

The Love Of God - Part 1

by Johnny Hunt

TITLE:	The Love Of God - Part 1
BIBLE BOOK:	1 Peter 1 : 22
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SUBJECT:	Love, Christian
OBJECTIVE:	Pastor Johnny Hunt points out that the kind of love that the believer is to live is only possible through the supernatural work of Christ in the believer. You will find only one major point in this sermon. The remaining points will be found in Part 2 of the sermon, "The Love of God."

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Introduction

The Christ-filled life is the life of obedience and of holiness. To be chosen by God is to enter, not only into great privilege, but also into great responsibility. The Christ-filled life is a life of reverence; fear/respect. Reverence is the attitude of mind of the man who is always aware that he is in the presence of God. The Christ-filled life is the life of brotherly love. It must issue in a love for the brethren and the lost, which is sincere, hearty, and steadfast. The context of 1 Peter 1 is a reminder that the Christian is the person who lives the Christ-filled life, the life that is different. Peter urges his readers to demonstrate their difference (holiness) by loving their fellow man. Note what God produces in His people:

I. The Supernatural Love 22

A. Love Sincerely

"in sincere love" - sincere love of the brethren is the hallmark of discipleship, according to Jesus. John 13:34-35, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." Jesus' command regarding love presented a distinctly new standard for two reasons:

1. A Modeled Love

It was sacrificial love modeled after His love "as I have loved you." John 15:13, "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends." This is the context of relationship of believers to each other.

2. Mighty Love

It is produced through the New Covenant by the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. In Galatians 5:22, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love." Godly attitudes that characterize the lives of only those who belong to God by faith in Christ and possess the Spirit of God. The Spirit produces the fruit. "love" - agape; is the love of choice, referring not to an emotional affection or physical attraction but to respect, devotion, and affection that leads to willing, self-sacrificial service. Romans 12:10, "Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another." To be devoted to other Christians with a family sort of love, not based on personal attraction or desirability. To show genuine appreciation and admiration for fellow-believers by putting them first. We read in 1 Thessalonians 4:9, "But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another." Philippians 2:3, "Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself." This is the basic definition of true humility. Hebrews 13:1, "Let brotherly love continue." The last chapter of this epistle focuses on some of the essential, practical ethics of Christian living. These ethics help portray the true gospel to the world, encourage others to believe in Christ, and bring glory to God. "Sincere love" -the word which is the word usually translated as "hypocrite" prefixed by the alpha negative. Thus it signifies a love void of hypocrisy. The word hypocrite designated one who wore a mask or played a role in a drama. A hypocrite is, therefore, one who is just acting behind the façade of a mask. He is a cheap imitation of the real. Love for our brethren in the faith is to be genuine; without pretense; authentic. In Romans 12:9, "let love be without hypocrisy..." Christian love is to be shown purely and sincerely without self-centeredness or guile. It centers completely on the needs and welfare of the one loved and does whatever necessary to meet those needs. Much love in the family of God is staged, programmed, put on. Throughout scripture we are challenged to have unfeigned love. Feigned love is "fake love." In II Tim. 1:5 Paul commended Timothy's "unfeigned faith." Possibly two of the greatest problems in the church is "faking love" and "faking faith." Why? Two reasons listed in 1 Peter 1:22

1. Purifying Your Souls

No love for other believers is a sure sign outwardly of impure inner life. Peter is obviously referring to the cleansing that we can experience through the precious blood of the Lamb without blemish and without spot. (18-20) Purified - perfect participle that points to a definite past action, the results of which are still abiding with us. A believer can become dirty and be in need of "coming clean" before God.

2. Obeying The Truth

It is in obedience to truth that man's soul is purified. John 14:15, "If you love Me, keep My commandments." John 14:21, "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him." John 14:23, "Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.'" Love for Christ is inseparable from obedience. Read 2 John 6, "This is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, that as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it." Those who are obedient to the truth contained in God's commandments, the fundamentals of the faith, are identified as walking in love.

B. Love Fervently

"love one another fervently" - an athletic term that means "striving with all of one's energy." Mark 12:30, "And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength." This is the first commandment." Love is something you have to work at, just as an Olympic contestant has to work at his particular skill. We show love to others when we treat them the same way God treats us. It is not a matter of feeling, but of willing. "Fervent" - from the heart and be demonstrated with full intensity; in an all-out manner. To love deeply. When such love is present; it erases tension, abolishes enmity, and banishes hatred. Another great meaning of this word fervent is "to stretch out." In Acts 12:5 the word is used to describe the prayers of the Jerusalem church in behalf of imprisoned Simon Peter. It is said that the church prayed "without ceasing." Stretching ourselves out in love is a vital aspect of Christianity, which must be in deed as well as word.

C. Love Purely

"with a pure heart" - (ek) out of as a source; emphasizing the inwardness of love. It is borne out of a pure life. Proverbs 20:9, "Who can say, 'I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?'" The answer is that no one can cleanse or purify himself or herself from sin. As Peter had just reminded us, only Christ can do that (19-20). We note in 2 Timothy 2:22, "Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart."