

Love Me

by Jack Hyles

The Lord wants us to love Him deeply and make love to Him, not just go through the motions of serving Him.

Duration: 47:28

Scripture: Psalm 91:4, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 23:37, Matthew 26:6-7, John 13:23, John 13:25

Topics: "Grief And Hope", "Gods Love"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the difference between weeping with hope and weeping without hope. He shares a story about a family mourning the loss of a loved one, where one member took the loss particularly hard. The speaker also recounts a personal experience at an airport, observing two mothers saying goodbye to their sons, one going to Vietnam and the other to college. The speaker emphasizes that although both mothers cried, their tears were different because of the varying levels of danger their sons would face. The sermon concludes with a reference to the Song of Solomon, highlighting the love and embrace of Jesus for his people.

Transcript

People ask often, what's the hardest thing you do as a pastor? The most tiring thing I do is have a wedding rehearsal. Mrs. Colston will vouch for that. That's the most tiring thing in the world, is a wedding rehearsal.

The hardest thing I do is have a funeral of one of my people. I don't know why, I know they're in heaven, but far and away the hardest thing that I do is to bury one of the members of this church. I think it's because of the loved ones.

Last Tuesday afternoon, I stood here in the body of one of our men, lay here in the casket with his little family over here, a little group as it's been now so many times in these 13 years. If you'll let me stay here another year, I will have been the pastor who's been pastor of this church the longest, in its history. Our church is 85 years of age, nearly.

Dr. Horton served for 14 years. I passed Dr. Miller two years ago, and if you'll extend me a call for another year, I will have... You better. I'll tell you why.

Oh, you're far and dead. You better keep me around here till we get up even, I tell you for sure. And... But... I've stood here many times, in the chapel and in funeral parlors and in the auditorium next door, and

have laid to rest our people.

Last Tuesday, we came to the place where we did it again. Little family here at the front, and their hearts were broken. After we spoke for a while and had the service, folks came by to view the body, as is our custom.

Brother Fisk helped me in the service, and he stood at the foot of the casket, and I stood here at the head as the folks came by, which is also our custom. And, of course, the family wept. Thank God, as the Apostle Paul said, they did not weep as those that have no hope.

They wept, but not as those that have no hope. There's a difference in the way those that have hope weep, and those that have no hope weep. It looks the same.

I was at the airport one day, oh, it's been a year or so ago now, and I saw two mothers and father, well, two sets of parents, saying goodbye to two sons. And both mothers were crying, looked exactly alike, had that look on their face, you know, and looked exactly, couldn't tell they were different. But one boy was going to Vietnam, and the other was going away to college.

Now, they all cried, but they did not cry the same tears. Because the one who was going away to the State University would be in more danger. As Joe Boyd says, excuse me, but you know it's so.

But, no, the mother who was saying goodbye to the boy that was going to Vietnam looked exactly like the other. But he wasn't the same. One mother was saying goodbye to a son, maybe for the last time.

But one was saying goodbye until the semester break. It looked the same. But, you see, one was weeping as those that had little hope, and one was not weeping as those that had little hope.

Now, the Lord says, I want you to cry, and I expect you to cry when you go to a funeral, and your loved ones die, but there's a difference in the tears. And so they cried, not as those that had no hope. Brother Fisk and I were standing together after the family had come by, and one member of the family and I, I hope I'll not be embarrassing to anybody, I would not want to, but the illustration is so beautiful, I must use it.

And Brother Fisk pointed to one member of the family and said he took it the hardest. He said, Pastor, when I was at the hospital, Mr. Peterson had just had a stroke, and of course he was unable to move his body. And this particular member of the family, well, I'll just go ahead and say it was Dick Peterson, the son.

He said Dick took it harder than anybody. And I said, well, what do you mean? And he said at the hospital, Mr. Peterson had his stroke. He couldn't move his arms.

He was unconscious. And Dick threw himself over his dad's body and said, Daddy, Daddy, love me. Love me.

And he took his lifeless arms and put them around his own neck, his daddy's lifeless arms, and put them around his own neck and said, Squeeze, squeeze, love me, Daddy. Love me. And I think that was one of the most moving things I'd ever heard.

He loved his dad. His dad could not reciprocate his love, could not return his affection. And there's the son, trying to put life in his daddy's body, saying, Love me.

And I began to think, and I thought a good part of the afternoon and evening. I drove Tuesday afternoon up to Holland, Michigan, where I preached Tuesday night. And all the way on the trip, often on the trip, I thought about those words, Dick Peterson saying to his dad, Love me.

Love me. Love me, Daddy. Putting his arms around him and saying, Squeeze, squeeze, love me.

No doubt those arms had been around that boy many times. And as a child, those arms had hugged the boy. And as a youngster, those arms had hugged the boy, and the lips had kissed the boy's brow, and he had caressed the boy with his arms.

And as an adult, no doubt, he still, I know my boy and I don't hug a great deal. In fact, we sometimes go several days without hugging each other. In fact, both of us are hoping we'll go several years without hugging each other.

But after he graduated, the night he graduated, I met him in the chapel, and I said, Son, I want to see you a minute. And he came over to the groom's room, the little room there off the chapel. And I said, I'm proud of you, Doc.

And for some reason or other, he wanted to hug me. I can understand why I'm so huggable. But he, and so we hugged each other.

Now that's the first time we've hugged in a long time. But Dick, I can understand a little bit why Dick would say, Daddy, love me, hug me, squeeze me. And I thought, and I want to share with you the thoughts that I had as I drove to Holland, Michigan.

It'll not be a life-changing message, but I think it'll be one that'll let you know something about the Savior's heart and that He wants us to love Him. I remembered a mother in Texas who had a son who died. He was 24 years of age.

And I went up to Sulphur Springs, Texas. And I won't forget it because the father was saved there at the funeral. He came and threw his arms around the son and wept over him and said, I trust Jesus now.

I want to be saved now. Dick, I want to be saved. Oh, Thomas, I want to be saved now.

And over the body of his son, the father received Christ as the Savior. By the way, he joined a Methodist church. Everybody's doing a mistake or two every once in a while, you know.

And the last I heard, he was the chairman of the board in this Methodist church. It so happened this was a fundamental Methodist church. And he was the chairman of the board years and years later.

But he was saved over the dead body of his son, Thomas Stubblefield. But that mother, that mother came up and she put her arms around the son's, his son was lying in the casket. She put her arms around his head.

And she said, Thomas, and she kissed him. And she said, Thomas, kiss me back. Kiss me back.

And, of course, the lifeless lips, the cold lips of the boy could not move nor return the affection of his mother. And I can see her as she, as she even, forgive her, forgive me, and I forgave her. But she even slapped his face a little bit.

And she said, Thomas, kiss me back. And she placed her lips to his cold lips. And unless you felt the cold body of one of your loved ones, you don't know really what death is all about yet.

Oh, when I touched my dad and I touched his cold, stone-cold face, something went through me. I'll never forget how I felt. And that mother kissed Thomas and said, Thomas, kiss me back.

Kiss me back. And Thomas couldn't kiss her back. And the mother said, Thomas, hug me.

And she reached out in the casket. And, of course, the arms go down a little bit beyond where the opening is. And she pulled those arms out of the casket.

And she pulled them up around her neck. And she got down next to him and said, Thomas, hug me. Thomas, hug me.

And then soon she got beside herself. And she, not hard, but gently, she slapped him again and said, Kiss me, son. Kiss me, son.

Son, hug your mama. Hug your mama. And so my mind thought about the Lord Jesus Christ.

I'll ask you not to use your Bibles, but I'm going to use mine a little bit tonight. Over in Song of Solomon, chapter 2, in verse 6, there's a sweet verse. Listen to it.

Here's a picture of the Savior and His people as typified by two lovers. And it says, in Song of Solomon 2, 6, it says, His left hand is under my head, and His right hand doth embrace me. Here are two lovers picturing Jesus.

And it says that His left hand is under my head, and His right hand doth embrace me. In other words, the right hand is around the body and the left hand is around the head. And the lovers are embracing a picture of the sweet love that ought to exist between Jesus and His people.

And our Lord is simply saying, I want you to love me. I want to show you how I want you to love. I want you to love me with an affectionate love.

Love me, our Lord says. And I'm sure our Lord comes to many of you tonight who are away from Him and not serving Him. And our Lord says, love me.

