

# Holiness With Love

by Zac Poonen

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*To be unblamable in holiness, we must increase and abound in love for all men, demonstrating God's love on earth and overcoming hatred with love.*

**Scripture:** 1 Thessalonians 3:12

**Topics:** "Holiness", "Love"

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## Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes that true holiness is inseparable from love, as demonstrated in 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13, where love for one another is essential for being unblamable in holiness. He warns against a counterfeit holiness that lacks love, which leads to self-righteousness and legalism, and highlights that God's nature is love, as seen in the New Testament. Poonen illustrates that the ultimate victory over hatred and evil was achieved through love at the crucifixion of Jesus, and that the true mark of the Spirit's fullness is love, not merely spiritual gifts. He calls believers to reject the lie that evil can be overcome by evil, urging them to respond to attacks with love instead. Ultimately, he asserts that the church can only thrive when its members are committed to demonstrating love at all times, as this is the foundation of God's kingdom.

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## Transcript

"May the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all men, just as we also do for you; so that He may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness" (1Th.3:12,13).

These verses teach us that if we are to be unblamable in holiness, we must increase and abound in love for all men. Holiness without love is a counterfeit - and any such holiness is actually self righteousness and legalism, that are like filthy rags in God's sight (Is.64:6).

The Old Testament emphasized the HOLINESS of God and taught people to fear Him. The New Testament however reveals God as a God Who is LOVE, and invites us to partake of His nature. God is Light and God is Love (1 John 1:5; 4:8). So the Light spoken of in the New Testament is actually the love of God. When it says that there is no darkness in God, what it means is that there is no hatred in Him (1 John 1:5). When we partake of His nature, there will be no hatred towards anyone in us either.

The greatest manifestation of HATRED this world ever saw was at the crucifixion of Jesus. And the greatest manifestation of LOVE too was seen there on the cross. And when Jesus defeated Satan on the cross, He demonstrated thereby that hatred can be overcome only by love and that evil can be overcome

only by good.

The unmistakable identifying mark of the fullness of the Spirit (according to Romans 5:5) is LOVE. What a difference it would have made in Christendom in the 20th century, if love had been emphasized more than tongues - if Romans 5:5 had been emphasized as the identifying mark of the Spirit's fullness and not Acts 2:4! The Bible says that even if we have the gifts of tongues, prophecy and faith to move mountains, we still get zero in God's eyes, if we don't have love (1Cor.13:2). On the other hand, even if we don't speak in tongues, never prophesy and never move any mountains, we will still get 100%, if we have love. Love is the greatest.

The lie that Satan has propagated all over the world is that evil can be overcome only by evil - that if someone attacks us, we can defeat him only by attacking him in return. Our calling is to disprove this lie of the devil. Like arms dealers who supply weapons to both sides in a battle, Satan supplies hard words and evil plans to people (and to believers too) to attack each other. Having done this, he sits back and watches them fight each other and rejoices therein. Believers who are sensible will recognize this scheme of Satan and will never ever fight against human beings. They will fight only against Satan (Ep.6:12).

[Note: We are not talking here about how a nation must respond to war or terrorist attacks against it, but only to how an INDIVIDUAL Christian must respond to attacks against him. The nations of the world are NOT under grace, but under Law and so must follow the Old Testament law of retaliation and punishment - an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth (as it says in Lev.24:17-22 and Deut.19:15-21). Otherwise there will be no law and order in this world.]

There was not even a smell of hatred in Jesus towards those who crucified Him. This is the love we are called to manifest to others here on earth. Forgiveness of sins is free. But this love is costly. It is the pearl of great price that we have to give up everything to attain.

God has kept us on earth to demonstrate this great eternal truth that love is more powerful than hatred and that good is more powerful than evil. Let us take our calling seriously. The Lord can build His church only with those who are determined to respond IN LOVE, to all people, at all times. The gates of hell will never be able to prevail against such a church or against such a home. Amen.

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