

Priority, Capacity, and Testimony of Love

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[0:00] What a blessed time we've had just in our singing and worship.

! 1 Peter chapter 1. I promise you that we will finish chapter 1 today.

As a matter of fact, we'll make mention of verse 1 of chapter 2 this morning. Let me go ahead and read the text, chapter 1, starting with verse 22.

Verse 22.

Through the word of God which lives and abides forever. Because all flesh is as grass. And all the glory of man as the flower of grass.

[1:34] The grass withers. And its flower falls away. But the word of the Lord endures forever. Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.

Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking.

As newborn babes desire the pure milk of the word. Now we're going to stop right there. We'll not get on into verse 2.

Though I couldn't end there at an awkward place. I wanted to go ahead and read on through verse 2 of chapter 2. I want to get right on into it this morning. Because we are looking at the fourth of four commands.

That are issued by the apostle Paul here in chapter 1 of 1 Peter. And last week we focused on the command itself. And that was what we spent our time doing.

[2:38] Wanted to start there. And we considered what I call the activity of love. The activity of love. Or Paul, or Peter, excuse me.

Where Peter said, love one another fervently with a pure heart. You see that at the close of verse 22? There's the command. Love one another fervently.

Extremely. As I explained last Sunday. With a pure heart. Now, the ancient Greeks had basically four words for love.

Four words. And the first one that I might mention would be the word storge. Storge. And that's not one you hear very much about. Storge means basically affection.

Specifically a natural affection. In fact, that is how it's translated in the New Testament where it appears.

[3:49] Natural affection. And the word refers primarily to love of kindred or family love. Specifically, the love parents have for children.

And children have for parents. Matter of fact, I was reading and discovered that some etymologists. Those are those who study the origin of words and progress of words. Etymologists have suggested that the word storge.

Storge is the origin of the fanciful tradition of the stork that brings the baby to the home. You're aware of that tradition, aren't you? Or that somewhat explanation.

Usually or sometimes used to help little children understand where the new baby came from in the home. You know, the stork brought the baby. Well, oddly enough, it seems that the word storge is the origin of that tradition.

I'm looking at a bunch of people who are looking at me and thinking, stork? What? Of course, those who likely believe in that tradition or that explanation are up in the children's church right now.

[4:53] But it's just interesting. And the word does appear in the New Testament. It appears only twice. And it appears only in the negative, by the way. And so it's usually translated without natural affection.

Without storge. You'll find that in Romans chapter 1, verse 31. And again in 2 Peter chapter 3, verse 3. Just in case you're interested. The second word that I might mention this morning would be a familiar word to you.

And that is the word phileo. Phileo. It's translated love in the Bible. And it's a very common word in ancient Greek as well as in classical Greek.

It's a word that's still common today. And it is in meaning very similar to storge. And yet it is, in a sense, a very strong, a stronger word.

And is used more often to very specific kinds of object. In fact, phileo means to show love, to show affection, to show hospitality.

[5:54] And the object of this form of the word, or form of love, can be almost anything, as a matter of fact. It can be God. In fact, it is translated or used in that sense in relation to God.

To have God as the object of phileo love. To have affection for God. It is also used, and more commonly used, in reference to man. With man as the object, of course.

And that's how you'll find it primarily in the New Testament. Also, the word is used, by the way, in the Bible to refer to the love of things. Certain things.

And yet, I think you know that the most common object in the New Testament of the word phileo is the brethren. The brethren. What does that mean? It means the brothers and sisters in Christ.

And you'll find the word just all throughout the New Testament. And especially in the book of Acts. As a matter of fact, we have this word. The root word.

[6:54] In our text here in verse 22. The first time the word love appears in verse 22. It is the word phileo. Love combined with adelphos.

Brother. And we get Philadelphia. Now, we've heard of that word, haven't we? Philadelphia. The city of brotherly love. And that's the word that we have appearing here in verse 23.

Love of the brethren. It takes four words in the English to express that one word. Phileo. The third word that I would mention.

Just in passing, really. Because it does not appear in the New Testament. It is the Greek word eros. And it refers to sensual love. And you'll find that word nowhere.

You will not find that word anywhere. Let's put it that way. In the New Testament. Now, the fourth and final word, of course, is the familiar word agape. And we're all familiar with that.

[7:52] And we're familiar with that word agape primarily because we are Christians. You might remember that last Sunday I made mention that originally the word agape had a very common meaning.

Very common usage. It was a very general word. Very mundane word. As a matter of fact, the word was used interchangeably with other words in the Greek language.

Phileo and even eros. And so agape could mean phileo love. It could mean eros love. It could mean any other kind of love. And so it was a very generic word. And there was nothing special about the word agape.

Agape. That is, until Jesus came. It's important for us to understand this about this word agape. This much, much cherished word agape.

Much, much talked about and preached on and sought after word agape. It's important to know that it carried no real meaning, no special meaning until Jesus came.

[8:59] And Jesus taught on the word. But specifically, it took on the meaning that it has for us today when Jesus died upon the cross.

Agape is a very special word. And it was Jesus who redefined it. I mean, literally, redefined the word agape. Took it from a very common usage, a very generic kind of word.

To something very special. Something very unique. Something, indeed, very supernatural.

In fact, Jesus redefined the word in John 13, 34. You don't need to turn to it. We looked at this last week. Let me read that again. Where Jesus said to his disciples, A new commandment.

There's something new he's about to say to them. A new commandment I give to you. That you agape. That you love one another.

[10:02] That this is a new commandment. As I have loved you. There's the word agape again. As I have loved you, that you also love one another.

Agape. Love one another. By this, he said. By what? Obedience to this new commandment. By this, all will know that you are my disciples.

If you, if you what? Obey this commandment. If you have agape. Have love one for another.

So, then, Jesus changed. Somewhat changed the definition of love. He expanded upon it to heights that had not yet been discovered.

That's why we would call agape the highest form of love. And it was made so by the Lord Jesus Christ. And confirmed to be so by his sacrifice upon the cross.

[11:02] So, he essentially created a new kind of love. That's why we cherish it so. As God's people. As we're going to discover here in 1 Peter.

The latter part of this chapter. We're going to discover that we're the only ones. Who can express this kind of love. It's a very unique love.

It's a new kind of love. New kind of love for a new kind of people. And I want you to take your Bibles. And look at Philippians chapter 2. This is all review.

And somewhat introduction. Because we're going to go further than the activity of love this morning. But I want you to see how Paul really taught the same thing that Peter is teaching.

And how Paul reveals to us the activity of love. As demonstrated by the Lord Jesus Christ himself. Philippians chapter 2. I love Philippians chapter 2.

[12:04] As a matter of fact, I love the entire book of Philippians. I would say it's my favorite book in the New Testament. Really, it is. Chapter 2. Look at verse 1. Therefore, if there is any consolation in Christ.

If any comfort of love. If any fellowship of the Spirit. If any affection. As a matter of fact, the King James uses the word bowels.

It's not a very pleasant sounding word. But it just literally speaks of something that comes from deep within. Again. Any affection and a mercy.

Fulfill my joy by being like-minded. Having the same love. That's agape, by the way. Having the same love.

Being of one accord. And of one mind. He's speaking to the church. And Paul is emphasizing what Peter emphasized in 1 Peter chapter 1.

[13:08] As he issues the command to love one another. And Paul is emphasizing the same thing. Same love. One accord. One mind. Let nothing, he says, be done through selfish ambition or conceit.

But in lowliness of mind. Let each esteem. Let each esteem others better than himself. This is how the church should be.

In fact, if we take Peter. Peter's command. Seriously. This is how it must be. Let each esteem others better than himself.

Let each of you look out. Not only for his own interests. But also for the interests of others. Let this mind.

What kind of mind? The mind that he's been describing here. Love. One accord. Unity. One mind. Esteeming others above yourself.