And He picks up your lifeless, dead arms, spiritual arms, and puts them around His neck and says, love me, love me, love me, love me. It says here, His left hand is under my head, and His right hand doth embrace me. But over here in chapter 8 and verse 3, in the same book it says, His left hand should be under my head, and His right hand should embrace me.

I thought about that passage. In chapter 2, it says His left hand is under my head, and His right hand does embrace me. But something happened between chapter 2 and chapter 8. The loving left hand of the lover had been removed, and now the lover says, I wish His left hand were under my head.

But He's been removed. And the right arm that was embracing has been removed. And a picture of Jesus.

Jesus says, there was a day when you got close to me, and I could put my left hand under your head, and my right arm could embrace you, and I could hold you unto myself. But, oh, Christians grow so cold. We've got away from God.

Oh, we still go to church. We still have a Scofield Bible. We still believe in the Millennium.

We still don't smoke cigarettes. We still don't drink liquor. We're still fundamentalists.

We still can dot the i's and cross the t's. But did you know, ladies and gentlemen, there's more to Christianity than just believing that Jesus is going to come again, and not smoking and not drinking. God didn't make you His child.

God didn't make us and redeem us in order that we'd just be clean, and that's all. God made us to love Himself. I want to ask you a question tonight.

As the Savior looks down from heaven, was there a time when He said about you, His left hand is under my head, and His right hand embraces me? And now then, though you're still saved, you don't make love to Christ anymore? You don't get close enough to where He can hug you to His breast anymore? Don't you recall how Jesus used to love for John to lean His head on His breast? The disciple whom Jesus loved. That's who He was called. Wonder why He loved John so much? He loved to feel His head on His breast.

I was reading last night, and let me share this with you. The Bible says that at the Last Supper, that our Lord reclined, and it said that John laid His head on Jesus' breast. But in the Greek, it seems to say that our Lord... Actually, they were sitting at the table.

Maybe they didn't have any chairs. Maybe they did. They're sitting at the table.

And our Lord laid down to rest after He ate. And John laid down beside Him. And the Bible seems to say that John leans over and puts His head on the breast of Christ.

And the Bible says He's the disciple that Jesus loved. God wants you to love Him. He looks down tonight and He says, He says, You preachers! It's not enough to preach a sermon.

I've said this often. Did you know I'd rather be a good Christian than a good preacher? And if people ask me, if they see me reading my Bible on an airplane or something, they'll say, You must be a preacher! I'll say, I'm a Christian. I'm a Christian.

And all Christians all read their Bibles. I don't go ahead and say this, but I'll say I'm a Christian. I want to love the Lord.

Charles Spurgeon, it is said that he prayed. Some of those who heard him pray said that as he prayed, he would look up to God and he'd say, Dear Jesus, help me to love You so. And to be so sincere that when I look up to Heaven and say, Dear Jesus, I love Thee.

You can look down from Heaven and say, I know it, Charles. I know it, Charles. Does God know you love Him? Does the Lord hunger for your fellowship? Does the Lord hunger for your left hand to have His left hand under your head and His right hand to embrace you? You know, listen, listen.

In a Jerusalem like this, and by the way, this area is rapidly becoming a Jerusalem. I mean, a Mecca of fundamentalists and Christian witnesses from all over the country. People are coming in.

And here's our high schools and our high schools and our grade schools and now our college. And we have all the activity going on. You listen to me and you listen to me.

Well, God will not be pleased with us if we get so busy doing His service that we forget to make love to Him. We've got to say, Dear Jesus, I love You. And I was thinking about the song of Solomon.

Our Lord wanted us to know how He wanted us to love Him and how He wanted to love us. And so He said, I want My left hand under your head and I want to embrace you with My right hand. The writers love to write about it.

Close to Thee, close to Thee, Thou My everlasting portion, Savior, let me walk with Thee. Draw me nearer, nearer, nearer, blessed Lord. And the psalmist knew how to put it when he said, He shall cover Thee with His feathers and under His wings shalt Thou trust.

The Lord loved to use the intimate talk concerning our relationship with Him. He asked a question, How long has it been since you made love to Jesus? Boys, hey! How long has it been since you made love to Jesus? How long has it been since you cuddled forgive me the crude illustration, but you cuddled up close to Jesus and said, Jesus, I'm not here. Because I want something.

Though I do want something, I'll get to that later. But I'm not here just to tell you. Oh, just to tell you how much Bible I know.

