

Love, The Common Bond

Sunday, December 8th, 1991

1 John 4:10-12

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

If you would like to follow this message in the Bible, open your Bible to First John Chapter Four verse: 10. I am going to speak to you on this subject: "Love, The Common Bond." The scripture talks about a common faith that all believers have. They have common trials, and a common salvation. There is a common bond experienced by every true believer and that is love.

Here it is, in First John Chapter Four. Let's look in verse 10: "*Herein is love, (here it is) not that we loved God, (we didn't), but that He loved us.*" God loved us. Love does not begin with us; it begins with God. "*He sent His Son into the world to be the propitiation,*" (to be the mercy seat, the sacrifice and the covering for our sins). This is love; "*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal life. Herein is love, not that we love God but He loved us and sent His Son into the world to be the propitiation for our sins.*"

Now, beloved if God so loved us, (in this way, to this extent), we ought to also love one another. If God loved us, we certainly can love those who are like us. We are unlike God. God is light and we are darkness. God is truth and we are error. God is Holiness and we are sin. If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. It ought to be a lot easier for us to love one another, understanding how God loved us.

"*No man hath seen God at anytime.*" The only begotten hath declared Him. "*No man has seen God at anytime, but if we love one another,*" this God whom we have never seen, yet whom we believe, dwells in us. "*His love is perfected in us.*" If we have experienced His love and understand His love and show His love; that love is perfected.

Now, in our Lord's great house and kingdom, there are many sons and daughters. They are not all of the same nationality. They all have different backgrounds. They have different personalities. They don't have all the same gifts, talents or abilities. But, in the kingdom of God, in the house of our Lord, by the mercy and grace of God, every child of God has three things in common. This is true of every believer.

The first thing that they have in common is this: God loves every believer. God loves them in Christ. What does it say? *“Herein is love, not that we loved Him, He loved us.”* We love Him because He loved us. We didn’t merit His love and we didn’t deserve His love. There was nothing in us loveable or that would cause God to love us. The cause is found in Himself.

God is love! That is why God loves; He is love. In Jeremiah 31:3, it says this; *“Yea I have loved thee with an everlasting love.”* If God loves you now, He has always loved you. His love is immutable, unchangeable, and infinitely everlasting. That is the way God is. God never changes. He said, *“I’m the Lord; I change not.”* God can’t change. God can’t be anything less than perfect. His love is perfect love. He said, *“I am the Lord; I change not, therefore, (He said), I have loved thee with everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness I have drawn thee.”* Because I loved Thee, I have drawn thee. I have drawn thee, because I love thee.

God’s love is everlasting. His love is from eternity through eternity. It is infinite. It is immutable, unchanging and it is always in Christ. John 3: says this; *“The Father loves the Son and hath given all things into His hand and he that hath the Son of God, he that believeth on the Son of God, hath life.”* Life is in His hands and love is in His hands. *“He that hath not the Son, or believeth not the Son, the wrath of God abideth on him.”* It is the believer that God loves. He loves him in Christ.

A man, who is not a believer, is not love. *“God is angry with the wicked, the wrath of God abideth on him.”* In Romans Chapter 8: it tells us this; *“Nothing can separate us from the love of God, not tribulation, distress, famine, persecution or sword.”* This love of God is in Christ. God’s gifts and calling are without change. So, this is true of every believer; God loves them.

Secondly: This is true of all believers; they love God. We love Him, *“We do love Him because He first loved us. If any man loves not the Lord Jesus Christ, (Paul said); Let him be Anathema, Maranatha.”* What does that mean? *“If any man loves not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, (accursed), Maranatha,”* (when Jesus comes) or the Lord is coming.

It is so foolish talking about a person knowing or believing God, who does not believe, know and love the Lord Jesus Christ. That is absolute foolishness! *“No man knows the Father but the Son and He to whom the Son reveals him.”* If a man does not know Christ, he doesn’t know God. If a man doesn’t love Christ, he doesn’t love God.

