

LET US LOVE ONE ANOTHER

1 JOHN 4:7-8 • TV175A

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1 John 4:7-8

“Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.”

For my text this morning I am reading from **1st John chapter 4:7 and 8**. *“Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.”*

Our subject is: **“LET US LOVE ONE ANOTHER.”**

We know that perseverance in faith is absolutely essential to salvation. We know that a person must continue in the faith. The Word of God plainly declares that we are reconciled to God by the death of His Son, that we are redeemed by the sacrifice of Christ, provided we continue in the faith.

That is what it says in the **Book of Colossians** *“And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight.”*

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Colossians 1:22, right after these two things are stated, declares this: *“If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel.”* Christ will present us holy, harmless, and undefiled before the Father and we are reconciled to God by the death of His Son, *“if we continue in the faith.”*

In other words, the Bible plainly declares that there is no hope of salvation for any person who denies Christ and departs from the faith.

The **Book of Hebrews** is full of warnings. Do you remember? He told about Israel in the wilderness and how they could not enter into the Promise Land because of unbelief. Paul sets forth this clear-cut warning; *“take heed brethren lest there be found in any of you and evil heart of unbelief.”*

In **chapter 3 of Hebrews 14**, he says; *“We are made partakers of Christ if we lay hold fast the profession of our faith, firm unto the end.”* We are made partakers of Christ *“if we hold fast our confidence, (our profession), firm unto the end.”* What I am saying is this, true believers will not depart from Christ and He will not depart from them.

Perseverance is this; anyone who loves the Word of God, anyone who knows anything about the Word of God is firmly persuaded that a person in Christ will not depart from the faith.

If someone does profess faith in Christ and departs from that faith and from that confidence and from that position, he certainly is not a redeemed person. John had this to say, (talking about people who had left the faith and who left the church); *“if they had been of us they no doubt would have continued with us.”*

Now, that is one of the clear-cut marks and evidences of saving faith, it is persevering in the faith.

Here is another and this is my subject today. Here is another found in **1 John 4:7 and 8**; *“Beloved, let us (believers) love one another for love is of God and everyone that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not, (whatever his profession); he that loveth not, (whatever his claim), he that loveth not, (whatever his gifts, whatever his talent and ability is); he that loveth not knoweth not God.”*

Now, I believe that this is the second, clearest evidence of regeneration. This is a second clear evidence of salvation, persevering in the faith, continuing in Christ. But, the other here is to love one another; *“he that loveth not knoweth not God.”*

We are talking here of true, sincere, love for God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and true, sincere love, for our neighbor, not just the brotherhood, not just the church, not just believers. Our Lord said; *“If you love those that love you, what thank have you?”* Everyone does that. *“If you give to them from whom you hope to receive something in return, what thank have you?”* Anyone does that.

But, *“I say unto you; love your enemies, (not only your friends and family, not only the brotherhood, not only the church), but all men.”* This is the commandment of Christ. This is the commandment of our Lord. He says this in **John 15:12**; *“This is my commandment.”*

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Now, we hear a lot about the Ten Commandments. People preach about the Ten Commandments and talk about the Ten Commandments. But, our Lord said; “The Ten Commandments are summed up in two commandments,” and Paul repeats this in the book of **Galatians**. This is the sum and substance of the whole law of God.

Someone came to our Lord one time and said, “*Which is the greatest commandment in the law?*” He said, “*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind, soul, and strength, and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two hang all the law and all the prophets.*”

So, this is the commandment of our Lord; he said, “*This is my commandment that you love one another as I have loved you.*”

Secondly: This is not only the commandment of our Lord but this is the evidence of regeneration.

We just got through reading this; “*Love is of God and everyone that loveth is born of God.*” But, listen to this verse: “*By this shall all men know that you are my disciples if you love one another.*” By this trait and by this characteristic, shall all men recognize that you are one of my disciples, “*if you love one another.*”

Not only that, but love is the fruit of the Holy Spirit. When the nine characteristics of faith and the fruit of the Spirit is given in the **book of Galatians 5:22**, “*the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.*” Which is the first one named? Love is the first one named.

Then, love is the crowning grace. In **1 Corinthians 13:13** it says; “*And now abideth, faith, hope, and love, these three, but the greatest, (the crowning grace); the greatest of these is love.*”

John says in **1 John 4:20**; “*If any man say I love God, (and this is strong language) if any man say I love God and hateth his brother he is a liar. He who loves God loves his brother also.*”

Then, in **1 Corinthians chapter 13**, Paul says that the absence of true love for God and for one another is the great absence, “*Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.*”

For a man may have many gifts and many talents and much knowledge, but if he does not have this one thing, “*love*” all of these gifts, talents and all of this knowledge, will profit him nothing.