[14:13] Looking out for the interests of others. Rather than your own interests. Let this mind be in you. Because. That was the mind. Or is the mind of Christ. Is that what he said in verse 5?

Let this mind be in you. Which was also in Christ Jesus. Who. Being in the form of God. That is being God himself.

Did not consider. It. Robbery to be equal with God. He didn't consider it something to be held on to. But made himself of no reputation.

Taking the form of a bond servant. And coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as man. He humbled himself. Became obedient to the point of death.

Even the death of the cross. That is. You see. Jesus. Commanded that we love one another. He said. By this shall all men know.

[15:12] That you're my followers. My disciples. He commanded us to love in this way. He said. This is a new commandment. Because this is a new kind of love. It's the kind of love. That's self-sacrificial. It's the kind of love.

That's unconditional. It's the kind of love. That does not. Esteem. Self. Better than others. It's the kind of love. That looks out. For others. Interests.

Rather than ourselves. It's the kind of love. That Jesus had. And he demonstrated it. Through his obedience. To death. Even death upon a cross. You see.

This is a love. That is an active thing. This is a love. That is a doing thing. It is the activity of love. All right. Now let's move forward.

Next. I want you to notice. To. Whom. This kind of love. Is to be directed. To whom. Specifically.

[16:08] And Peter gives us. Some specific information. About that. Some specific instruction. About that. And so we move. From the activity of love. That is the command itself. And now let's move.

To the priority of love. The priority of love. He says there. In verse 22. Right. The smack dab. In the middle of the verse.

He says. For. Or in. Or more literally. For sincere love. Of the brethren. There's that. There's that word. Philadelphia. For sincere.

Love. Of. The brethren. Love one another. Fervently. From a. Or with a pure heart. Now you might have noticed. That I am. Dealing with the text.

In a little different order. Than it appears. In our Bibles. Because last Sunday. We started at the end. Of verse 22. Or 23 rather. Or 22. Rather. And started with the command itself.

[17:05] And then now I'm working my way backward. Toward the beginning of verse 22.

Ultimately we're going to get there. And then after I'm done with verse 22. Going from the end of it.

To the front of it. We're going to skip on over to verse 23. And then follow that. Follow the text. All the way to the end of the chapter. And the reason is. Is quite simple.

In our contemporary. Way of thinking. In our mind. Our way of thinking. We. We have to start with the what of love. That's where we need to start. Now that's not where Peter started.

But that's where our minds need to start. And so I don't mind. Changing the order a little bit. So that we can emphasize. The thing that comes first in our minds. What kind of love is this?

And that's what we looked at last Sunday. And so then we move from the what. Then we want to know who. If that's what this kind of love is. Then to whom are we to direct it?

[17:58] So we go from the what. To the who. And after we get the what and the who of it. Then we want to know how. And believe me. When we understand just what kind of love this is. And I hope we understand that by now.

I spent all last Sunday talking about it. And I've already talked about it quite a bit here this morning. Once we understand the what of it. Exactly what this kind of love is. And then we understand.

Who is to be directed toward. And considering the kind of people. We're sometimes. Are commanded to love. Then we want to know. How in the world. Are we going to do that?

And we also want to know why. So I've given you kind of the outline. For the rest of my message. We've seen the what. Then we move to the who.

That's just the way our mind thinks. At least that's the way mine thinks. I'm assuming yours thinks the same way. All right. But understand. The how of love.

[18:56] Is where Peter began. The how of love. Is rooted. In salvation. It's grounded. In our salvation.

It springs. It springs. Forward. And comes forth. From a heart. And a life. That has been saved. That's where Peter began.

And one aspect. Of salvation. Specifically conversion. Is where Peter begins. In verse 22. Where he says. Look at verse 22. Since you have. Purified your souls.

In obeying the truth. Through the spirit. That's where Peter begins. And he's talking about.

Specifically. Talking about conversion. Conversion to Christ. And that's where he begins.

And that is the how. Of this kind of love. And we'll get to that. A little bit later. But we want to know who. We want to know who.