“No man has seen God at anytime. The only begotten hath declared Him.” So, here are two things that every believer has in common with other believers. One: God loves him and he is an object of God’s love. Secondly: He loves God. *“The love of God is shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Spirit.”*

Thirdly: All believers love one another. They really love one another. The scripture does not say that they ought to love one another; it says that they do love one another. *“By this, (Christ said), shall all men know that you are my disciple.”*

How shall they know that you are my disciple? Are you my disciple because you make more noise than others? Are you my disciple because of the religion you talk of? Are you my disciple because you have faithful church attendance? The scripture says, *“By this shall all men know that you are My disciples; if you love one another. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love.”*

“How can a man love God whom he hath never seen, if he does not love his brother whom he hath seen?” John said, *“If a man says he loves God and hates his brother, he is a liar.”* It is an impossibility to love God and hate your brother. These are the three things that are common to every believer: God loves him. He is the object of the love of God in Christ. Secondly: He loves God. Thirdly: He loves God’s people.

You see; my friends, what do you call a Christian? That word has been misused and abused. A Christian is a believer, a child of God. A Christian is not merely a church member. He’s not just a person that lives in America. I know we call this nation a Christian nation. A Christian is not merely a theologian who can recite his creed. He is not merely a moralist that reforms his life; a Christian is a believer in God.

A believer is regenerated, recreated, born again, and is a new person. A Christian is a Son of God. *“Beloved, now are we sons of God. What manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us. What manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called sons of God.”* We’re not just church members; we are sons of God. *“Beloved, now are we sons of God.”* It’s not that we are going to be, we are sons of God if we are believers. Now, are we sons of God. *“It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall see Him as He is and we will be like Him.”*

This work of salvation is a heart work. Salvation is a work of God, done in the heart, believed in the heart, known in the heart, experienced in the heart, felt in the heart and lived from the heart. It has to do with the heart of a man. It is just not his mind, or his

body. *“Bodily exercise profiteth little, but godliness profiteth in all things. If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus to be Lord and believe in thine heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the mouth confession is made unto salvation but with the heart, man believeth unto righteousness.”*

I know that all believers experience conviction of sin. They know that they are sinners. All believers are made aware of the holiness of God. Isaiah saw the holiness of God and said, *“Woe is me; I am cut off. I am a man of unclean lips.”* We have heard the gospel, we have believed the gospel, and we have received the gospel. We have confessed Christ.

Besides all this, God hath given to every believer a new nature, and a new heart to love Him. He will have a new heart to believe His Word and a heart to love His people. It is a transformation. It is a conversion. He is a new creature. It is to be born anew. That is what a Christian is.

Let me read some scripture to you, which emphasizes what I am talking about. I want to talk about this heart love. God loves His people and His people love Him. They love one another. Listen to these scriptures: In First Corinthians 16:22, it says; *“If any man, (I don’t care who it is) love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, (let him be accursed) if he doesn’t love Christ.*

He may love the church and he may love the building and the denomination. There are a lot of things. If he doesn’t love Christ, Paul offers no hope for him. He allows no hope for that person who does not love Christ. There are no loopholes, no excuse or alibis. A man may lack courage like Peter did. Peter denied the Lord and yet loved Christ. A man may fall like David and rise again. A man may fall out with others as Barnabas did. Do you remember how he and Paul fell out with one another? One went one way and the other went one way. However, to not love Christ is to be accursed.

There are many faults and failures that God’s people have. They have trials, troubles and tribulations. There is one thing that is true; they do love Christ! This is what Peter confessed; *“Lord, you know that I may have denied you and I may have boasted when I shouldn’t have. You know I am an impulsive character, but you do know one thing, you know that I love you.”* If any man doesn’t love Christ, let him be accursed when the Lord comes.

Look at Ephesians 6:24, Paul is writing to the church at Ephesus. He says; *“Grace be with you all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ.”* You see; Paul is sending his good will and his good wishes to these

people in Ephesus. There were many of them whom he had never seen. There were many of them whom he had never met. He didn't know them and he wasn't aware of their position, profession or whatever.

