

Motive Love - Orientation 5

by George Verwer

The sermon emphasizes that love must be the central motivation for all Christian actions and ministry efforts.

Duration: 52:43

Scripture: Matthew 22:37-39, Mark 12:29, Luke 6:27-30, Luke 14:33, Acts 2:42-47

Topics: "Christian Love", "Obedience To God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of love and prayer in the Christian life. He highlights the connection between faith, love, and prayer, stating that without love, our actions are meaningless. The preacher challenges the audience, particularly university students, to examine their lives and see if they are truly living in love. He shares a testimony of a young man who was deeply impacted by the love he witnessed in a group of believers, emphasizing the need for love to be evident in our lives. The preacher also mentions the importance of forsaking all and living in obedience to God's Word.

Transcript

Orientation session number five. The motive for our warfare, love. Without any doubt, we can say that this is probably the most important message in the orientation series.

For if we miss, if we miss the emphasis and the basic principle of this message, everything else will be, as Corinthians said, sounding brass and clanging cymbals. God has told us in his word quite clearly that the first commandment is to love him with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength. And this is what we want to consider in this orientation session.

Without any doubt, it's probably the most practical principle. For it's our love for one another that will determine our effectiveness on our teams as we go into Mexico, as we go into the Middle East, or as we go into Europe. Now, as we look through the New Testament, we see so many verses on the subject of love, we hardly know where to begin.

We see so many revolutionary verses concerning love and how we're to love God and love one another that it would be impossible in this short orientation session even to begin to discuss a small part of them. One time, for my own study, I went through the whole New Testament and underlined all the verses that mentioned love and then all the verses that had one of the synonyms of love, such as patience, kindness, meekness, long-suffering, and the other fruit of the Holy Spirit that comes in this great spectrum of love.

Just as light can shine into a crystal and come out many different colors, so the love of God, shed abroad in our hearts, comes out in the many different spectrums of love, such as joy, peace, long-suffering, et cetera.

And as I look through the New Testament on the subject of love, I found that next to the name of Jesus Christ, love was mentioned more than anything else. Without any doubt, love is the message of the New Testament and anyone who has not loved has not received the message of the New Testament. We can be orthodox, we can be fundamental, we can be evangelistic, we can be studious in the word of God, but if we have not loved, the Bible tells us very clearly we are nothing.

And as we think in terms of this tremendous warfare that we have entered into, as we think in terms of moving into Mexico to evangelize, as we think in terms of moving into Europe to evangelize, we must think constantly in terms of love. The Bible says God is love and we cannot separate one from the other. You cannot have God without having love and you cannot have love without having God.

God goes so far as to say that he who does not love is a murderer. How more blunt can you possibly get? How more specific could he possibly be than to call those who have not loved for the brethren murderers? Or that we might stop watering down the word of God. Or that we might stop rationalizing and theorizing and we might realize God meant what he said.

When God said we were to love one another, he meant it. When God said we were to love our neighbor as ourselves, he meant it. When God said we were to lay down our lives as an offering of love, he meant it.

But now let us look into the New Testament and let us take this subject of love, realizing that as we go into the warfare, this must be our motivation. This must be the compelling thing. This must be the constraining thing.

This must be the thing that leads us out into the battle. We look at the cults and as we look at communism, as we look at various groups and organizations in society, societies moving out actively, working, struggling, fighting, witnessing for their faith, we realize that in most cases they're working out of false motivation. There's so many things that can come in in the realm of false motivation.

One of the greatest is seeking honor of men. Jesus, in the book of John 5.44, said that the Pharisees and the scribes could not believe. He said to the Pharisees, how can you believe which receive honor one of another and seek not the honor that's coming from God alone? God saw, Jesus saw that these men could not believe.

They could not enter into this revolutionary life. They could not enter into this dynamic life because they sought the honor of men. And it's seeking the honor of men is our motivation.

Is this evangelistic effort. If seeking the recognition of men, seeking the honor of men, seeking the back-patting and the hand-shakings, seeking the well-done of men is the thing that's going to motivate us, we're going to find only sadness and eventually catastrophe. Jesus said, I seek not the honor of men.

Each one of us needs to come today as we think in terms of this tremendous warfare. As we think in terms of this tremendous crusade that lies ahead. We must come and ask God to purge our mood.

We must ask God to take away all this spirit of adventure. And we might not go to Mexico or to Europe or any other place motivated by anything else than the love of God. And we see this so clearly in the New

Testament.

Let us open now to the book of Matthew. First of all, let us look in Matthew the ninth chapter. I found that in every single book in the New Testament, minus none, love was either the major theme or one of the major themes in every book in the New Testament.

That's why I want to go through the whole New Testament during this orientation session and take one major verse on love from each book in the New Testament. Then in your own studies, you can read the other verses that are found in each one of the books of the New Testament. In Matthew, there are many verses, of course, on love.

