

We're born takers. Give it to me my way. If you don't give me it my way, I'll cry.

I'll kick. I'll scream. I'll demand my own way because I'm seeking my own.

We're born selfish. This is the world in which we live. Everyone seeks his own.

Everyone seeks her own. Everyone pushes and fights to get to the front of the line. God was dealing with me on this and on our way home.

Lo and behold, Luke and I stop at Golden Corral, this big buffet and it hit me. We walked in and there's a line and people crowding in and we came in one door and we're standing in line and two people came in and they cut right in front of me and immediately there was this, hey, it's my place. So quickly, the Holy Spirit, love does not seek its own.

But that's what you see. That's what you see in the world. Give me the front of the line.

Give me the biggest piece of the pie. Let me rise to the top and it doesn't matter who I have to step on to get there. At the root of it all is this self-centeredness, this selfishness, the very opposite of love.

The world, the center, the unconverted, the unregenerate fight for their rights. Demand to have their own way. Wait on nobody.

Hunger for self-exaltation and glory. Keep a record of everyone who has wronged me. That's the world.

And we should expect to see that in the world. Here's the tragedy. Here's the tragedy.

All of us will remain like that, except we are born again of the Spirit of God. But once you are born again of the Spirit of God, that kind of self-centeredness has no more place in the life of a Christian. It should have no more part in the life of a Christian.

Not in marriage. Not in our home. Not in the church.

Not in anything we do or say or who we are. But the tragedy is not only is this kind of love rare to find in the world, it's becoming rare even among the people of God. Even among those who profess to know Jesus Christ.

And brothers and sisters, it should not be. We are representing a living God who gave His all to save us. We are ambassadors of Christ.

The living Christ who laid down His life. There was not a hint of selfishness in the Lord Jesus Christ. That's who we are to represent to a lost world.

That's who we are to represent to one another. That's who we are to represent to one another in the home, in the church, to the world. A God who had not even one fiber of selfishness in His being, but laid down His life.

The tragedy is when you find that kind of self-seeking in the world. When you find that kind of self-seeking, you do not see love. Love vanishes.

It is impossible to love God and love one another with this kind of love and still remain self-centered. Turn with me, if you would, to Philippians chapter 2. Philippians chapter 2. And I want you to see how even for the Apostle Paul, it was so rare to find for him someone who did not seek their own. Philippians chapter 2, verse 19.

He says, but I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly that I also may be encouraged when I know your state. For I have no one like-minded who will sincerely care for your state. For all what? Seek their own.

All. Everyone seeks their own. Not the things which are of Christ Jesus.

Imagine the Apostle Paul. Surely this man knew many believers. This man surely had many co-laborers.

But when it came down to finding someone that he could send to the church of Philippi who would love that church and did love that church sincerely, like-minded with the same kind of love that he had for that church, he looked around, he went down the list, and he could find no one. He found one. Only one in the midst of all of them.

I can imagine. Come on, Paul. Surely, don't you remember so-and-so? Remember how he preached? Oh yeah, he can preach.

He's a gifted preacher. But I know him. I spent time with him.

He's still seeking his own. I can't send him. But what about the faith of so-and-so? Do you remember that guy? He has faith to move mountains.

Remember how he exercised such great faith. Can you send him? He's got faith. You're right about that.

But I've been watching. He's still seeking his own. He's still looking for something.

Something's in it for him. Oh, but what about the zeal of this brother? He's got zeal. He's got fire.

He's gifted. He's got passion. Won't you send him? Can't send him.

Why? Because he seeks his own. And down the list he goes, and he cannot find one person that he could send to rightly represent the Lord Jesus Christ until he comes down to Timothy. Thank God for Timothy.

Thank God there is one that Paul could send, and he says here's one who's like-minded. Here's one who will sincerely love you the way I love you. Here's one who does not seek his own.

I thank God for that. I thank God for brothers and sisters in this church. As I said earlier, that I could go if I need to go and spend all week at appointments in Memphis with Luke and know someone will stand in the pulpit and represent the heart of God and love the people.

Someone who would be willing to lay down their life for the people. Thank God there's not one, but more than one in this fellowship who sincerely loves the body of Christ. And brothers and sisters, the whole message this morning is for us to grasp that, to hear what this true definition of love is, that it does not seek its own and to pursue even harder after it.