How should he address everybody? How is he going to write this letter to all true believers? Do you know how he identifies them? He says; "*Grace to all of you who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.*" There is no grace to anyone else. That will take in every believer. "*Grace to all of you who love Christ sincerely.*"

Listen to this in John 8:42; "*Jesus said to them, if God were your Father, you would love Me for I preceded forth and came from God.*" Who is He talking to? These religious people had denied Christ, despised Christ and rejected His Word and His gospel. They had rejected everything about Him. At the same time, they claimed God as their Father. Do you get the picture?

These religious people had their ceremonies, works, Sabbath Days, and tithes. They were going about playing religion and playing church. They all said that they were going to heaven when they died. Christ came with the truth of God and the true gospel. They despised Him, denied Him, rejected Him and didn't believe Him. They said, "*But God is our Father.*" Oh, no, He said, "*If God were your Father, you would love Me for I came from God.*" No man is a child of God who does not love Christ; Christ is God. To despise God is to despise the Father. To despise Christ is to despise God.

Listen to John 21:15; "*After they had dined, the Lord Jesus said to Peter; Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me? Do you love Me?*" Peter, "Are you converted?" He didn't ask him, "Are you born again?" That is what we ask people all the time, "Are you saved?" Our Lord didn't ask him if he was sorry for his sins. He didn't ask, "Are you sorry you denied me? Peter, will you be true from now on? Peter, will you serve me, and obey me? Will you do what I tell you to do?"

He wasn't asked any of those questions. He just looked at him and asked him point blank; "*Peter, do you love Me?*" He asked him that three times, Peter said, "*Lord, yea I love Thee.*" Christ said, "*Feed my lambs; feed my sheep.*" Peter, "*Do you love me?*" Peter said, "*Lord, I love you.*" Christ said, "*Feed my sheep.*" He was grieved that the Lord asked him three times if he loved Him. He said, "*You know everything; you know I love you.*" The Lord said, "*Feed my sheep.*"

I will tell you this, as simple as it may sound, and as plain and easy as it is to be understood; this is the foundation for all that we do in the name of God. The foundation is that we must do that which God will honor and do that which God will own. There are

a lot of things done in the name of God that He doesn't honor and that He doesn't own, because it does not glorify Him.

Our Lord did say, "If you love Me, you will feed my sheep. If you love Me you will serve Me. If you love Me you will obey Me. If you love Me you will do My will." That is what He said to Peter; "*Do you love Me?*" Peter said; "*I do.*" Then the Lord said, "*Feed my sheep.*" You do what comes naturally for one who loves.

You may ask me what is the true secret of a believer's whole life, I would reply, "It is his love for Christ." That is the secret. Why do I preach? Why do I do what I am doing? The answer is; I love Christ. Our preaching is determined by our love for Christ. Our giving is determined by our love for Christ. Our conduct is a result of our love for Christ. That is what Paul says, "*The love of Christ, constraineth me.*"

Suppose you go into a hospital where there is a baby boy lying in the bed. There are two women in the room. One is sitting by the bed and one is moving around the bed. The one is dressed in a white uniform and she is the nurse. She is very efficient, and she's very dedicated. She is waiting on the child, helps the child and does all that she can do. When 3 o'clock comes; she goes out, punches the time clock and goes home. The other woman is still sitting there.

Another nurse comes on duty and she serves and labors. She does all she can do for that desperately ill child. At 11 o'clock, she goes out and punches the time clock and goes home. The woman is still sitting there. Who is this woman? This is the child's mother. The mother loves the child. She's not working for wages. She's not serving out of a duty or because of a duty. She's not even serving out of fear; she is serving the one person out of love. She won't move from that bedside until that fever breaks.

I hear preachers trying to get people to sow a seed so that they can reap a harvest, and give something to the church so that they can get more in return. They pray thinking God will take them to heaven. They are trying to have people serve God out of reward. They are looking for rewards. They use fear tactics and duty and covetousness.

You are wasting your time! Our Lord said, "*Peter, do you love Me?*" That is all there is to it. "*Do you love Me? If you love Me you will feed My sheep.*" Christ says, "I'm not worried at all about you; if I have your heart, I have you. If I don't have your heart, whatever I have isn't worth it." That is just so!

