

# Xv. Three Steps in Loving the Lord

by John Sung

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*To love the Lord is the greatest thing we can do, and we can know, experience, and be filled with His love by reading the Bible, trusting in Him, and choosing to love Him above all else.*

**Scripture:** Luke 10:38

**Topics:** "Love for God", "Experiencing Christ's Love"

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## Description

John Sung emphasizes the importance of loving the Lord through three key steps: knowing His love, experiencing His love, and being filled with His love. He illustrates these points through the story of Mary, who chose to sit at Jesus' feet and learn from Him, contrasting her devotion with Martha's busyness. Sung highlights that true love for Christ is remembered and celebrated, as seen in Mary's anointing of Jesus, which symbolizes total devotion. He encourages believers to embrace the transformative power of Christ's love in their lives and families. Ultimately, Sung calls for a deeper understanding and experience of Jesus' love, which leads to a more profound love for Him.

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## Transcript

I remember it was January 1934 that I came here. Two hundred were saved and born again. I also received two hundred letters requesting prayer. Since then I have not ceased to pray for them. Most of them were students.

Three years have passed. As for myself, every three years finds my life on a different plane .... Now, I've not come here for three years. Unexpectedly Pastor Tang came yesterday to invite me. Though I stay not far from you, I have not come. But God wants me to come this time, so I come.

My three years previous to this saw me on the road of faith. Henceforth God wants me to go on the road of love. So, I have chosen for my topic this morning: "Love."

In the Bible it is Mary who loves the Lord most. Our Lord wants us to remember two things most --- love and the precious blood. First is the precious blood that flows from His Cross for our sins. Second to be remembered is not some great man, but a girl called Mary. Wherever the Gospel is preached, what Mary had done for our Lord shall be remembered. Yes, from olden days, there is only this Mary mentioned for remembrance. Why does our Lord want us to remember her? Because her love is the greatest.

1. By Knowing the Lord's Love (Luke 10:38-42).

"Now it came to pass as they went, that he entered into a certain village; and a certain woman, named Martha, received him into the house. And she had a sister, called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, "Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her, therefore, that she help me." And Jesus answered, and said unto her, "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things. But one thing is needful, and Mary has chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." This is the first mention of Mary in the Bible.

In this passage of Scripture we see Jesus and his twelve disciples come to a village. Here a family of three, Martha the big sister and Mary with their younger brother (perhaps gone out) received them. Thank the Lord, there is one family at least in Bethany willing to receive the Lord, one in a world filled with every evil and sin! Jesus says, "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." Few there are that love the Lord. Yet the Lord comes into the world to give us His love. He left His throne in heaven to come into the world incarnated a man. Who will receive His love? How can we comprehend the length, breath, depth and height of our Lord's love? He comes into the world to love us, even to death. He shed His precious blood and has forgiven us all our sins. Whom does He love? He loves the greatest of sinners! He loves us all in the world to the very last, to the death of the cross. What greater love is there than this? I have followed the Lord for nine years, and I have not comprehended His love. Here the Lord is seen imparting His love to them.

As for Martha, she is cooking not for the three of them, which was simple, but for Jesus and His twelve disciples. And His disciples were fishermen with a big appetite. While Martha was working her head off her brother had made himself scarce and her sister sat at Jesus' feet to hear Him expound how He loved us, and had descended from heaven even to their home.

Martha wanted Mary's helping hand, but Mary kept on listening without a care. She had cast aside everything else in order to learn what it was for the Lord to come into the world and give us His love. Jesus said, "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things. But one thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." You are busy, busy with many things, but Mary is busy with only one thing. How many are troubled and worried everyday about their children's education, and when they get older about their sons' and daughters' marriage, and when babies are born, about their feeding! Aya! Truly they are like the traffic on the main road rushing up and down! But not Mary. She wants only to know what the Lord's love is. Today you who have come to Church are also desirous of knowing the length, breadth, height and depth of His love. The crucifixion of Christ is the greatest picture, for there He is seen shedding His blood and giving up His life. If you desire to know what is Christ's love then you will love Him more.