[19:56] Who are we to love. With this kind of love. This. Sacrificial love. This. Unconditional love.

This. Self-giving love. This. Willful love. This. Highest form of love. To whom is that love. To be directed.

Well notice. What Peter said. Look at verse 22. Pay close attention. To. How he words this. And connects these phrases.

Because it. It. It. It. It teaches us. It tells us. About this love. And. To whom it. It. It. Is to be directed. He says. Since you have purified. Your souls. And obeying the truth.

Through the spirit. In. Or more accurately. For. Sincere. Love. Of the brethren. Do you see how those fit together? Do you see how.

[20:51] How that comes together? You have purified. Your souls. For what? Sincere love. Of the brethren. Did you know that's why.

You were saved. Well one of the reasons. I would maintain. One of the primary reasons. We've been saved. To be a part of a family.

That loves one another. To love. One another. See. This is important to get. We're going to understand. What Peter is trying to tell us.

As we understand. How he packages. This command. That will help us. To inform us. About the command. And also to instruct us. On how to obey it. And also to tell us.

Why we ought to obey it. It's important to get. One of the goals. And purposes. Of our conversion. Is to love. Our fellow believers. They are the priority.

[21 : 50] Of agape. That is. You and I. As the body of Christ. Members of the body of Christ. Are the priority.

In this kind of love. And I know what you're thinking. You're thinking brother Don. Aren't we to love the world too? Well yes we are.

Redemptively. Savingly we are. But did you know. That nowhere in scripture. Are we commanded. To love the world. By the same token.

I would. Say to you. That nowhere in scripture. Are we prohibited. From loving the world. Either. I'm not talking about. The world. In the sense. Of a world system.

In fact. The Bible is very clear. That we're to hate. The world system. But. We are to love. Love. The world.

[22 : 48] In the sense of its people. Primarily. We're to love them. As Christ loved them. Love them redemptively. Love them. Savingly.

But when it comes to. This command. That Peter issues here. And. And he's just simply. Referring to the command. That Jesus gave him. Personally. And all the other disciples.

When it comes to the command. To agape love. It is directed. Toward. The. The. Brothers and sisters. In Christ. That's the priority.

Now. Now. Understand. I'm not talking here. About the exclusivity. Of love. That's not the point here. So don't. Misunderstand me. It's not that we're to love. Love. God's people. And no one else. That's not the idea. But rather. The idea here. Is. The priority. Of love. The priority. Of it. And the priority. Of love. Is.

[23 : 46] The family. Of God. It's the family. Of God. It is to love. The brethren. A new love. For a new family. And here is the interesting. Thing about it.

Our love. For one another. Is. One of. Our most. Effective. Witnesses. Of our faith. Did you know that?

That our love. For one another. As the body of Christ. Specifically. This local body. Of Christ. That our love.

For one another. Is. Our most. Profound. And therefore. Most. Effective. Witness. Of our faith. And I would even. Go so far. As to say.

One of the chief. Tools. Of our evangelism. And I can go that far. And say that. Because of what Jesus. By this. We'll all know. That you are my followers.

[24 : 42] That you have love. For one another. You see. If we're not a community. Of love. That is. Genuine. Unhypocritical.

That's what. Paul means. By the word. Or Peter. I keep wanting to. Wanting to. Give. Paul the credit here. That's what Peter means. When he uses the word. Sincere.

It could be translated. Unhypocritical. If we're going. If we're not going to be. A community. Of love. Love in the. Unhypocritical sense. Genuine love.

Then the world. Will not. Take us seriously. And we have no. Reason to believe. Or expect. That they will believe. Our message. I tell you.

Dear people. It's that serious. And the church. In America. Needs to wake up. About this reality. Jesus said. By this.

[25 : 36] We'll all know. That you're my followers. That you have love. One. For. Enough. Tertullian.

One of the church fathers. Wrote in the second century. And he wrote. Concerning what. Pagans thought of Christians. This is what he said. He said.

It is mainly. The deeds of a love. So noble. That lead many. To put a brand. Upon us. See. They say. How they love. One another. For they themselves.