Here is a question that I would like for us to consider in closing. How do I know if I really love the Lord Jesus Christ? How can a person know that he loves Christ? I don't

think that is too difficult, I really don't. How do you know if you love anybody? In what manner is love shown or revealed? How do you know you love your dear husband or your wife? How do you know you love your child? How do you know you love your grandchildren? How do you know you know you love your beloved friend for all these years? How do you know?

Number one: If you love a person, you enjoy thinking about that person. You don't need to be constantly reminded of that person. You are not going to forget his name are you? He or she dwells in your heart. You don't forget them. If you love Christ, He dwells in your heart. You don't forget the Saviour. *"It is Christ in you, that is the hope of glory."* That husband or wife, child, mother or father is part of you. It is an extension of your very person. You love them and think about them.

Secondly: If you love a person, you enjoy hearing about them. You love to hear people talk about them. You find it a great pleasure just to hear their names. You find it a great pleasure to hear of any of their activities. They are an interest to you, a great interest to you. You love to hear the phone ring. You might pick it up and it may be your daughter, who lives in Oklahoma. You want to know all about the family. You want to know what so and so is doing because you love them. You dread to hang up.

You get a letter in the mail and it may be from a beloved friend, son or daughter. You may read it 10 or 12 times. What's this? You are reading it because you love them. If you love God, you love His Word. You love to hear His gospel. You love to hear His name. The things of God are of great interest to you.

Thirdly: If you love a person, you love to hear from them. A letter is welcome from far away. *"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel, the glad tidings of the Lord."* His sheep will go far to hear His Word preached. *"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet; a light unto my path; I will hide your Word in my heart."* When you are in great trial or trouble, you read God's Word. God's Word comforts you. It is a Word from the Lord.

I will tell you this; if you love a person; you like to please them, don't you? You just love to please them. Anything that you can do to make that person happy, you will do. Anything that you do that displeases that person causes you grief. Isn't that right? When you do something that displeases that one whom you love, it bothers you. You are troubled about it.

That is the way we are about this matter of sin and displeasing our Lord. We can't be comfortable knowing that we are grieving the Spirit of God. How happy we are when we

are in His presence and with His people. That is the reason David said, *“I was glad when they said to me, let’s go to the house of God.”* David also said, *“I would rather be a doorkeeper in God’s house than to dwell in the tents of the wicked.”* Yes, if you love a person, you also love those whom they love.

My only daughter brought home a young man that I had never met. I love my daughter so very, very much. She brought home a young man that I had never met. After a few months, she came home and said that they were going to be married. I didn’t know him very well, but I loved him. Do you know why I loved him? The answer is, she loved him. I learned to love him for himself but my first love for him was because my daughter loved him. I will tell you, if you are one of God’s own, you will love God’s people. Yes, you love those people that love Christ. You love those that Christ loves.

I’m not crazy about cats. My youngest son brought a cat home one time and asked us if we could keep that cat for him. I kept that cat for several months. I didn’t particularly care for that cat but I kept him and loved him for my son’s sake. Do you know what I am saying? If you love a person, you love those whom they love.

If you love a person, you love to talk to them. You don’t have to twist a believer’s arm to get him to pray. The believer loves to pray. If you love a person you want to tell them your thoughts, needs, and interests. There is no trouble having a conversation with someone you love. It is a strain talking to someone that you do not love. You may avoid them. In fact, you may leave the room when they come in. Maybe that is the reason why a lot of folks don’t pray. If you love God, you will talk to God. You can’t do without it. Praying to God is like the breath of a human being, it is the believer’s life and love.

If you love a person, you want to be with them. That is the reason that Paul said, *“I have a desire to depart and be with Christ which is far better.”* He said, *“For me to abide is expedient and convenient for you, but as far as I am concerned, I want to go and be with Christ which is far better.”*

David said this; *“I will be satisfied (and not until); I’ll be satisfied when I wake with His likeness.”*

LOVE, IS THE COMMON BOND