Let me show you that in the **12th chapter of 1 Corinthians**: Paul talks about the gifts of the Spirit. You know that there are languages, knowledge, discernment of spirits, faith, healing, miracles, and all of these different gifts are talked about, the uses of them, the importance of them, and the right use of them.

In the last verse of **chapter 12** he said; “*But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.*” Covet gifts; desire these gifts that you may be used of God for his glory and the good of the church. I will show you a better way; I will show you a more “*excellent way.*”

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Chapter 13: verse 1 starts this way: *“Though I have the gift of tongues, though I speak with tongues, (not only of men) but of angels, and have not love; (I am a clanging gong; I am a sounding gong) and a tinkling cymbal.”* The amplified version says: “I am a noisy gong, that’s all I am.”

Watch **verse 2**: *“And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.”*

If I have the gift of prophecy or the gift to preach and though I understand truths and mysteries (secret things) and have not love, though I have personal faith so that I could say to this mountain, (*“be thy removed and cast into the sea,”*) and have not love, I am nothing.

This is the great absence; this is what I am saying, a man may have many gifts and much knowledge and great talent and ability, but this is the great absence, this is the evidence of faith, this is the evidence of regeneration, this is the evidence of the new birth.

Thirdly: I may be very generous to the poor; I may bestow my goods to feed the poor. I may be willing to die for my doctrine, in other words, give my body to be burned at the stake for what I believe, for my doctrines, my traditions, and have not love, *“it profiteth me nothing.”*

What Paul is saying here is this; true love for God and for others is not a fancy virtue to which certain special saints may attain by working, studying, and striving. But, true love is the common, every day character of God’s people.

And then, love is not the prerogative of a few, it must be the possession of all believers. It is not a thing desirable; it is a thing that is absolutely necessary. That is what he is saying in **1 Corinthians 13**. It’s not a prerogative; it is a possession. It is not a thing desirable; it is necessary that every believer have this grace of love.

We are not to look upon love as a high virtue that is only obtainable by a few. Love is shed abroad in the heart of every person whom God saves. The absence of love is clear evidence that individual does not dwell in grace. *“He that loveth not knoweth not God.”*

I want to look at several things. I’d like for you to take your Bible and turn to **1 Corinthians 13**. I want to look at several characteristics of this love. I have given you two attributes of saving faith, two characteristics of the redeemed (perseverance and love).

Now; let’s go to the characteristic of love and let’s see what Paul says love is; what is the definition of love?

Someone said, “Love is a principle of the heart which wishes to bestow the best that it can on the object of its affection.” That is a good definition. There is no definition that is quite as good as this one given right here in **1 Corinthians 13**.

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Will you take your Bible and turn to **1 Corinthians, the 13th chapter** and let's begin with **verse 4**: Let me make this clear; it is not love that saves; it is Christ that saves. It is Christ who loved us; it is Christ who died for us; it is Christ who puts away our sin. It is Christ who is our Mediator. It is Christ who is our Representative. It is Christ who is our "*wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.*"

But, where Christ dwells, love dwells. Where love does not dwell, it is evident that Christ is not there. Let's take some of these characteristics and I will try to move quickly and get them all in. There about 10, 11, or 12, of them that I want to give you today:

First of all: **Verse 4**; Paul says, "*Love suffers long.*"

What does that mean? It means this; love is patient, love is long-suffering. True love makes a person patient and long-suffering with others, slow to anger and not easily offended.

James says in **Chapter 1:19**; "*My beloved brethren; let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath.*" Here is the illustration that our Master gave: He said, "There was a lord or king who was calling in all the people that he did business with and was demanding an account, demanding that they would settle their accounts."

A man came in before the king; he owed him an enormous sum; it was a tremendous sum of money. The king said, "You must pay." This were the exact words he said; "Master, be patient with me and I will someday be able to pay; I will be able to repay you. I don't have the money now but I will someday; will you be patient?"

The Scripture says that "*he forgave him of the whole debt, (just wiped it out).*" This man, who had just been forgiven, walked out on the street and he met a person who owed him a very small pittance. He took him by the neck and this man who owed the small debt cried the same words, "master; have patience with me and I will pay you off."

He would have no patience with him and he demanded that he pay now or go to prison and stay until the debt was settled. When the servants of the king heard about it they told the king and he sent for the man.