I'm not here just to chat with you. I just wanted to spend a little time with you. And I wanted to tell you that I love you.

The other day, someone came to my office, a teenager, a lovely girl, and she said, Brother Hiles, I don't have any troubles. I don't have any problems. I just want to tell you, I love you.

I married a little couple the other day. We're standing right here at the altar. And here was the groom right beside the lovely bride.

And we'd had a beautiful wedding. And we'd had a lovely time at the rehearsal and then the wedding. And before I started to leave, and the little bride who grew up in our church, she said, Brother Hiles, I love you.

And she placed a holy kiss on my cheek. Would all the brides that want to kiss me see me after the service, please. But she placed a holy kiss on my cheek.

And she said, I love you, Brother Hiles. I love you. And so they gave me some money for the wedding.

I either gave it back or put it in the offering plate. I never take any. I never keep it.

You know why? I want the love. And our Lord, we're made in the image of God. Our Lord looked down and made us in His own image.

If we want folks to love us, don't you think our Lord wants us to love Him? How long has it been since you just took a walk and said, Dear God, I love you. I'm not here to talk to you about theology. I'm not here to tell you about all my needs.

I'm not here to pray for money for Baptist City. By the way, you let me pray for that. I'm busy.

I got that line all tied up. But, Lord, I'm just here to tell you that I love you. And I thought about that at the hospital.

Daddy, love me. Kiss me. Love me.

I thought about that mother up in Sulphur Springs saying, Thomas, kiss mother. Kiss mother. Kiss me.

Kiss me. That's why our Lord sometimes reaches down and slaps us on the face and puts us on our back in the hospital. Or makes us have to be laid up for a while with the flu.

Why? He's slapping us and He's saying, Kiss me. Love me. Let me get close to you and love me like you used to.

I kept on thinking. I thought of that sweet time our Lord had been raised from the dead. Peter had gone back fishing.

Our Lord went out. You recall the story how He saw him fishing and said, Have you caught anything? They said, No, we've fished all night and haven't caught anything. They said more than no.

In fact, all the words that they said are not in the Bible. You know why? I've fished all night and haven't caught anything. I know what you say.

You say, Dirty breaker, backer, packer, loader, dirty splatter, ruff, blotcher, blot. That's what you say. Which is being interpreted as censored.

But, I've heard it. I've heard it. And, No! You say, How do you know Peter cursed? If Peter were cursed while our Lord was being crucified, he'd dead sure curse after fishing and not catching anything.

In fact, anybody would. We used to say in Texas, That's bad enough to make a preacher cuss. And we've got words that's bad enough to make a preacher cuss on Sunday.

And so, Peter was out fishing. Our Lord, Caught anything? Peter said, No! And he said, Put your nets over here. And you recall how they got a big lot of fish.

And our Lord went and he cooked some fish. And they had breakfast together early that morning. And they sat down after breakfast.

And Jesus said, Peter, Lovest thou me? You folks who have been here know that word love means agape. It's a deep love. Jesus said, Peter, do you deeply love me? And Peter said, Lord, thou knowest I fillet o' you.

That's I am fond of you. The same word in English but not in the Greek. Peter, Jesus said, Do you deeply love me? And Peter said, I fillet o' you.

I am fond of you. And the second time, Jesus said, Do you love me, Peter? And Peter said, Lord, I am fond of you. And I think the heart of the Savior wanted to hear him say, I agape you.

And Peter said, Jesus said, Peter, do you agape me? And Peter said, I am fond of you. I think there are two reasons why our Lord kept asking him. The first thing, he wants our agape.

He doesn't want our little fondness. Yeah, I love the Lord. There is a name I love to hear.

I love to sing. It's worth it. Sounds like music in my ear.

The sweetest name on earth. Oh, I love Jesus. I think that Peter, the Lord is saying, I want you to say, Oh, I love Jesus.

I agape you. But I think there's a second reason why our Lord asked him three times. You know why? Our Lord wanted to know three times.

I was in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. And I was walking through the airport to catch a plane. And up on a poster was a cute, but it's about that big, was a poster.

And it had these little kids on it. Charlie Brown. The only thing I know about Charlie Brown, he ran for president once.

And I don't know who he is or anything. But didn't get elected. But Charlie Brown or Peanuts or some of those other worldly characters, I never read such stuff.