The whole Sermon on the Mount is basically a sermon on the subject of love. And I want us, first of all, in this study, on motivation, to look at the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ wasn't a sit-down pacifist.

He wasn't one of these kinds of people who said, well, we better not do anything because we might end up striving. Jesus did things. Jesus was not a hearer of the Word, but a doer.

And we see Jesus Christ in the ninth chapter of Matthew doing something. Matthew 9.35. And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. Here we see Jesus Christ doing basically what God has put on our hearts to do.

And we follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. This past summer, God put it on our hearts to go into all the villages of Spain, Italy, Austria, Belgium, and France. And so we went.

And God blessed. As over 250 tons of literature went out, as tens of thousands of people were dealt with personally, as close to a thousand street meetings were held, as people were presented the claims of Christ, we went because Jesus went before us. We love him because he first loved us.

Yet Jesus wasn't just a few-sitter. Jesus didn't just go into the mountains and stay there all day in prayer. He believed in prayer, but he also believed that prayer motivated.

He believed that prayer moved, and he believed that which his father had told him. And in the light of it, he went. He went into all, notice that word there in that verse, all the cities and villages, all that God might give us, that same desire, all that God might meet us in our raininess, in our sleepiness, in our lack of mobility, and say all the villages, all the cities in all the world.

This has always been the great commission. Jesus, in 2000 years ago, tell us to go into all the world. And now, 2000 years later, because things were caught up in the realm of political barriers, they will now, it's only half the world.

The command is still all the world. Just as Jesus went into all the towns and villages in the area where he lived, in the area where God had sent him, so we today can go into all the towns and villages in all the world. But here's the important thing found in the 36th verse.

Why did he go? That's the key thing. Was he seeking a status? Was he seeking position? Was he seeking recognition? Was he going for the spirit of adventure? Was he going because he wanted to see what the villages were like? Was he going because some friends had asked him to go? Was he going because he was proving himself? Was he going to prove that he was Jesus? No. He went, as we see in the 36th

verse, for a reason more important than all of these.

He went for a reason beyond anything that the human mind had ever dreamed or thought of. A reason that had begun with the Father and had been carried down to the earth through him. Here it is in the 36th verse.

But when he saw the multitude, when he saw the people, he was moved with compassion on them because they fainted and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherds. There was the motivation of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was moved with compassion.

Moved, indeed he was, but not by false motivation, not by status seeking, not by a drive to beat somebody or to go somewhere, but he was moved with compassion. I want to say with all sincerity and from the very depths of my heart that unless we in this movement to reach the world for Christ are moved with that same compassion, everything we do will eventually be sounding brass and tinkling cymbals. Unless what you're doing there at your college campus, unless what you're doing there at your Bible school campus is being done because you're moved by compassion, eventually it will be sounding brass and tinkling cymbals.

And that includes your Bible study. That includes the clubs you belong to. That includes the athletic events you take part in.

That includes wherever you go, whatever you do, whatever you say. God says it needs to be moved by compassion. That compelling motive, that constraining motive, that dynamic impetus is compassion.

Compassion that drove Jesus into the towns and villages is the same compassion that will drive you and I to the very uttermost parts of the earth. Yea, at the same time, the same compassion that will drive you and I to be kind and meek and loving and gentle and friendly to those who live around us. You see in the next verses, then said he unto his disciples, the harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few.

Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth laborers into the harvest. We discussed that verse, I believe, in one of the previous days. But we see here again that divine combination of love and prayer.

Love and prayer tells us in the book of Galatians that faith, worketh by love, and faith and prayer and love are linked as close as the Trinity. All might receive it in our Christian living. Now let us turn to the book of Mark.

Mark the 12th chapter and the 29th verse. Here we read, and Jesus answered him, the first of all the commandments is, Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord, and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy faith. This is the first commandment.

And the second is like, namely this, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. Now Jesus bluntly, clearly, specifically, emphatically tells us that there is none, there is not one commandment greater than these in all of heaven and in all of earth.

The first commandment is to love the Lord our God. Oh, young person, if we only see this, God is far more interested in our love for him than our service or our studies or our activities. All might we beware of the barrenness of a busy life.

It's easy to become busy for God. So busy for God that we miss God himself. God has not called us to be busy, he's called us to himself.

God is not asking us to see how much we can do for him, God is asking us to see how much we can love him. And as you listen to this tape, no matter what you're doing for God this week, no matter where you're going for God this week, no matter what you're studying about God this week, still his first commandment is for you to love him. That's why the most important thing in your study life is your love to God, your personal devotion to God, your personal time of worship, your personal time of praise to him.

So easy to be tricked by the noise of this world. So easy to be tricked by the bowings of men. So easy to be tricked into the busyness of Christian activity that ends in barrenness and noise and futility.

Oh, might we come back to that place that Jesus came to, to which we realize that the most important thing we can do is love the Father. Might we seek those quiet times where we can be alone with him, to love him, to praise him, and to worship him. Might the great love book, the book of Psalms, become the very treasure chest of our library as we take it day after day to worship him and to praise him.

I believe that it's a worshiping life, a loving life, a life linked with the love of God that's going to be and make the greatest impact on the world today for Jesus Christ. As we go into this warfare, indeed, we have a weapon of prayer. Indeed, we have a weapon of the word of God.

But without any doubt, even though it's also our motivation for using prayer and for praying and for using the word of God, love by far surpasses these two things when it comes to a weapon because it's as we love God and as we give ourselves utterly to him and as we love him with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength, that he pours out the power and the blessing upon us to carry out this tremendous offensive to reach lost men and women for Jesus Christ. Sometimes I speak on the subject of Luke 14.33, the subject of forsaking all. And a lot of people don't like it.

We don't like to hear that message today in materialistic America and materialistic Britain. We don't like to hear about what we're to do with our possession. And the verses that are throughout the word of God concerning possession and concerning giving and concerning forsaking all are verses that most people need to cut out of the Bible with their scissors but we aren't living in obedience to them.

The little book, True Discipleship, has brought criticism from all over the world, practically, as people have rebelled against this message. But they haven't rebelled against that message any more, really, than they've rebelled against this message found in the 30th verse of the 12th chapter of Mark because this verse teaches us to forsake all far more than Luke 14.33. This verse makes even the book, True Discipleship, look lukewarm as far as its challenge to forsake all. Man in all of his efforts will never get the words or the challenge or the dynamic that God's word has.

God says here that we're to love Him with all of our heart, with all of our soul, with all of our mind, with all of our strength. If on this table I have a glass of water and I take the glass and I pour the water out but I leave just a few drops in the bottom of the glass, can I say that all the water is out of the glass? Of course I can. If I take the glass again and pour all of the water out except one little drop of water in the bottom of the glass, can I say that all of the water is out of the glass? Of course I can.

If I have 10 apples and I put nine of them on one side of the table and one on the other, can I say that all the apples are on this side of the table? Of course I can. And even if I only leave a part of something or a

part of the apple on one side of the table, I can't say all of the apples are on this side of the table. So it is in our love for God.

As long as there's one little bit of love for this world, as long as there's one little bit of love for anything in this world, as long as there's one little bit on this side of the fence, it can't all be on that side. And as long as there's one little bit of love anywhere for anything in this world, we are breathing the first commandment. Say, well, that's hard.

Say, that's difficult. Well, indeed, that is as hard as Luke 14, 33. You see, we in the evangelical church, we in the fundamental church, for years have taken the Bible as sort of a fetish.

We say that I believe the Bible from cover to cover. I believe from Genesis to Revelation, it's all inspired. And it's inspired by God.

I believe in verbal inspiration. And beloved, I want you to know I do. I believe that the Bible is verbally inspired by God, that God breathed, and this book was the result.

But when we say this, we need to tremble. When we say this, our lives should shake. When we say this, our very eyes and ears and mouths should begin to take on a new form.

Our feet will begin to go in a new direction. Our hearts will begin to pound and beat in a different way. But we're coming in saying that we believe that God's first commandment is to love him with all of our hearts, not half, not three-fourths, not 90%, but all.

And this is the great message of the New Testament. This is the message of Jesus Christ. This is the message of this book from Genesis to Revelation, the message that God demands all of you.

God wanted all of Abraham. God wanted all of Moses. God wanted all of Isaiah.

And God wants all of you. He never asked for half. He never wanted half.

He never asked for 90%. He never wanted it. He wants all of you, all of your love, all of your time, all of your talent, all of your energy, all of your money, everything you have, he wants it.

That's why he said in Romans the 12th chapter, I have esteemed you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your body as a living sacrifice. Don't make a sacrifice with just hands. All on the altar is the cry of God.

A challenge, indeed. A challenge that makes communism look lukewarm. A challenge that makes the cults look like they're walking backwards.

A challenge that should thrill the heart of any young man or any young woman. A challenge that should cause us to renounce all the hidden things of darkness and cling to God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Might we no longer pray with the word God.

Might we no longer just count it as a theological explanation of nice and interesting facts. But might we realize it is the living word spoken by a living God for you and me in this generation. This is the message of this movement.

This is the message of the New Testament. Love, and without love we are nothing. Without love we are noise.

Without love we will never in all the world see the world evangelize. And the second commandment, says the 31st verse, is namely this, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is no other commandment greater than thee.