And you and I will have every opportunity to do that starting now. You will have a multitude of opportunities to do that today. You will have times today when you are required to wait on someone.

And love will seek not its own time, but love enough to wait. You'll have many opportunities. I thank God for brothers and sisters who have understood that the way of the Christian life and the way of following Christ is not about us.

It's all about His glory and it's about serving others. Can I tell you another way to spell love? Another way to spell love? O-T-H-E-R-S And may that be branded upon your heart and mind. Others.

If you forget everything else, I hope you don't forget this one word when you leave today. Others. Others, others, others, others.

Love equals others. It's putting others before myself. Paul said it again, if you will, in Philippians 2 and verse 1. Therefore, if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than themselves. Let each of you look not only for your own interests, but also the interests of others. You see, love is not just not looking to my own, seeking my own or looking to my own interests.

It goes beyond that to rejecting my own interests and looking, pressing in, looking into the needs of others. Looking to the benefit of others. Looking to bless others.

It's all about others. Jesus showed us that in everything He did and said. Others.

Listen to this poem. Others. Lord, help me live from day to day in such a self-forgetful way that even when I kneel to pray, my prayer shall be for others.

Help me in all the work I do to ever be sincere and true and know that all I do for you must needs be done for others. Let self be crucified and slain and buried deep and all in vain may efforts be to rise again unless to live for others. And when my work on earth is done and my new work in heaven's begun, may I forget the crown I've won while thinking still of others.

Others, Lord. Yes, others. Let this my motto be.

Help me to live for others that I may live like Thee. And that's when you will live most like Christ. When your whole life is characterized by being poured out for the sake of others.

The true story about a woman who came to her pastor for counseling and she came about to have a nervous breakdown. She was on the edge of a nervous breakdown. She came to him seeking for counsel.

She said, I can't take it anymore. I'm going to have a nervous breakdown and for the next half hour to an hour, she just unloads and he listens quietly. At the end, she says, well, pastor, can you give me some counsel? What do you have to say to me? What do I do? And he looked at her and he said, here's what you do.

You go home and bake a cake. Bake that cake and cut it up into squares, into pieces. Put it on little plates and go down to the local nursing home and you serve each one a piece of cake.

And she was livid. She became so angry. She said, I'm on the verge of a nervous breakdown.

I'm about to fall apart and you tell me to go home and make a cake? That's my counsel for you. Go bake a cake and go serve the nursing home. Well, she went home angry, but she couldn't get it out of her mind.

So she thought, may as well try it. She bakes a cake, goes to the nursing home and serves one by one, each one a piece of cake. You know what happened? Her focus transferred from herself to someone else in need.

And she decided not to have a nervous breakdown. She came back about a week later and they passed each other in the hallway and she was full of joy serving others, serving the Lord by serving others. He was doing the same thing, serving the Lord by serving others.

They pass each other in the hall and he says, hey, I thought you were going to have a nervous breakdown. She said, I put it off. Do you know how many nervous breakdowns, brothers and sisters, and how many problems would dissipate by this alone? Getting our eyes off of self and onto someone else in need.

It happens. I think it happens every time we visit St. Jude. You think you really have problems until you see little babies with bald heads that are fighting for their lives.

And parents that have cried all the tears out, they can't cry anymore. Look to the need of others. It's all about others.

This is love. Love does not seek its own. There's nothing self-centered about it.

Now, how do we live it out in a practical way? Go back with me, if you would, to 1 Corinthians 13. I just want to walk through these two verses quickly. Sometimes someone thinks, well, you know, I will serve others.

I will serve the Lord once I become more of a spiritually mature Christian. But I want to tell you this morning, you'll never become a spiritually mature Christian unless you first begin to serve others. You know what has stunted so many Christians' growth? They start living for themselves.

The minute you start living for yourself, you no longer grow in Christ. Your growth is stunted. Begin to be poured out for the sake of others and you will grow rapidly in Christ.

Your heart will be enlarged. You will know the filling of the Holy Spirit. God will not continue to fill anybody with His Spirit who is not willing to be poured out for the sake of others.

That's the way of the cross. That's the way to follow Christ. Now, 1 Corinthians 13.

Let's walk through this. Verse 4. Let's see how this great love chapter is to be applied. The first thing he says is love suffers long.

With each one of these, I want you to join me in adding others. Love suffers long with others. Love suffers long with others.