He said, "Didn't I just forgive you of an enormous sum?" He said, "That's right!" He said, "And you went right out and demanded that a man who owed you a small pittance pay that and you put him in prison?"

He said, "Bind him hand and foot and cast him into prison until every last cent has been paid." Our Lord said, "*If you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive yours.*"

Here is what he is saying: as God Almighty through Christ has been patient with us and long-suffering with us, let us be patient and long-suffering with those whom we love.

Secondly: Notice the 2nd word in **verse 4**; love is not only long-suffering "*it is kind.*"

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Love is tender and compassionate, ready to do what is good; it does not wish to wound and to hurt. Love produces in a person a desire to be kind, courteous, and considerate of others and based on the same principle.

Do you remember the first illustration I gave you, that love is long-suffering? God is *“long-suffering to usward.”* He is so patient with us. He puts up with so many sins, so many errors, and so many failures. We must be patient with others. If we love them we will. God is patient with us because He loves us for Christ’s sake.

God is kind to us. He says in **Ephesians 4:32**; *“Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, (gentle), forgiving one another even as God for Christ’s sake forgave you.”* That is the basis of this whole thing, *“even as God for Christ’s sake forgave you.”*

Someone said, “Let every word that we speak pass through three doors. The first door is this: “Is it true?”

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We certainly ought not to tell things that are not true. That’s the first question to ask; “is it true?”

Secondly: “Is it necessary that I tell it? Is it absolutely necessary? Will it accomplish any good by me repeating this story?” You are not supposed to tell it just because it is true.

Thirdly: “Is it kind?”

Those three doors; if we pass our words through those three doors, it is very, very, possible, that we will not offend, hurt, wound, and be unkind in our conversation. **James** says in **chapter 3**: *“The tongue is a little member and it boasteth great things, but how great a matter a little fire kindleth. The tongue is an unruly evil; full of deadly poison.”*

A believer does not carry a poisonous tongue. He does not carry a poisonous heart; therefore, he doesn’t carry a poisonous tongue because *“out of the heart the mouth speaketh. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.”* Out of the abundance of the heart come forth the things that are considered there and thought. So, love is kind.

Fourthly: Love is not envious

That’s the translation; in the amplified it says, “True love does not boil over with envy and jealousy.” Nothing is more adverse to true love than envy; *“love envieth not.”*

Because of envy Cain rose up and slew his brother. Because of envy Joseph’s brethren sought his death and sold him into slavery. Because of envy the church at Corinth was divided. The preachers were divided one against another.

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But love does not envy. Love rejoices at the prosperity of another. Love rejoices after success of another. Love rejoices when God blesses another person. It weeps over their misfortune and rejoices over their good. *“Love envieth not.”*

Now; notice **verse 4** again; true love; this is a definition of true love, the characteristic of the redeemed; *“love vaunteth not itself.”*

Preacher; I have read that often *“vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up;”* what does that mean? It means this in plain, everyday language; “true love is not conceded.” It is not proud, haughty, and arrogant.

John Newton once said this; “For an object of the grace of God to be proud, arrogance and high-mindedness is the most inconsistent thing in the world.”

What do we have to be conceded about? What do we have to be proud of? **In 1 Corinthians 4:7** Paul says; *“who maketh you to differ? What do you have that you did not receive? If you received it, why do you glory as if you had not received it?”*

The Pharisee stood in the temple and said; *“God, I thank you I’m not like other men.”* If you are not like other men it is by the grace of God and not by your own strength, righteousness, merit, worthiness, or morality.

The great business of the Gospel is two-fold: The great business of the truth is to reveal to a man two things:

First of all: His own sinfulness, his own unworthiness, and his own inability

Secondly: The undeserved goodness of God in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Thirdly: Pride and self-esteem is contrary to the Gospel; it is contrary to the truth and it is the most contrary thing to love that there is.

Fourthly: **Verse 5** says, love, *“does not behave itself unseemly.”*

Now, what that means is this: true love is not rude. Have you met rude people, rude, unmannerly and just rude? Do you know what begets rudeness when you won’t speak to a person or you are haughty and proud around the individual and rude to them, unkind to them, and unmannerly? Do you know what causes that?

Pride begets rudeness; conceit begets haughtiness and self-righteousness makes a man unmannerly. In **Romans 12:10** the Scripture says; *“Let your love be sincere;”* now watch this, as members of one family showing honor one to another; *“look not on your own things but on the things of others.”*

Love is considerate and kind. The opposite of that is rude and unmannerly. Love is never rude.