One young university fellow told me not too long ago, he meditated on that verse, and he was never the same again. I challenge you, I challenge you university students, I challenge you young intellectuals, I challenge you Bible school students to meditate on that verse. To let it penetrate into your inner most being.

To let it penetrate into your subconscious mind. To let it penetrate into the very heart of your life. Think on it, memorize it, meditate it, meditate on it, consider what it means.

You'll find that your life will never be the same again. Love thy neighbor as thyself. Love thy neighbor as thyself.

What does it mean? What does it mean in this modern materialistic age? What does it mean in this modern age of mechanisms and all nations? Love thy neighbor as thyself. First of all, I think we need to consider how we love ourselves. It says love thy neighbor as thyself.

And to get an understanding of how we should love our neighbor, we need to realize how we love ourselves. And in order to understand this, it would be good to substitute the word care. Care for thy neighbor as thou dost care for thyself.

You see, you don't rise up in the morning and go over to your mirror and say, well now Georgia, I really love you. You're the best dressed and you're the best looking and I love you. None of us are that stupid.

But we get up in the morning and we take care of ourselves. We wash and we have a nice breakfast and we put on our clothes and we put on our shoes. And if it's cold outside, we get on our heavy coats and constantly, all day long, automatically, we take care of ourselves.

And when we realize this, that our love for ourselves mainly is expressed in acts of charity, in acts of love, in acts of kindness, in acts of self-preservation, we will realize that this is indeed a revolutionary teaching from the word of God. Care for your neighbor as you care for yourself. There's so many ways love for self is expressed.

It's expressed in taking care of ourselves, as I mentioned. It's expressed in exalting ourselves. It's expressed in defending ourselves.

It's expressed in satisfying ourselves. It's expressed in helping ourselves. It's expressed in making ourselves comfortable.

It's expressed in wanting our own way. It's expressed in impatience and irritability. It's expressed in not having self-control.

It's expressed in harshness and a lack of gentleness. But when the revolution takes place, when this dynamic revolution takes place, and the Holy Spirit begins to take control of our lives, we're going to find no longer these words, but we're going to find that we take care of others, that we exalt others, that we

defend others, that we satisfy others, that we help others, that we make others comfortable, that we want the other man's way, and that our lives will be tempered and controlled by patience, self-control, gentleness, and all the other fruit of the Holy Spirit. This is the greatest revolution that has ever taken place in the earth.

This makes the revolution that Marx began look like a little game of checkers. Oh, let God's light grip us with the fact that Jesus Christ has brought the revolution in. We're in a new dynamic way of life in which everything we do and say is hinged around this great thing of loving him and of loving our neighbor, yeah, even as ourselves.

Oh, I challenge you to meditate on this. What would this mean in terms of world evangelization? What if we began to love the Chinese like we love ourselves? What if we began to love the Indian like we love ourselves? What if we began to love the Turks like we love ourselves? What would happen to our spending? What would happen to the way we spend our money if we began to care for the other man as we care for ourselves? Indeed, there would be a revolution in your college campus. Indeed, things would be different.

No longer would it be every man out for his own self, but it would be as the word of God says, each man seeking the other man's welfare. Oh, how little of this we see. I remember back at school making an intensive study of this on my campus.

How little! We see a practical, outworking, outreaching love. Love each time the other man's due. Love that helps him when he's weak or sick.

Love that comes to his rescue at every moment. I remember how at school we used to have apples on Saturday and 10 of us would sit around the table and there'd be 10 apples put in the tray on the table. And usually one of them was fairly rotten.

It was worm-eaten. And the apples would be passed around the table. When do you think the rotten apple was chosen? First, of course not.

Second, certainly not. But around the table it went, each man taking the apple. And the rotten apple would always be the last or the second to the last.

Might be a crude illustration, but I can give a dozen. I can give hundreds of other similar illustrations that are probably taking place in your and my life daily without us even realizing it because we've never allowed Jesus Christ to bring us into this revolution, to make this tremendous change in our life, to turn our lives upside down like Paul turned the world upside down. In which, in a similar instance, we would happily and automatically reach for the rotten apple, esteeming the others as better than ourselves, seeking their benefit, seeking their welfare, seeking their advancement.

Every time we went to buy a new book to build our library bigger and bigger, we'd begin to think about that Indian pastor who still hasn't got his first Bible concordance. We'd begin to think about some of those Russian pastors who still haven't even got a complete Bible. And we automatically, in our living, begin to think of others, others, others.

Instead of I, my, me, the three most famous words in our vocabulary, it would be others, others, others. All that God might show us that he's called us to fall into the ground concerning our own life, that we might bring forth fruit, that we might be a blessing to others. There isn't time to go on.

I challenge you to meditate on that, the static commandment, realizing there's no greater commandment than these two. And that will bring about a revolution in Mexico. That will bring about a revolution in world evangelism.

That will bring about the evangelization of the whole world. Oh, my God granted, the grace to see and the grace to obey. Turn now to Luke, the sixth chapter.

Luke chapter six, starting at the 27th verse. Here are some more of the revolutionary teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ, mainly outward expressions of this commandment of loving our neighbor. Jesus said, Luke 6, 27.

But I say unto you, which hear, love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. And answering him that spited thee on the one cheek, offer also the other. And him that taketh away thy cloak, forbid not to take thy cloak also.

Give to every man that asketh of thee, and of him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again. And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. For if ye love them which love you, what than can ye? For sinners also love those that love them.

And if you do good to them which do good to you, what than can ye? For sinners also do even the same. And if you lend to them of whom you ought to receive, what than can ye? For sinners also lend to sinners to receive as much again. But love your enemy, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again.

And your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the highest, for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged.

Condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned. Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven. Give, and it shall be given unto you, good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give unto your bosom.

For with the same measure that ye make, withal it shall be measured to you again. For with the same measure that ye make, withal it shall be measured to you again. Oh, do you see the revolutionary teaching of this portion of the word of God? How far we are from this.

Love your enemy. Many of us have close friends at college and at school. Tell us we really love him.

We're really thankful to God that he's put a love in our heart for these people. We love to play with them. We love to be with them.

We love to talk with them. God says in this passage, we do no better than the sinners. Because in most cases, you're gonna find that the people you love, the people you go with, the little cliques you've organized, are mainly with those people that you love and that love you.

People that think you're rather keen. People who are willing to be obedient to you. People who accept your ideas.

People who accept your mode of living. God says, but the sinners do the same. The sinners do the same.

Real love, Christ's love begins when we begin to love enemies. Because you see, the only ones Jesus ever loved were his enemies. We're all enemies of God.

The Bible says we were aliens. We're enemies. We were strangers.

God loved us. Yea, while we were yet sinners. Christ's love.

How different than the little so-called love relationships we build up. How different than this love that we have for people because we have an affinity. We have a liking.

We have an equal personality. And unless we begin to love those who don't love us. Unless we begin to love those who are against us.

Unless we begin to love those who persecute us. Unless we begin to love those who misunderstand us. We haven't begun to love as far as God is concerned.

What a challenge. What a challenge for you there in your college. What a challenge for you wherever you are to begin to love those who don't love you.

To begin to love the unlovely as Jesus loved the unlovely. All like we see the reality of the Christian faith. A revolution of love that indeed will turn the world upside down.

We could spend hours on this passage of Scripture. We could never touch the depth of the love that is expressed here when God tells us to do unto others as we would have them do unto us. That golden rule, that royal rule.

To do unto others as we would have them do unto us. To do unto our team leader as we would want our team members to do unto us. To do unto our teacher as we would want our pupils to do unto us.

To do unto our parents as we would want our children to do unto us. To do unto the bus driver or the maintenance man or the housekeeper or the house mother or the dean of men as we would want them to do unto us. Are you practicing this? Is this the daily practice of your life? Is this a part of your very nature, your very being? If not, you're still not in the revolution.

Oh, you can be a Christian. You can be baptized. You can be in the church.

Some of the most unloving people I've met in all the world are in the church. But that doesn't mean you've taken hold of these promises. That doesn't mean you've entered into this life of victory, this life of love, this life of faith.

God tells us in the word that there's carnal Christians, there's babes in Christ. They've never grown. They've never come into maturity.

And today our churches are filled with spiritual dwarfs and spiritual midgets. Our Bible colleges are filled with people that have even been 20 or 30 years as Christians and they're still babies. They're still toddlers.

They're still wearing their diapers and their nappies because they've never come to grips with the life of Jesus Christ, which is basically a life of love, basically a life of mercy, basically a life of forgiveness. Don't forgive them seven times, Jesus said, but 70 times seven. We go holding our grudges against this person and that person.

And we think that we can hold things in our hearts against our fellow men and still walk with God. And God said, it's not possible. God says, if you cannot love those whom you have seen, how can you love him whom you have not seen? And as long as there's broken fellowship between you and some brother in Christ, as long as there's a broken fellowship, a broken strand in the cord of love between you and some brother in Christ, there's a broken strand between you and God.

We can pass over it. We can think that we're getting through in prayer, but God says we're deceiving ourself. And in the book of Galatians, he says, be not deceived.

God is not mocked. Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap. And when we sow these unloving feelings, when we sow these jealous thoughts, when we sow these unloving actions, we're going to reap.

We're going to reap a bitter reaping. Oh, God, let God open our eyes and show us that there's only one way, the way of love, the way of Calvary love, the way that Jesus went, because he loved us with an everlasting love. Let's look now in John.

John the 13th chapter. John 13, verse 34, drives this message home even harder. John 13, 34, we read these amazing words.