## 2. By Experiencing Christ's Love

Second, let us speak on Mary's experience of Christ's love. This is recorded in John 11. Here are Mary's brother and sister, the three of them all loving the Lord. The two sisters are unmarried, but they are a happy family with the cooperation of their brother.

But where is the family that enjoys peace unbroken day after day? Not even this one, for Mary's brother, Lazarus, fell ill. The doctor said, "This sickness is not serious." But, it got worse and worse as the day went by. Martha boiled some medicinal herbs while Mary kept watch over his sickbed. Meanwhile they had sent for Jesus. For two days they waited, but Jesus did not come. Their fears increased. Lazarus died --- a

picture of recurrent trouble in this life. Which house is exempt from such unhappiness? Finally, Jesus came. Martha went out to welcome him. She said, "Lord, if You had come earlier, my brother had not died." Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And he that liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." Jesus' love changes not. The love between friends is built on money. You have money, you have friends. You have no money, you have no friends. Not even the love between husband and wife is reliable.

A certain sister loved her husband very much. Her husband was a doctor. When he removed to Shanghai to practice, she began to discover her husband's paying attention to another woman. One day she wrote a note and put it on her husband's table. Then she took sleeping pills and committed suicide. When the husband came home and opened the letter, on it was written this brief note, "I thought you loved me. But it has turned out that you are loving another."

When Mary heard Jesus come, she burst into tears. Ah! what a sorrowful family. But Jesus has come! He ordered them to roll away the stone of Lazarus' tomb. He called Lazarus to come out of the tomb. Jesus said, "I love him!" The Risen Saviour, the Lord of life! When the Lord comes to a family, that family is wholly transformed.

Mary did not merely know the Lord's love. She must also experience it, taste it, that we through her might find our faith firmly rooted. In a family where there is not peace between mother and daughter-in-law, when Jesus comes peace comes. Wherever Jesus goes, he transforms Jesus is like Spring bringing new life that takes away the solitary winter. Let Jesus come into your family and what a change you will see! Let Jesus come into a school and what a change you will see in that school! Have you tasted His love?

3. By Being Filled With His Love Let's see how Mary was filled with Jesus' love:

"And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman, having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard, very precious; and she broke the box, and poured the ointment on his head." And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, "Why was this waste of ointment made? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor." And they murmured against her. And Jesus said, "Let her alone. Why trouble ye her? She hath wrought a good work on me. For ye have the poor with you always, and whenever ye will, ye may do them good; but me ye have not always. She hath done what she could; she is come beforehand to anoint my body to the burying. Verily I say unto you, wherever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of, for a memorial of her." (Mark 14:3-9) This record of Mary's love for Jesus, anointing him with an alabaster box of precious spikenard, is a record of her giving not a little portion but all, so that the perfume filled the whole house. Judas coveted money, so he became unhappy. Now the alabaster box is a symbol of the sanctified bodies of believers, sacrificed for Christ. To love Him is no loss. Jesus said, "Wherever (the gospel is preached) this thing must also be mentioned, for a memorial of her." All is vanity, but not loving the Lord. Fifty and a hundred years hence, all will have passed away. Some like to donate to schools, or to a locality, and they requite that they be remembered on stone tablets or in bronze statues. These also will be gone. Only the love for Christ remains forever.

By knowing His love, by experiencing it, and by being filled with it, can we begin to love Him.

THEME SONG

Of Jesus' love that sought me,

When I was lost in sin,  
Of wondrous grace that brought me  
Back to His fold again;  
Of heights and depths of mercy,  
Far deeper than the sea  
And higher than the heavens,  
My theme shall ever be.

Chorus:

Sweeter as the years go by,  
Sweeter as the years go by;  
Richer, fuller, deeper,  
Jesus' love is sweeter,  
Sweeter as the years go by.

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