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In the next place in **verse 5**; *“Love seeketh not her own.”* That is, love does not insist on having his own way.

Have you ever heard people say, “I am going to have my own way or I am going to quit? I insist on my rights.” I hear that so much, “my rights, my will or my way. I must have my way.” That is not true love; *“love seeketh not her own.”*

Love does not demand its rights nor insist on doing things its way. Listen to **1 Corinthians 10:24**: *“Let no man seek his own welfare but the welfare of others.”* Now that is true love. *“Love seeketh not her own.”*

It does not insist on its own rights, its own will and its own way, not true love. True love wishes to make the other person or the object of affection happy, and in giving happiness, happiness is received. In giving love, love is received. *“Love begets love.”*

Watch in the next place: In **verse 5** it says; *“Love is not easily provoked and thinketh no evil.”*

Let’s look at that: In plain words it says this; love is not touchy. You have heard about folks who always go around with a chip on their shoulder. That is what it means, touchy, resentful, easily offended, easily provoked, looking for a reason to fall out.

Love does not carry a suspicious nature. Love does not read between the lines and judge by appearance. True love interprets words and actions by the rule of grace, not by the emotions of the moment. Love pays no attention to words spoken in haste. Love is not easily offended.

Verse 6: *“Love does not rejoice in sin, rejoices not in iniquity but rejoices in truth”*

What does that mean? It means this: nothing is more contrary to love than to take pleasure in, to point out and to rejoice in somebody’s fall. That is not love.

Someone has fallen or someone has committed a sin or someone has a misfortune and you tell it, you just hasten to tell it, you rejoice to tell it, you just can’t wait to tell it, that is not love. Love doesn’t rejoice in another person’s fall. Job said, *“I do not rejoice at the destruction, even of him that hates me.”*

Do you know how much King Saul hated David? He tried to kill him on several occasions. Yet, when King Saul died, David wept. David didn’t even rejoice over the death of one of his greatest enemies. Love does not rejoice in, it does not repeat bad tidings; it rejoices in good, it rejoices in truth, it rejoices in beauty.

Do you know what makes people rejoice in evil and repeat evil and keep evil tidings going? I will tell you what causes that. If a person’s heart is evil he delights to see evil in others. It makes him happy to find in another person that which he finds in himself, and he insists on telling it. You see; “I have told you what he was like. I told you what she was like.” They are just like me.

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Verse 7: *“Love beareth all things.”*

I was careful to look up this word “*beareth*” in the Greek Concordance. This is what it says; this is the correct translation: “Love covers with silence all things.” That is exactly what it means; “*love beareth all;*” it covers with silence.

This is what **Solomon** wrote in the **Proverbs** several times, not once but several times. Listen to these verses:

Proverbs 11:13: *“A talebearer revealeth secrets but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.”* Not just in the spur of a moment but this is his tenor of life, this is his spirit, this is his attitude.

Proverbs 10:12: *“Hate stirreth up strife, but love covers all sins;”* just puts a covering over it; that is what love does, it hides it from view, hides it from sight, and hides it from the stares of others. *“Love covers a multitude of sins.”* That is what the Scripture says.

Proverbs 17:9: Listen; *“He that covereth the transgression seeketh love; he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends.”*

In the next place *“Love believeth all things.”*

Love wants to believe the best. It doesn't want to believe the worst. It doesn't want to believe it. If someone comes to you with a story about a friend of yours, do you want to believe it? Not if he's your friend, not if you love him; you don't want to believe it. Love believes the best and it wants to believe the best.

“It believeth all things; it hopeth all things.” What love can't see it hopes for; what love does not see on the surface it hopes that it is at least underneath the surface. *“Love believeth all things”* and believeth the best.

“Love hopeth all things” and watch this; *“Love endures all things.”*

It will endure conflict. It will endure sickness. It will endure trial. It will endure disappointment. It will endure misunderstanding. It will go through thick and thin. It will go through dark days and sunny days.

If true love is present; I am telling you, it will always be present. If true love is not there now; you might say, “Well, I use to love.” No you didn't! You loved yourself. You never did love because *“love endureth, love never fails, whether they be prophecies they shall fail,”* whether they be this, that, and the other they will fail. *“Love never faileth.”*

“Gifts and tongues, they shall cease but now abideth faith, hope, and love. These three; the greatest of these is love.”

One point before I quit:

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**“Let us for each other care
Each the other’s burdens bear
Each to each by love endear
One in faith, one in hope, one in fear.”**