Love does not demand its own time. To be long-suffering is to be patient. This is the one that convicts me, that pierces me.

How we hate. How I hate to wait. How I hate when a schedule, my big schedule is broken into.

And over and over again, especially recently, the Lord laying me down on my face. Love does not seek its own time. Why do I demand my own time? Why do I demand this? I must get this done.

And I'm irritated if anybody breaks me out of my schedule. Why? Because I've not learned love. That's why.

Love suffers long. Love is patient. Patient with others.

Love learns to wait on others. Next thing he says is love is kind. Kind to who? Kind to others.

Listen, why do you wait for someone to come be kind to you? Why not be kind to them? Instead of murmuring, complaining, nobody's kind to me. Well, they didn't do this or say this. You go.

Be kind to them. You go bake a cake. You go serve someone else.

Love is kind. To who? To others. Then he says love does not envy.

Envy who? Others. Love is not jealous of others because it doesn't seek its own praise and glory. It can rejoice when others are in the spotlight and not yourself.

Love does not seek its own. Love does not parade itself above others. It's not self-seeking.

It's not puffed up. Why? Because love only seeks to glorify God, never self. He says in verse five, love is not rude to others.

Love does not provoke or easily angered by others because it's not self-seeking. Love never demands its own way. And then how about this one? Love thinks no evil.

Do you know what that means? It keeps no record of wrong done to you. I heard recently about a tribe of people. I forget where they live, but one of their customs was to write down every wrong that had been done to them by anybody else and to plaster it on their ceiling.

Every night they lay down, they remember. They never want to forget the wrongs done to them. Why? So they can take out revenge.

That's not love. Love keeps no record of wrong. Love erases the scoreboard.

It does not seek its own. It does not seek its own revenge. Over and over again, we see that love does not, will not, cannot seek its own, but instead lives for others.

Listen to this, brothers and sisters. A true story. Ernest Gordon writes about a true account of a Scottish soldier who laid down his life for his fellow soldiers.

He writes, The Scottish soldiers, forced by their Japanese captors to labor on a jungle railroad, had degenerated into barbarous behavior. But one afternoon, something happened. A shovel was missing.

The officer in charge became enraged. He demanded that the missing shovel be produced or else. When nobody in the squadron budged, the officer got his gun and threatened to kill them all on the spot.

It was obvious the officer meant what he said. Then finally, one man stepped forward. The officer put away his gun.

He picked up a shovel and he beat the man to death. When it was over, the survivors picked up the bloody corpse and carried it with them to the second tool check. This time, no shovel was missing.

Indeed, there had been a miscount at the first checkpoint. The word spread like wildfire through the whole camp. An innocent man had been willing to die to save the others.

The incident had a profound effect. The men began to treat each other like brothers. One man, who was so selfless, when he saw that all of his fellow soldiers were going to be put to death, he was willing to take the blame for something he didn't do.

The words of Jesus are true. Greater love has no man than this, that he lay down his life for others. Lay down your life for another.

That's the way of love. It's very simple. I felt even this morning, Lord, I almost feel like I could just stand in the pulpit and say, Go love one another.

Go love others. And then say, Amen. This is not a message that we'd say, Amen.

Okay, wonderful sermon. And forget. This is something you're going to be accountable to the moment you walk.

No, before you walk out those doors. Will we just nod our head and say, Amen? Or will we say, Lord, I've heard you. I've heard you calling.

I've heard this call, this pursuit of love. And yes, God, by your grace, starting now, I no longer want to seek my own. I want to seek your glory and the benefit of others.

Get rid of this mentality that says, How will this decision affect me and my family? How will this decision benefit me? What's in it for me? How can I be blessed? Get rid of it. It's how can this benefit my brother? How can this benefit my sister? How can this benefit the body of Christ? You know what will happen in terms of sharing the gospel with the lost world? You're no longer overcome by, I'm so inadequate to share the gospel, inadequate to say anything. Brothers and sisters, where is your focus? It should be on a lost soul.

A lost soul that needs the love of Jesus, that needs the gospel of Christ. When your focus is transferred from you to them, suddenly you will experience a boldness, a clarity, a passion to tell people about Jesus. It's self-seeking, it's selfishness and self-centeredness that keeps us from proclaiming the gospel.

That's it. Now, as we come to a close, look with me, if you will, in 1 John 3. I want to leave you with this. 1 John 3 and verse 16.

