

A Return to Functional First Century Christianity - Part 1

by Peter Brandon

The sermon emphasizes the importance of perfect love, which is knowledgeable, practical, and sacrificial, and is made possible through the vicarious love of God in Christ.

Duration: 37:25

Scripture: Romans 5:1

Topics: "Perfect Love", "God's Unconditional Love"

Description

Peter Brandon emphasizes the concept of perfect love as described in Romans 5, illustrating how God's love is unconditional and sacrificial, even towards those who are weak, sinful, and considered enemies. He explains that while humanity struggles with sin and feels unworthy, God's love remains steadfast and transformative, offering hope and reconciliation through Jesus Christ. Brandon highlights that perfect love is not only knowledgeable and practical but also a miraculous gift from God, poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. He encourages listeners to open their hearts to receive this love, which can revolutionize their lives and bring them peace with God.

Transcript

I'm just going to read from Romans 5 and we'll read the first 10 verses.

I won't be able to go all through the chapter but we shall just expound a few of these verses tonight.

Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God and not only so but we glory in tribulations also knowing that tribulation work as patience and patience experience and experience hope and hope makes not a shame because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us for when we were yet without strength in due time Christ died for the ungodly for scarcely for a righteous man will one die yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die but God commended his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us much more than being now justified by his blood we shall be saved

from wrath through him for if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his son much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life may God bless to us the reading of the in

Romans 5 we have a description of perfect love you will realize that there is nothing perfect in this world if you were to be asked to describe perfect furniture a perfect car a perfect airplane a perfect house you would find yourself up against an infinite impossibility because we do not know what perfection is so tonight I'm going to speak upon the subject of perfect love and you will all agree with me pure love is the greatest faculty that we have in this human composition of ours and perfect love may almost seem an impossibility yes but I want to explain it to you tonight from the word of

God John tells us that perfect love casts out all fear and you will agree with me that if there is such a thing as perfect love it is the greatest thing in the universe and that's the subject tonight now first of all I want to show you that perfect love must be knowledgeable there must be no blindness in it at all perfect love must be practical and sacrificial it must give and give and give and perfect love must be a miracle why because God must do something in our lives so as to insert a love that we've never had before and if I can put those three facts over to you and if you want it very simply the men whom God loves the manner of God's love and the miracle of God's love then I'm sure tonight we'll all get a blessing now when we love we can only love people that are likable no one can

fall in love with a person that constantly irritates them we may be able to like them we may be even gracious to them but no one can positively love an enemy we haven't that propensity one philosopher has said love is blind marriage is an eye-opener now you will smile at that but that's perfectly true when you begin to know the person that you have married then you get your eyes open and we all see failures and that's why many marriages break up when God loves the human race he loves it because he knows it and therefore he describes the human race under three headings he says when we were yet without strength in due time Christ died for the ungodly now the word ungodly has to be strictly translated within the confines of its content and therefore the word means to be totally unlike God

here the word is associated with weakness when we were yet without strength now what does that mean a young man from Aberdeen was swimming the channel that little bit of water between Dover and Calais that's 21 miles long he was breaking all records he got three miles from the French coast and then he said to the man that was in the boat with him or helping him pull me in the man couldn't believe it and when he was pulled into this boat he collapsed in the seat and he said this can't make it finished and then he collapsed now that is the basic meaning of the word ungodly someone that can't make it now what does that mean I've often spoken to people in my own town and especially in the city of London and I've discovered this that hundreds would like to be Christians but they say they can't

make it one man said I couldn't live without swearing one person said I couldn't live without a drink one man said I couldn't live without a fag one man said he couldn't live without lust would like to be a Christian but I can't make it dear friends this is the news none of us can make it can I prove it to you there has never lived one human being that's kept the dictates of his own conscience not one there has never lived a human being apart from the Lord Jesus that's ever kept all that's against same commandments we've broken almost everyone in fact I believe most of us have made new year's resolutions and we've made promises only to break them and somehow in our minds we've got this kind of hunch I can't be a Christian I'll never make it this is the good news God knows all about our

organic weakness he knows all about our besetting sins that master us and yet he still loves us still loves us and loves us deeply isn't that marvelous the next word he uses jagged and rutted it's the word sinner but God commends his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us now this word needs to be carefully explained if we lean over the platform of evangelical preachers and tell the

congregation they're poor lost sinners we shall upset them unless we explain what we mean some people where I live think it's almost a Christian swear word when you use the word sinner now what does it mean it's completely different from the word ungodly for that's associated with weakness this word is linked with strength so what does it mean when we lift up a little baby we love

that child and if you don't love babies there must be something wrong with you children are lovely even when they're rascals but when we lift up a baby and we've all done this if we have our own children we must tell ourselves this that child is born with the genes of sin in it and no matter how much that mother may try she will never stop that child from sinning why because sin went right into the genes of that child when that child gets a little older you will suddenly see strength I saw in London just before I came here one of the most beautiful little girls I've ever seen in a shop and her mother caught her and she said this I'm not coming strength the rebellion in that beautiful child and we've all got that rebellious nature in us when we get older we find that there's a power in us

that we can't control and this is how Paul puts it there's the law of our minds that longs to do that which is respectable and good and within us there's the law of sin that's a gravity that pulls us down again and that great moralist was trying to fight sin with willpower it got him right on the ground until he cried out all wretched man that I am who shall deliver me haven't you all been like that defeated by the power of sin now I'm going to do something that's a little unkind and uncultured but I do it to help you have you ever seen the strength of sin being expressed here is a man talking to his wife and she's irritating him he goes on talking and she says something else and then he becomes red the conversation increases in rapidity and all of a sudden he explodes he goes like a

maniac why does he get like that because of the power of sinning here is a young couple and they're not married and they're trying to keep themselves pure and they go too far and then the vortex of lust grips them and they fall into sin and they feel they could kick themselves why did they do it there was a power in them that they couldn't control the strength of sin but this is the miracle God knows all about our rebellion and yet he still loves us still loves us what a God and then he uses a word enemy now my dear friends this must be very carefully translated otherwise we shall give the wrong impression of our God may I say this there's not a tinge of bitterness in the heart of God God is love all the attributes of God are baptized in love the enemy is on the part of a human being now

in order to do this I'm going to do something that's very untheological to get to the point I'm going to imagine that we can almost make a human being not really human but nearly and then we bring this being into our house and we join him up with our children we show him a few of our laws which are very few that all the family keeps and then we share all our inheritance with him and we lavish our love upon him and after six months we find him vandalizing our property hurting our children violating our laws bringing corruption into our homes and then we have a talk together what are we going to do if you've got patience you can stand it for 18 months but after that your patience would be exhausted what do we do with a dog that bites you know what we do what would we do with that human

being put it down listen to this man has been violating the laws of God for 3 000 years treading over all his creation even violating the laws of nature until the little green world that we're in is like a cesspool yet he still loves us he still loves us friends doesn't that break you down it does me I could wait to think after all my failures God still loves me but then you say brother Peter you are almost condoling sins no a mother picks up a child that may be dying with cancer and I've often seen this and she positively loves her baby but she hates the disease that's killing her God infinitely loves you but hates sin and that's why he judges

but get the thought God knows the very worst about us but still infinitely loves us let's turn away from the human family and let's look at the

love of God that God commends his love that word but is an intervention if we went through the old testament and saw history from the eyes of God we would see God intervening and the moment sin came into the world the moment the world in the antediluvian period reached the pitch where men were destroying one another because of sin he intervened with the blood he intervened when men and women were violating even the law of conscience and brought in the law of God but two thousand years ago he intervened in love when his son came into this world listen to this for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son and every time you write the date you're not putting after Caesar after Alexander the Great after Plato and Aristotle the great Greek philosophers when you write the date

you are putting AD and I domini which means after Christ and that means God intervening in love and dear friends for two thousand years he has been dealing with the human race in love and thank God he's still dealing with the human race now in love but here there's an illustration of love that's brilliant but we can't understand this until we understand the Roman background for scarcely for a righteous man will one die yet penitent for a good man even some would dare to die but God commends his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us now what does that mean in the time of the apostle and in the Roman city they had a vicarious sentence we haven't got it in England and you haven't got it in Australia but there are two states in America where a person can do a

vicarious sentence now what is it if you feel that a person has been wrongly accused you can stand in his shoes and do his sentence in the time of the Romans there were judges that were not worth their salt many of them were governed by bribes and they were unjust men and the apostle describes a man who is righteous coming into the courtroom and would you believe it the judge condemns this man when he knows he hasn't committed the crime of which he has been accused now says the apostle how many will die for a righteous man just one that's all then he brings into the courtroom a man who is good a benefactor someone we revere and love and we cannot believe that this man is being accused of guilt and this evil judge finds him guilty and the challenge is thrown up who will die for him he says

just the very few then he brings into the courtroom a rascal a villain of society let me explain as we look upon this man he is weak to do any good at all as we look upon him he's strong to do evil as we watch the movement of his eyes and we hear his language we can see his sadistic vandalistic cruel and maniac for crime and this judge finds him guilty and there is a cynical unloving laugh and he says who will die for him and we're shocked the door of heaven opens and Jesus Christ I will I will you see he says but God commends his love toward us in the while we were yet sinners Christ died for us but then you say brother Peter that's all language yes but listen to this that love is manifested I think I can tell my congregation the love of God is devoid of the smallest particle of

hypocrisy the love of God is absolutely genuine it's real and he says this is the love of God that Christ his son should die for us that many people have died during the war I was on bomb disposal work and we were called to a place where a bomb was unexploded and one of these rockets had fallen and brought the whole street down and yet there they believed there was a woman and four children we were digging in all the rubbish to try and find the bomb and then we came to an inside Anderson's shelter an iron cage where people used to try and be rescued themselves from the debris and when we got to this iron cage we were digging around it and we came to a body it's hard to explain this and when we lifted up that mother's body it crumbled in our hands and underneath that woman there were four

children unconscious but alive and she became a human air raid shelter for her children that's love but this is deeper when jesus christ went to the cross he didn't go there for his children he went there for the ungodly for the sinners for those who were in and when he hung upon the cross he didn't hang upon that cross or hang upon that cross just to show physical love he went a step further can i put it to you like this if you could see one sin as god sees one sin you would have a terrible shock if you were asked to bear the responsibility for that one sin no matter how much you loved a person you would never do it when jesus was hanging on that cross that sinless son of god he took the responsibility for them and as god brought judgment upon him he cried my god my god why has thou

forsaken me and then finished but that's a different word do you remember we were speaking about that abaddonian that was swimming the channel breaking all records he got three miles from the french coast and said pull me in and said one word finished it meant he but when the lord jesus said finished it didn't mean that he was finished what did it mean let's illustrate the world's greatest artist was painting his masterpiece in rome and after 18 months of brilliant painting he went into the studio and put the last spot of paint on the canvas and he threw the brush down and said finished the masterpiece was done when jesus christ hung on that cross he said finished the masterpiece of god's love was revealed he bore our sins in his own body on the tree and god raised him from the dead and so

god now through the death of the lord jesus commends his love to you now friends can i put it to you like this how many people are here tonight who have a loved one that actually died for them i'll guarantee there wouldn't be one and yet your creator jesus christ actually died on account of your sin that's how much he loves you but then there's another word that we don't really understand that god commends his own love toward us what does that mean it means communication first of all i shall never forget the first time i saw the world's greatest reservoir up there in the mountains of cape town and when i saw it dear friends it took my breath away i couldn't understand how that human beings could make a sea of water like that and then i saw these six massive pumping stations pumping the

water all over the cape peninsula then i saw something that touched me i looked down from the mountain and i saw a rondavel a place where an african lady lived and she came out with a rusty old kettle she came out to the sandpipe she put the kettle underneath the pipe and all that water was being communicated to god's infinite love the reservoir of calvary is coming and that love is being communicated to you it's coming to you it's coming to you it's coming to you and the kettle is your body and he wants to put that love of god with him isn't that tremendous and what a joy for a simple london preacher to stand here tonight and commend the love of god can you think of a higher privilege but then there is something here quite frankly that's mind-boggling paul says and love and hope makes

not ashamed because the love of god is shed abroad in our hearts by the holy ghost the word shed abroad is brilliant if you're fond of underlining underline that word shed abroad it's one great word and what does it mean god pours out his love in effusion that of course may not be understood by our younger people he pours out his love in unrestrained boundless how can i explain the first time i saw deniagra when the river was in spades again i was spellbound and i looked at that water for 10 minutes and then looked at myself and i was soaked through with the spray and it looked as though i'd fallen in the water i felt awful but i only got the spray i didn't get the force of it then there were some people that had more money than me and they went into a boat and they got right near the

falls and they got more of the spray but they only got the spray and would you believe it this is materialism there were some that had more money that went underneath the falls but they only got the spray only got

the spray this verse says you haven't the spray of god's love you've got the full force you see if you stood under the niagara it would kill you but hallelujah you can take the full force of god's love you say well how does he do that my dear friends through the holy spirit you see tonight what god wants to do in your life he wants to cleanse you from all sin righteously because the lord jesus died for you the blood of jesus christ his son cleanseth us from all sin then he wants to put the holy spirit within you and when the holy spirit comes within you the love of god is shed

abroad in your heart for the first time we've had a break with the pub they came to gospel meetings like this and frightened us when they came in they had mohican hair cut safety pins through their nose and ears bobber jackets with chains and razors all over them bobber skirts and bobber trousers and great bobber boots and those boys came every night and girls and then they trusted the lord and i went back and spoke to one boy i said simon when you became a christian what was the greatest thing the lord did for you and you know what he he said he took all the kill out of my heart and he filled me with love that's it the love of god is shed abroad in our heart by the holy ghost god doesn't put in us a new kidney a new liver a new physical life or heart he puts within us the mighty love of

god now i'm going to ask you a question would you like this love of god in your heart tonight a love that could revolutionize the whole of your life and make you a completely new person you say well how do i get this love by opening your heart and receiving christ as your savior i'll close with this i was in a house called will be house it was 550 years old they only had lights in three rooms all the other rooms we had to take candles when i went up the great oak staircase the shadow used to follow me with the candle and once or twice i was scared when i got into my bedroom it was like a football pitch so big and the floor was like the rolling heels of scotland in those days they didn't know much about a straight line we had just two small windows and the room was dark damp and can i add

another word dank and did i freeze in that room my bed must have been 300 years old it had three giant mattresses all sewed up and you know what it is when you get into a center of the bed and you want to get out at night i found it like getting out of a scene well one night i couldn't sleep and i could smell this dampness and i thought right i'm getting up to see what time it was but i was feeling round for the matches who couldn't find them and then i was feeling round for the light switch of course they had none so i got out of bed in my pajamas it must have been a pantomime and i thought i'll start at the back like this that's how i was going round the room till i came to the curtains and i was knocking over some antiques i'm going to tell you and then i came to these thick velvet

curtains never have them in your bedroom they keep the light out and do you know i saw something that was like a spark of light and there i was shivering in the cold in that dark dank damp bedroom completely lost and there was the window there are some here tonight and you've got dark lives they're damp you're lost beloved friends unite but when i got to those curtains i looked and said there must be light and do you know what the light was saying let me in peter let me in but i was staring at the little crack let me in and i'll change the whole of that room the lord is saying let me in to cleanse you from sin and i'll change the whole of that house let him in and i shall never forget it i grabbed hold of those curtains and pulled them aside in came the light and the morning sunshine i

nearly went the room was transformed the light and the sunbeam was in friend god wants you to receive his luster who's going to pull aside the curtains right now at this moment and let him in

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