A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. Now, this goes beyond my understanding. When Jesus tells us that we're to love one another as he loved us, that says so much that we could stop right here and spend the next 24 hours meditating on it.

Love others as Christ loved us. And when we think of Jesus Christ leaving, forsaking all the glories of heaven, all the treasures of the galaxies and the glories of the heavens, to come down and be born in a stable and to live on this earth with no place to go, no place to lay his head, and nothing of this world's goods, leaving everything, leaving his reputation, becoming a man, taking on the form of a servant, taking the towel and washing the disciples' feet, walking up Calvary's cross, going up Calvary's road to Calvary's cross. When we think of all of this, that love poured out on Calvary as Jesus with a nail-pierced hand looked down on us and said, forgive them, they know not what they do.

And then he comes and he says, now you love the brethren as I love you. Now you love one another as I love you. Perhaps it can only be captivated in the words of the 15th chapter of John where it says, and greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life, that he gives his life.

And this is what God is asking you and I to do, to be ready, willing, and wanting to lay down our life for the brethren, to lay down our lives for one another. Some of us have trouble just living together. Some of us have trouble just forgiving one another's faults and letting love cover one another's sins and meeting together in times of prayer and love, much less laying down our lives.

Do you see how far we are from the crux of the gospel? And I say this with all the backing and all of the authority of the New Testament. Love is the crux of the gospel. Christ is the crux of the gospel and love and Christ come together.

When Christ comes, love comes. And when love comes, Christ comes. You can't separate the two.

And Calvary is a great Christ story. Calvary is a great love story. And the less we see this, we're blind and see not.

Yes? Second verse, the next verse, the 35th verse comes right in just as strongly. And it says, by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one toward another. People aren't gonna know we're his disciples because we're forsaking or selling our possessions.

People aren't gonna know we're his disciples because we're going to Mexico or Europe to get out there richer. People aren't gonna know we're his disciples because we preach good servants. People aren't gonna know we're his disciples because we sing hymns loudly or because we go to evangelistic meetings or because we pass out facts.

They're gonna know that we're his disciples because we love one another. That's the test of fellowship. That's the center of reality in the Christian faith.

And oh, how easy it is to get on the fringes. How it breaks my heart to see the church playing at the fringes, arguing over secondary doctrines, arguing over minor points and minor issues when God says that we don't love one another. We're nothing, we're standing fast and we're tinkling cymbals.

Oh, might we sing it? It can't be expressed in any better words than it's expressed in the New Testament. How God's people have missed the message, how God's people have been so fluent to the teaching of Jesus is beyond my understanding. It's beyond my capacity to rationalize or to reason or to be logical.

So clear, so punch, in this show though they're my disciples, they love one another. Not because they sing together. Not because they sign their name on the same dotted line.

Not because they go to the same school. Not because they belong to the same clique. But because they love one another.

Because they show for love and joy, peace, gentleness, meekness, long-suffering toward one another. Because they forbear one another in love. Because they're kind to one another.

Because they're gentle with one another. Because they esteem the other as better than themselves. This is how we know they're Christians.

No wonder people aren't coming to Christ in these days. And we can go on with our futile evangelistic efforts. And we can go counting decisions, counting decisions, counting decisions.

But until those who are supposedly engaged in a follow-up learn how to love those who make decisions for Christ, it's few and far between that'll continue in the faith. And I've gone from place to place making a study of this. We'll be bringing forth some of these ideas in the new manual I'm writing on follow-up.

Titled, The Missing Link in Evangelism. Love, oh how true it is that the missing link in our evangelism in love. We want to get decisions.

We want to see souls saved. We want to see people come to Christ. And we love to welcome them at the altar.

But we're far more willing to welcome them at the altar than we're willing to welcome them in our homes. My dirty, I rubs you now. And after all, we just can't bring people off the streets in these new converts into our homes and fellowship with them and go with them week after week.

And so a man accepts Jesus Christ and we phone him up the next week. And we say, well, how about coming to church? And he says, well, I'm not sure I'm busy. And we hang up the phone.

We say, well, I guess he really didn't mean business. Well, I'm glad some of the others did. We don't know who the others are.

And we go our way and on our way. If we are going to see evangelism succeed in Mexico or anywhere else, we're gonna have to learn to love men. And this doesn't mean just welcoming them at the altar of decision.

It means welcoming them in our homes. Welcoming them in our cars. Welcoming them at our breakfast table.

Just making them a part of our life. Better to have five or six men the rest of your life who you really love and who really come to know Jesus and who go on to walk with Jesus and who become fruitful in Jesus than hundreds of people who raise their hand at a decision meeting and say they follow Christ but because they've never been loved, they go their way. Jesus said, if you love me, feed my sheep.