What is love? We can answer that in John 3.16 and we can answer that in 1 John 3.16. What is love? John 3.16. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. That's love. What is love? 1 John 3.16. By this we know love because He laid down His life for us and we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

But whoever has this world's goods and sees his brother in need and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. Love is action. It's not a noun, it's a verb.

It's action. Love in action is laying down my life and giving up my rights and giving up whatever I have that I may bless someone else in need. That is love.

What is love? 1 John 4.10. In this is love. Not that we love God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

What is love? You have to look no further than the cross, brothers and sisters. No further than the cross where Jesus Christ, the Bible says, demonstrated. God demonstrated His love for us in that while we were yet sinners, enemies of God, Christ died for us.

That is love. Was there anything self-seeking about Jesus going to the cross? Nothing. Nothing.

He went to the cross for you. He went to the cross for me. And that is love.

Love does not seek its own. We serve and belong to a loving God who is so generous and so kind and so giving and so compassionate. And that's the love that He's calling you and me today to pursue.

And you're going to have every opportunity. I'll say it one more time and we'll pray. Every opportunity to be long-suffering, to be patient, to be kind, to keep no record of wrong done to you, to forgive as He forgave, to reject all self-exaltation and self-glory and put it where it belongs, on Christ alone.

You will have every opportunity this week to practice what we've just preached. And that's how we learn to love. There is a practice about it.

It's only done in the power of the Holy Spirit. It cannot be done in the flesh. But it must be practiced.

It must be lived out. And that's my challenge to you this morning. Let us love as Jesus loved.

Let us not seek our own, for love never does. Amen. Stand with me if you would, please.

Stan, if you'll lead us in some closing songs. Father God, I just pray that You would brand this Word into our hearts. I feel, Lord, so compelled by You that this is not some pep talk.

It's not something just to stir our emotions. It's something very clearly that I've heard from You, Lord. Something so simple.

Something that You've brought down to a laser focus. This is love. Love never seeks its own.

Lord, I ask You, even before my brothers and sisters, to forgive me for every act of selfishness and self-centeredness. On behalf of the body of Christ in our church, we ask You to forgive us for selfishness of every kind. For self-seeking of any and every kind.

And we ask You, Father, to cleanse us from this sin. To fill us with the power of Your Holy Spirit who sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts. And we pray, Lord God, that You would send us forth from this place and that Your love would flow through us like a river with every opportunity, Lord.

Be it something so simple and so practical as letting someone go before me. Being last. Choosing to serve in hidden ways so someone else gets the glory.

Would You, Lord, help us to follow You this way. To truly love. And, oh God, I thank You that when we do, the world will see, the world will see and will come to know that we are Your disciples by the love we have

for one another.

By the love we have for them. I'm asking You, Lord God, to fill us afresh this morning with the power of Your Holy Spirit so that we can encounter the lost and have no hindrance to loving them. Even if we're spit on, to love them.

Even if we're hated or rejected, to love them. To speak forth Your words of life. Help us, Lord, to get over ourselves.

Help us to get our eyes off of ourselves and onto You. And I pray, Lord God, with every offense that any of us may have, we would lay that down today at the cross, at the feet of Jesus. We have no right, Lord, to hang on to offense or any kind of unforgiveness or bitterness because we have been forgiven for so much.

Would You help us to see it anew? Would You help us to fix our eyes upon You today, Lord Jesus? Would You help us to see others through Your eyes of love and compassion? And would You help us even to begin here in this house and in our home? No longer is it, what can my family do for me? What can my spouse do for me? But may it be from this day forward, what can I do for them? How can I lay my life down for them? How can I lay my life down for my brothers and sisters? How can I lay my life down for a lost sinner? Lord, help us. We give ourselves to You. And we thank You that it's all possible by the power of Your Holy Spirit.

You are love. You are love. And may the world see a true living demonstration of Your love through us, I pray.

In Jesus' name, Amen. Amen. I want to just invite you to respond in any way that the Lord is leading you to respond this morning.

The altar is open. I invite you to pray. If you'd like for someone to pray with you, then we invite you to come.

If you want to pray right where you're at, let's respond to God. Brothers and sisters, let's respond to the simple word we've heard. Amen.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/24/SID24859.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/brian-long/what-is-love-the-root-of-self-seeking/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**