I'm too busy reading Dick Tracy. But it was cute. It had this little boy talking to this little girl.

And one of them, and I forget which one was saying it, but it was in Pittsburgh where I saw it. And one of them was saying to the other, tell me if you love me or not. You told me once, but I forgot.

And I thought that's what the Savior is saying to Peter here. The Savior is saying, Peter, do you love me? And if Peter had said, I got to you, I think the Savior would ask him again. You know, I want to hear it again.

Let's see, you've got little girls here beside you. Did they ever say, I love you, Daddy? They did? How many times, did they say it one time back yonder? And you don't care about hearing it anymore, do you? Huh? Did she ever pat you on the cheek and say, you're a good Daddy? Huh? Did you ever have her knock you in the jaw and say, you're a good Daddy? Well, you don't want that anymore, do you? I bet you could take it every night. I bet you could take it several times a day.

There's not a parent in this room, but what couldn't take it time and time again if the little child looked up and said, I love you. I love you. Or, I love you, Mommy.

Or, I love you, Daddy. And, do you play the little game? When Becky was a little girl, she used to play the little game, Do you love me? That's four times you'd squeeze. Do you love me? And then she'd answer back, Yes, I do.

Then I'd ask, How much? That's two squeezes. And then she'd go, Mmm. And I used to just ask about that a lot of times.

Do you love me? Oh, I just thought of something funny. You know Bob Keyes? The fellow who preached the baccalaureate service here? Bob and I went to high school together. He had a girl named Sylvia Jensen.

They were really in love. They held hands during, I was about to say chapel, during assembly. It weren't chapel, I'll tell you for sure.

And so, I sat behind them. I didn't have a girlfriend, because I was a good Christian. but, I, Bob and Sylvia were sitting in front of me one day.

I hadn't thought of this in years. And so, the lights went out. We were having a movie in the assembly.

Adamson High School, 2,000 students in assembly. And I was sitting right behind Bob and Sylvia. And I thought I'd have some fun.

And so I reached up, and during the, I saw, they'd been holding hands, but they quit. And I reached up, and I reached out, and I got Bob's hand. And he reached it, and he squeezed it.

And I rubbed his hand, like that. That's one reason why he had a heart attack. And, he rubbed my hand back, like that.

And, so I said, I squeezed four times, Do you love me? And Bob squeezed back, Yes, I do. And I squeezed back, How much? And he squeezed, and he squeezed, and he squeezed. And I reached up, and I rubbed his hand.

He rubbed my hand. And, so finally, I leaned up beside him, and I said, I love you. He turned around, You never saw a man so mad in your life.

I hadn't thought about that in years. I don't know when I thought about that last. But, you ask him sometimes.

I'm the only fellow in the country who's ever played hands with Bob Keyes. but, that's why you ask that. Do you love me? How many times have you said to your child, Do you love me? Do you love me? Why? You want to hear it? Well, Jesus wants to hear it.

And that's why he said, Peter, Do you love me? And Peter said, Thou knowest that I'm fond of you. And Jesus wanted to hear it again. Do you love me? And he said, Thou knowest I'm fond of thee.

Do you love me? You know why I think he said it three times? I think he's trying to tell us that he's always asking that question. He's asking you young people, Jesus, to say, Do you love me? And he wants to hear you say, Oh yes, I love you. And he's asking us adults.

He's saying, Do you love me? And Jesus, and he wants to hear us say, Oh yes, I love you. And, and so he asked, three times. And I thought, as I relived the experience of that young man saying, Daddy, kiss me.

Daddy, hug me. Daddy, squeeze. I thought of that lady at Sulphur Springs, Texas.

And I thought of the empty arms of Christ when his left hand was around under our head and his right arm did embrace us and we drift away and get cold. And I thought of Jesus when he said to Peter, And then I kept thinking. I thought of Jesus overlooking Jerusalem.

And you recall how that he prayed, which boys on the front, second row, you keep your eyes on me while I preach. I thought of Jesus as he, over the city of Jerusalem, and he said, Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thee, the English says, as a, as a hen doth gather her chicks. But in the Greek it means, as a bird doth gather her little birds under her wing.

How often would I have, have gathered thee like a, a mother bird would reach her, her wings out and pull her on to her breast. How often would I have gathered thee like that. But he said, You would not.

He's saying the same thing that Dick Peterson said to his dad, Daddy hug me. He's saying the same thing that that little lady said in Softer Springs, Texas. Thomas kiss me.

Thomas kiss your mother. Thomas hug me. Jesus is simply saying, Oh Jerusalem, hug me.

Hug me Jerusalem. I love you. Hug me.

Jerusalem, I wanted to hug you and I wanted to bring you to my breast, but you would not. Hug me Jerusalem. Kiss me Jerusalem.

Hug me. Kiss me. I want to love you and I want you to love me.

There's a little word there that I need to talk to you, say a word about, and that word gather, it's not just the word gather. There's, there are two words that are used for gather. One word is the word gather and the other uses the word EPI in front of it, or gather here.

Let's suppose I said, Okay everybody, all you folks out in the street, let's gather now. It would mean where we gather. But if I said, Okay, I'm going to hold up my hand.

Everybody gather around me. That's the word used here. It means gather here.

Gather where? Gather close to Jesus. Jesus just doesn't want His people gathered. He wants them gathered close to Him.

When He said, I pray that they shall be one, even as we're one. He wasn't praying that we'd all get together. He was praying we'd all get together around Him.

I hear preachers talking to people, Oh, let's all get together. The liberal says, Let's all get together. Mr. McGovern, forgive the dirty word, he says, Let's all get together.

And the democrats say, Let's all get together. And Mr. Kennedy says, Let's all get together. And Mr. Percy says, Let's all get together.

And the National Council of Churches says, Let's all get together. And the word is union and union and union and get together, get together. God is not interested in any kind of get together unless we get together around His Son.

The unity the Bible speaks about is the unity around Jesus. That's why I don't belong to the Ministerial Association in heaven and that's why I won't belong to it. So every pastor in the group has to sign a statement that he gathers around the virgin birth and sinless life of Jesus Christ.

Unless he believes he's the Son of God. There's no harmony. There's no unity unless we gather around Him.

And our Lord says, Oh Jerusalem, I would have loved to have gathered you around Me, gathered you close to Me. And our Lord comes tonight and He says to every one of His children, Get close to Me. And by the way, if all these one world, one race, one sex, one government, one religion crowd would just get in the Bible, they'd find there's nothing in the Bible that tells us all to get together.

The Bible teaches us to get close to Him and when we get close to Him, we as a by-product will all be together. Our job is not to draw close to each other. Our job is to draw close to Him.

Tonight I said, Okay Brother John, what's this now? Brother John, can you get up? Alright, be careful now. I don't want your stitches to break. You'll talk all the rest of your life if you have to have it again.

Okay, would you mind getting up? Be careful, you're aged, you know. Alright, fellas, gather around, get close to Me. Close to Me, fellas.

Get close to Me. Notice what they're doing? They're getting close to each other too. You see, any kind of gathering unless it's around the Person of Christ is a false gathering.

Thank you, fellas. That's why the Tower of Babel was no good. That's why the National Council of Churches is no good.

That's why the ecumenicalism that is not built on the Word of God as being the verbally inspired Word of God and Jesus as being the virgin-born Son of God, it's a false unity. It's not scriptural unity because it's not built around the Person of Jesus Christ. And I thought, Our Lord wants us to come to Him.

And then I thought again as I drove to Holland, Michigan. I thought about that story over in, I won't turn to it, but over in the 26th chapter of Matthew. Don't you recall, Our Lord loved to be in the home of Mary and Martha.

He loved to be in their home. And one night He was sitting and one of the ladies came and she, and I think it was Mary Bethany, she loved Him so. And she came and she broke an alabaster box of almond and she anointed Jesus' feet.

And Judas Iscariot who was the treasurer, what he said was in the Greek was good night, that could have been used at Baptist City. That's in the Greek. You won't get that in the English.

But Judas said, Lord, that could have been sold for so much money and been given to the poor. But Our Lord said, He said, Let her alone. She had done what she could.

The poor you have with you always. What was Our Lord saying? He said, I enjoyed it. I enjoyed it.

Let her alone. Our Lord enjoys being loved. And Our Lord looks at you tonight and says, Love me.

Love me! You who are backslidden. Love me! You who don't pray. Love me! You who don't read your Bible.