This must be our motivation. This must be our number one weapon. More powerful than the atomic bomb.

Faster than anything man has ever created. Stronger than the strongest of all men or the strongest of all the things that man has ever created. Love.

Christ love. Working in us. Working through us.

Constraining us to do his will no matter what the cost. And in this, they will know that we are his disciples. We turn on now and we see in the book of Acts chapter two, just take this down, chapter two, verse 42 to the end.

We see the New Testament church. They continue to say fastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship and breaking of bread and prayers and fear came upon every soul and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles and all that believed were together and had all things common and sold their possessions and goods and part of them to all men as every man had need. And they continuing daily with one accord in the temple and breaking of bread from house to house did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart praising God and having favor with all the people and the Lord added to the church daily, such as should be saved.

What was the one thing that stood out among those people more than anything else? It was love. Why did they sell their possessions? Because they loved. Love gives.

Love always expresses itself in giving. A young man falls in love with a girl, he wants to give her things. And when we fall in love with Jesus, we're gonna want to give him everything.

When we fall in love with others, we're gonna want to just give everything we've got for the Indian, for the Chinese, for our next door neighbor, love gives. And that's what happened. That's why they had communal living there in the New Testament.

And any attempt today to live like this outside of a spontaneous action of the Holy Spirit, loving for us will end in just utility and nonsense. That's why we in this work have no specific rules about selling possessions, no specific rules about how much you must forsake or about living in common. We just

believe that if we love one another, we'll go as far as God goes in our heart.

But we've seen wonderful things as God has poured into our hearts his love that has caused us to forsake all that we've had or at least to begin to forsake all that we have, to count all things as his and to have no rights. Love takes your rights away. When Jesus loved us, he had to leave the rights of heaven to rescue us.

And when you and I want to go and rescue men, we've got to leave our rights. Oh, might we see what would happen if we begin to love one another. Now let's move on and look at Romans 5. Romans 5, verse 5, we see where this love comes from.

You see, it isn't something you start with in yourself. It isn't something you'll work up in an emotional meeting. It isn't something you can dig up.

It isn't something that you can even pray up. Here in Romans 5, 5, we read this, and hope it make it not a shame because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. You see, love is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, and it's the Holy Spirit in us as we abide in Jesus Christ, as we rest in him, as we trust in him, as we turn from all sin, as we repent of all sin.

The Holy Spirit fills us and takes over our life. God tells us in Ephesians to be filled with the Spirit. Are you filled with the Spirit? Oh, that God might show us.

And what a grievous thing it is to meet all these people in America and England today who claim to be filled with the Spirit, and they talk about all these different experiences they've had with the Holy Spirit, and yet we don't find the love, that love that forsakes all, that love that'll reach out to the ends of the earth, that love that esteems the brothers better than ourself, that love that brings about patience and gentleness and meekness and kindness. We don't see it, and when I don't see those things, beloved, I don't care what kind of experience a man claims to have had, I doubt that he's experienced anything with the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost, first of all, brings love.

The love of God has been shed upon our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Now, please copy down these references to study on your own, for there isn't time to complete them all. I want you to look at 1 Corinthians 13 and study it intensely.

Then look at 2 Corinthians 5.14, where it tells us that the love of God constrains us. You don't need to hear again that same thing we saw in that first verse that we read in this message, that Jesus was moved with compassion. Here it says the love of God constrains us.

Then in Galatians 5.6, where it tells us that even faith worketh by love. And then read that prayer of Paul in Ephesians 3.16-21. I believe that's where he tells us to be rooted and grounded in love. And then look at Philippians 2.1-4, that tremendous unity that God wants us to have, how he wants us to be a one love.

Read that, Philippians 2.1-4. And then Colossians 3, verses 12-14. Study those verses. And then 1 Thessalonians 3.12, where Paul tells us that we need to abound in love.

Are you tonight, are you this morning, or this afternoon, or whenever you're listening to this tape, are you abounding in love? Love is falling over and people can feel it. I had a young man come to one of our conferences recently here in Great Britain. And when he went back, he wrote us a letter and the thing that impressed him wasn't the preaching, it wasn't the evangelism, it wasn't all the activity and the distribution

of thousands of pieces of literature, but the thing that shook his life was the love he saw in the young people.

And he said, I learned more in two days than I've learned in all the past years in my Christian experience. And I found this everywhere. What youth is looking for, what people are looking for today, in the realm of reality, is love.

They hear about a church that's preaching a message of love, but they aren't seeing lives of love. This is what's needed on your campus. This is what will sweep in a revolution.

It isn't your preaching, it isn't your knowing it all. It isn't your OM vision, it isn't your forsaking all and all these other things. The thing that's gonna make an impact on your campus, in your college, wherever you go, is love.

Are you abounding in love? If you are, something's gonna happen on your campus, in your school. And then copy down 2 Thessalonians 3.5. And then 1 Timothy 4.12, where it says that we're not to allow people to despise our youth, but we're to be examples. And one of the ways we're to be examples, according to this verse, is in love.

Study that little verse, how powerful it is. And then 2 Timothy 2.22, where it tells us to flee lusts and then follow after certain things, righteousness and love. Oh, might we see this is Christianity, it's life, it's a holy life, it's Christ's life in us.

Even a little book of Titus, you can't hardly read it without seeing it. Look in the first chapter, in the eighth verse and onward, just the message of love in that little book. And Philemon 1.4, and then Hebrews 12.6, and there's one thing I noticed about that verse, where it tells us that because God loves us, He chastens us.

Remember, love isn't just a wishy-washy thing, it's going to be love at times that leads you to go to a brother in gentleness and humility. And if you can't go like that, don't go. But it'll lead us to a brother in gentleness and humility and love, to correct him, to help him, to love him.

Neatness, esteeming him as better than ourself. Love and light go together. You can't separate truth and love.

Don't fall into the pitfall of the modernist who thinks that love is the answer, even though he knows nothing of real, sacrificial, God-sent love. He thinks he can separate love from truth. You can't, and we see that in the epistles of John and many other places.

And then read the book of James, what a love story, especially James 2, one through eight, about how God condemns this thing of being a respecter of persons, how God condemns this thing of seeking honor and of giving a special place to those who are rich. Oh, what God says concerning this is very, very powerful. Read James 2, one through eight.

And then that verse I want every one of us to meditate on, so important, 1 Peter 4, where it says that above everything else would have love, for love will cover a multitude of sins. You must see this as you go out on your team. You must see this as you work together there in your college.

You must see this wherever you are. Love covers sins. See, that repeat of the matter separates the very best of friends.

But love covers a multitude of sins. Write that down, memorize it, and the next time you go to backbite, the next time you go to gossip, the next time you begin to gripe about something someone's done wrong, remember, God says that love covers sin. It was the love of Jesus Christ that caused him to cover our terrible sins with the blood that he showered Calvary's cross.

And it's that same love shed upon our hearts through the Holy Spirit that will cause us to love people so that we'll cover their sins and we'll seek the good and we'll believe the good. Love believes all things. Oh, it's revolutionary.

Oh, it's different. But it's the only thing that's ever going to enable us to stand together, united in Jesus Christ for this tremendous battle we're faced with. Then, 1 John, we read these words.

Before I end with these verses from 1 John, jot down 2 John 1, 5, and 6, 3 John 1 and 6, Jude 1, 21, and Revelation 2, 4. And now in closing, let's look at 1 John 3. Yes, this is the chapter that calls us murderers if we don't love. This is the chapter that, one verse upon the other, talks about love, and I want us to close by just looking at 1 John 3, 16. We all don't like John 3, 16, but here's 1 John 3, 16.

And everything I could possibly say is summed up in these powerful words. Hereby receive we the love of God because He laid down His life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

How thankful we are today that God loved us and gave His life for us. He redeemed us, He reconciled us, He brought us back to Himself because of every love that was expressed on the cross when Jesus Christ laid down His very life. We love this, we sing about it, we enjoy it, we study about it.

It's only half the message. Second half of the message is found in the second half of the verse. And that's what we've been talking about today.

And we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. And the 17th verse follows up on it and makes it more practical. But whosoever has this world's good and seeth his brother hath need and shutteth up his vows of compassion from him how dwelleth the love of God in him.

My little children, let us not love in words, neither in tongues, but in deed and in truth. No doubt many of you have been listening to my voice. Up to now, you've loved in tongues, you've loved in words, you've talked about these things, you've meditated on some of them, you've heard messages on them.

But the challenge today is to begin to love in deed, to begin to allow this revolution to take place in your life where you begin to esteem the others better than yourself, where you begin to love your neighbor as yourself, where you begin to do to others as you would have them do unto yourself, where you begin to care for others as you care for yourself and in which you're consumed in the love of God, loving you with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength. This is Christianity. This is the life.

This is the revolution that Jesus brought in. And with this, we'll see the offensive in the warfare. With this, we'll win victories in Mexico, in Europe.

With this, you'll bring about a spiritual revolution wherever you go. God says, not I, this is God's message. Invite each one of us.

Realize that if God has told us to do this, he will give us the grace to do it. For God is not a liar. And each and every command in the word has just enough grace from God to enable us to obey.

Let us pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you for thy word. We thank you that it's true.

It's like a double-edged sword. We thank thee that God loved us and we understand his love through seeing Jesus Christ laying down his life. And might each one of us in our prayer even now lay down our lives for God and for the brethren that we might see spiritual revolution in this year.

For we ask it in Jesus' name, amen.

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