Love me! You to whom Christianity is simply a code or a set of rules or a set of laws. Do's and don'ts. Love me! You who just put everything that's bad and don't spend time with God.

Love me! We who get so busy in the Lord's work and the Lord's service, we don't take time with Him. And Our Lord says, Love me! Kiss me! Put your arms around me! And then some Pharisees say, That could have been sold. Our Lord says, Let her alone.

She has done what she could. Don't you recall, and I kept thinking, Don't you recall when Lazarus was dead and Jesus came to the grave Listen now. He came to Lazarus' grave and the Bible says, Jesus wept.

I'm not sure, I don't think that's the only reason why they said this, but they said one of the most beautiful statements in all the Bible as they watched Jesus at the grave of Lazarus. Oh, how He loved Him! Oh, how He loved Him! Do you think maybe Jesus was there at the grave of Lazarus and His mind wandered back to that little house in Bethany where He had eaten so many times and tears began to fall and He loved Him and the people saw the face of Christ and they said, Oh, how He loved Him! Our Lord maybe thought

about the times that Lazarus didn't say very much. His sister did all the talking.

His sister did all the talking. And Lazarus didn't say very much but our Lord remembered how when He had come He was headed and set His face like a flint toward Jerusalem and it will just be tomorrow when He is going to be betrayed and delivered into the hands of wicked soldiers and our Lord has one last night. What would He do? The last night before He goes to the angry mob.

The last night before the Passion Week. The last night before the awful suffering. The last night.

Where would He go? He goes to the home of Mary and Martha and Lazarus. And our Lord looks back at times like that as He looks at those times except at the tomb of Lazarus and there is something in His face and some pathos and some sincerity and some love and they say oh how He loved Him. I heard a cute little story the other day sort of illustrates what I am saying.

A pastor was in his study praying and didn't come to the pulpit on time and the service had begun and they looked for the pastor to come in and he didn't come in. And finally a little boy was walking down the hallway and he heard the pastor saying Lord I am not going to go alone. I am not going to go in there alone.

I am not going to go unless you go with me. I am not going to go unless you go with me. And the deacon chairman got up and he said folks the pastor is not here.

And this little boy raised his hand out in the audience and the pastor said what is it son? And the deacon chairman said what is it? And the little boy said the pastor is not here but he is coming. And he is going to bring that other one too. He is going to bring that other one too.

I thought about that this morning. I want to bring the other one too. When I walk in the pulpit I want to bring the other one.

When I preach to you I want to have the other one. When I live I want to have the other one. I want you to have the other one.

How long has it been since you just got alone and said oh Jesus I love you. My Jesus I love thee I know thou art mine for thee all the folly of sin I resign. My gracious redeemer my savior art thou if ever I loved thee.

My Jesus it is now in mansions of glory and enlisted light I'll ever adore thee in heavens so bright. How long has it been since you said it? He wants to hear you say it. I don't know why.

I don't know why he wants to hear sinners like us. I don't know why Jesus wants to hear Jack Hiles say I love you Jesus but he does. He comes tonight and he says Ray son of Harold lovest thou me Jack son of Willis Hattie Lord thou knowest that I love you lovest thou me I love you Lord lovest thou me I love you Lord lovest thou me I love you Lord and that's what he wants from you tonight.

He wants you to love him. He wants you to love him. Listen to me.

Did you know that the better the Christian the more the temptation not to make love to Jesus. Did you hear what I said? The better the Christian. You know it's harder for the preacher to make love to Jesus than it is for the layman.

You know why? Because he has some things he can substitute for that. You know it's harder for the professor to make love to Jesus than it is for the student. You know why? Because he thinks he's grown above that.

No you haven't doctor. No you haven't professor. No you haven't theologian.

No you haven't historian. You know you you the student may see you as as Dr. Bostead. Is it Dr. Bostead? She asked her how to pronounce her name.

She said just like Bumstead but Bo instead of Bum. The students I think think it's Bum instead of Bo. But anyway I uh uh you may be Dr. Evans and Dr. Hiles and Dr. Billings but there's one place where you're just a little child and that's when you come to the father.

The father doesn't say what is it Dr. Billings? Dr. Hiles what is your request today? No the father says son lovest thou me lovest thou me? Every house in this town just about every house in this town I go to folks that say oh Pastor Hiles our uh our Dr. Hiles our Reverend Hiles there's one house over in Calumet City where my mother lives I ring the doorbell she says who is it? I say this is Jack Jack? I'll never say that to you I said to mother this is Jack I call Chattanooga Tennessee want to talk to Lee Robertson call him on the phone hello Dr.

Robertson in no he's on vacation he's visiting his mother she's sick I call down to Louisville Kentucky where's mother live before she died and she said hello I said is Dr. Lee Robertson there she said yes Lee I thought good now he'll kill her nobody calls Dr. Robertson Lee yeah she does or she did she did that's why our Lord comes in 1 John chapter 2 verse 1 my little children now Dr. how's to you maybe a brother how's to you a pastor how's to you just Jack to the father and he comes tonight and he says I want my left arm around your head and my right arm I want to embrace you tonight in our early class we talked about predestination millennium tribulation limited atonement those things are good but they're not worth a dime unless you're in love with Jesus love us thou me he asked love us thou me love us thou me tell me if you love me or not you told me once but I forgot do you love me Jesus asked I wonder how many would say with a house I did it again I did it again I got so busy I forgot to make love to him I did it again I didn't mean to I didn't plan it it just worked out that way I got so busy maybe even doing the Lord's work but I got so busy I haven't made love to him like I should oh there was a day when his left hand was under my head and his right hand embraced me but not now you brought me to the Holy Spirit brought me through you tonight to realize my love life with Jesus is lacking I'm sorry I didn't mean to but it happened again I want God to forgive me would you lift your hand please all over the building all over the building all over the building thank you with heads bowed let's just sing and mean it my Jesus I love thee I know the heart line just above a whisper shall we sing it my Jesus do you mean it tonight is his left hand under your head and his right hand embracing you love us thou me he asked our heads are bowed in a few moments we're going to sing as the choir sings I'm going to ask them to sing that song and as they sing it I'm going to ask them to sing that I'm going ask them song and going to ask them to sing and I'm going to Who else would say, pray for me, I don't know that I'm saved, God bless you, on the back row, upstairs, I see you, God bless you, thank you, I hope you'll trust Jesus tonight.

Who else, anywhere in the house, you'd say, well, the house, pray for me, I don't even know that I'm saved, I want to know that I'm saved, pray for me, lift your hand way up high, would you please? Who else, lift it way up high, anywhere in the house, God bless you little fella. Who else, anywhere in the house, you want to know that you're saved, but you don't know that you're saved, but now, would you lift your

hand, Father, I pray for these three and others perhaps that I did not see, I pray tonight they'll say yes to Jesus.

Our heads are bowed, little lady, over on my left, God loves you, won't you right now say, dear Jesus, I know I'm a sinner, and I know you died for me, and I trust you as my Savior tonight, won't you do that? Then we'll sing in just a minute, leave your seat and come down to this aisle, let me know. Way back in the balcony I saw a hand, won't you right now say, dear Jesus, I take you as my Savior tonight, won't you say it and mean it, and come down to the balcony steps and down to the front and let me know about it. Wait a minute, how many have been saved and you know you're saved, but you've not been baptized since you got saved, would you raise your hand please, all over the building, you know that you're saved, but you've not been baptized since you got saved, would you lift your hand, way up high, way up high, God bless you, son, are there others, way up high, way up high, may I see your hand, God bless you, little lady, I see you, are there others, way up high, you've been saved but not baptized yet, would you lift your hand please, I'm not going to embarrass you, I promise.

All right, you come tonight on the first stanza, you sit by the house, how can I love Jesus? He said, if you love me, you will keep my commandments, if you love me, you will, not you may or might or should, but you will, how can I assure him I love him, by obeying his commandment, for what, to get baptized, so you come tonight for baptism, and others ought to come to join the church by transfer of membership, and so when we stand and sing, if you need to come and kneel at the altar, you just come without taking my hand, if you need to come and receive Christ, to know that you're saved or get baptized or join the church, I'll meet you here at the front, heavenly father, get glory to thy son, to thyself in this invitation, amen, shall we stand please, the choir will sing, my Jesus, I love thee, I know thou art mine, and as the choir sings it, way on the back row, you come, and over here on my left, you come and receive Christ, and back here, and others come for baptism, salvation, church membership, show you love him tonight, do it while we sing, come on, sing choir, come on right now.

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