Are animated. By mutual hatred. See. They say. About us. How they are ready. Even to die. For one another. They themselves.

Would sooner kill. See. Listen. I tell you. The lost. World. Longs. To be a part.

[26 : 32] Of a community. Of genuine love. They do. They long for that. They desire that. They are looking for that. But sadly.

They are more likely. To find something. Closer to it. In a bar. Than they are. In some churches. In America. Where there is anything. But genuine love. Being expressed.

For one another. Within the body. Within the membership. I tell you. It is just. Almost. Becoming.

The common thing. To hear. About church. Squabbles. What does. The world.

Think about. What do they. Think about. The activity. Of love.

The priority. Of love. Then third. The capacity. To love. Verse 22. That is.

[27 : 25] The first. Part. Of the. Verse. This is. Where. Peter. Peter. Begins. With his. Discussion. On. Love. As he. Builds. Toward. This.

Command. And in. Verse 22. He says. Since. You have. Purified. Your souls. In obeying. The truth. Through the spirit. In sincere.

Love. Or for sincere. Love. Of the brethren. Since all. That's true. Love. One another. Love. One another. He's talking about. The capacity. To love.

The capacity. Someone has put all this together. A new love. That's what agape is. It's a new love. Made new by the Lord Jesus Christ. His command. His sacrifice. A new love.

For new family. Empowered by. A new birth. That's the idea. And so from. Where do we get the capacity.

[28 : 18] To love in this way. Do we wait for. A special kind of feeling. No. No I don't think so.

Do we wait. To develop. The kind of relationship. With one another. That would. Result in this kind of love. No.

No I don't think so. No. And so do we. Wait until we. Get that kind of love. Until we are loved. In that way.

So that then we can. Express that kind of love. Toward others. Absolutely not. Because it'll never happen. Remember. Dear people.

Agape is not. Love of. Love in a feeling. Sense. Love is. It's. It's not a. Love of.

[29 : 19] Emotion. Not feeling. Not emotion. It is a. Doing. Kind of love. That's what we need to understand. It's.

It's a doing thing. It's the only kind of love. That can be commanded. And obedience. To it. Is an act. It's an act.

Of the will. Act of the will. In obedience. To a command. A clear command. In scripture. That is given. By the Lord Jesus. And.

Repeated. And. By the apostle Peter. Here. In this text. And the will. To love. In this way. Resides. In a certain kind of heart. A. Heart. That has been. Changed. A heart. That has been.

[30 : 12] Purified. Peter said. Love one another. Fervently. With a. What? Pure. Pure. Heart. Where does.

A heart like that. Come from. New birth. Comes from salvation.

It's the result. Of salvation. That's Peter's point. To. As a matter of fact. Peter places. This command. To love one another. Fervently. With a pure heart.

He places that command. In between. Two statements. Concerning salvation. And since you could say. He packages it with.

Salvation. They kind of serve. These two statements. About salvation. Kind of serve as bookends. So to speak. And Peter's objective. Is twofold here. First of all.

[31 : 08] And this is what I want. To see at this point. Our salvation. Again. Is. The. Is. The source. For our capacity. To love. That's what he's saying.

Here. In verse 22. The first part of it. He's talking about salvation. Specifically. About conversion. Conversion. It is the side.

That we experience. The side of our salvation. That we experience. Look at what he says. And how he says it. It begins. In verse 22. Even though he doesn't begin.

With this phrase. He. Is telling us. That this salvation. This conversion. Begins. First of all. With obeying the truth. What truth?

The gospel. The gospel is proclaimed. The gospel is preached. And we obey. The gospel. We respond.

[32 : 04] To the truth. And so it begins. Then this. Kind of love. This kind of changed heart. A heart. Out of which. We have the capacity. To love. In this way. It begins.

With submission. To the truth. In obedience. To the truth. That results in. Separation. From sin. Do you see. That here. Since you have. Purified your souls. In obeying the truth. So it begins. With submission. To the truth. And that results in. Purify. Purification. Of the soul. Or. Or. Separation. From sin. What sin. Specifically. Well. All sin. But did you know.

That Peter also. Mentioned. Some of those sins. Within the context. Of the body of Christ. He's commanding. The body of Christ. To love one another. And he's saying. If. You have the capacity. [32 : 59] To do so. Because you have. Since you have. Obeyed the truth. Resulting in. Separation. Or purification. Of sin. And he mentioned. Some of those sins. Down there.

In verse one. Of chapter two. That's why. I went on. Into the chapter. He says. Therefore. Laying aside. What? All malice. Malice. Or. Ill will. Toward one another. Lay that aside. He says. Deceit. Hypocrisy. Envy. And all evil. Speaking. Some Baptist churches. Need to hear that one. Evil. Speaking. Ah. Well. We won't get there.

You see. Listen. The capacity. To love in this way. I mean. This kind of love. This. This. This. Highest form of love. This. This. This. Supernatural. [33 : 58] Kind of love. In order to obey that command. The capacity. To obey that command. That's not a feeling. Not an emotion. It's an act of the will. The only way.

You'll have that act. Of the will. Or. Be able to will. In that way. Is to have a changed heart. And that comes through. Submission to the gospel. Submission to God's word. That absolutely. Radically. Changes your life. Separating you from sin. Cleansing you from sin. That's. That's what happens. At conversion. And it. Results in. Or leads to. Sincerity of love. That's how you ought to get this down. We're talking about the capacity to love. Submission to the truth. Separation from sin. Sincerity of love. Sincerity of love. The capacity. To love. [34 : 54] Comes from the heart. And if you're a born again Christian this morning. Then you can obey this command. You say. I just. I find it hard to do it.

I don't know how I can do it. I can't do it. Brother Don. Yes you can. Because it's in. It's in you to do it. You have a changed heart. I was at a Bible conference some years ago. And I heard a pastor. Speaking on the subject of love in the body of Christ. And he. He said. That someone came to him one day. Someone said. You know. You're a pastor of such and such church down there. Very successful church. And. A growing church. And. Why is it that you never seem to have any problems. Internally. In the body. In the body. Why. Why. Why do you never have any squabbles. And. And disagreements. Like most churches we hear about. And he said. Well it's simple. He said. All my members are Christians. [35 : 55] Now I know that's an oversimplification. And even Christians can get out of sorts with one another. That it is for us to know. That we've been commanded to love one another.

Fervently. Unhypocritically. Love one another in the same way that Christ loved for us. And we're to love the body of Christ. Just as he loved the body of Christ. And died for the Christ. Body. And we can do that. Because. We have the capacity to do that. Changed heart. The capacity to love through the new birth. See. Here's the. Fourth and final point. I said that. Peter. Mentioning salvation on the front end and back end. Both sides of the command. That he did so. For twofold purpose. [36 : 55] One. We've already looked at. To reveal the capacity of love. The second one. And the final point of the sermon. Is to reveal the testimony of love.

The testimony. Of love. That is. What. Is. Love. Of the brethren. Love. Of the brothers and sisters. What is that. A testimony. Of. A testimony. Not only to ourselves. But more importantly. A testimony. To the world. What is it. A testimony. Of. The worthiness. Of the brethren. Is it. A testimony. Of the love. Worthiness. Of the brethren. For it. Well. I wish it were so. But not that. [37 : 52] Is our love. For one another. A testimony. Of the neediness. Of the community. Of faith. No. Not even that. Though we all need love. What then. Is it. A testimony.

Of. Well. Peter says. Love. Is a testimony. Of the new birth. It's a testimony. Of the new birth. Would you look at.

How he. Describes this. It's really quite. Strange. When you think about it. Because his subject. Is love. Love in the body. And now he. Talks about.

The word of God. He says there. In verse 23. Having been born again. Not of corruptible seed. But incorruptible. Through the word of God.

[38 : 48] Which lives. And abides forever. Because. All flesh is as grass. And all the glory of man. As the flower of grass. The grass withers. Flower. Its flower falls away.

But the word of the Lord. Endures forever. Now this is. The word. Which by the gospel. Was preached to you. Now why would. Peter include. Those passages there.

Quotations from the Old Testament. That are clearly. Identifying the. Supernatural nature. Of the word of God. Why mention that here.

Within the context. Of loving. The brethren. Well I'll tell you why. See. Love is a testimony. Of the new birth.

In fact. Love is the only. Listen. Love. For one another. Is the only. Indisputable.

[39 : 49] Consistent. Evidence. Of. New life in Christ. You ever thought of that? It's not theology.

That is the evidence. It's not our eschatology. What we believe about the end time.

It's not our ecclesiology. What we believe about the church. It's not. Our soteriology.

What we believe about salvation. It's not. Brother Jonathan. Our worshipology.

What we believe about worship. It's not. What is the one. Indisputable. Consistent.

[40 : 50] Evidence. Of new life in Christ. That this body has it. What's the evidence of it? It's our love. One for another. You see.

When it comes to theology. And that's very important. But when it comes to theology. We can be as straight. As a gun barrel. And be absolutely.

Out of God's will. If we do not love one another. The unbelieving world. Does not care. About our theology.

Did you know that? The unbelieving world. Does not care. About what we believe. We believe. I tell you.

The unbelieving world. Here in Bartlesville. Does not care. About the way we worship. I see these churches. That. Are rearranging.

[41 : 49] And radically changing. Their approach to worship. To make it more contemporary.

Thinking that. They can reach. The lost. In the community. And that is a bunch of baloney.

That may reach other members. Of other churches. But the lost. Man does not care. About. Our worship. He cares about.

Our love. That's what he's attracted to. And she. Is attracted to. To. I believe.

In theology. I believe. In correct doctrine. I want to be absolutely. Right on that. But I do.

Not want. To be known. For theology. Not above. Being known. For our love.

[42 : 56] Love. For one another. Here's the genius. Of the apostle Peter. And why. He includes. This little. Little. Quote. From the old testament.

About the flesh. And about the enduring. Word of God. Here's the genius. Love. Is a supernatural. Thing. The kind of love. We're talking about here. Supernatural. Love.

Is a supernatural. Thing. Because love. Comes from. The new birth. Which is. Supernatural. And the new birth. Is a supernatural. Thing. Because it is.

Brought about. By the work. Of the Holy Spirit. As the Holy Spirit. Applies. The word of God. Which is supernatural. And that's what. Peter says. He says. It is incorruptible.

It is. The word of God. It is. It lives. And abides. Forever. Forever. It endures. Doers. Forever. It's supernatural.

[43 : 53] But. What does he say. In verse 24. All flesh. Is as grass. And all the glory. Of man. As the flower. Of grass. The grass.

Withers. And its flower. Falls away. But it's the word of God. That endures. Forever. What's the point here. You see. The point is. That you and I. As the body of Christ.

Can do anything. Almost anything. In the flesh. Oh yes we can. Anything. Almost. Almost anything.

And you and I. Can serve the Lord. In about any capacity. Here in this church. And do it. In the flesh. We can even participate. In correct forms.

Of worship. And we can even. Boldly. And proudly. Be proud. About our correct. Points of theology. And we can be. Like the grass.

[44:45] That's waving. In the field. In its glory. We might even. Become the flower. That rises above. The grass. And shows off. Its glory. Above the grass.

But the grass. Withers. And the flower. Fades away. But the word of the Lord. Endures forever. Do you see. Peter's point. The only. Undeniable. Testimony. Of the new birth.

Is the love. We have. One for another. That cannot be faked. Not this kind of love. It can't be. Cannot be faked. Everything else. Can be faked. Everything else. Can be just a facade. God. Everything else.

[45:44] Can be. A point of pride. But self-sacrificing. Unconditional.

Love. Cannot be faked. Cannot be done in the flesh. As withering grass. And fading flower.

But. We cannot love unconditionally. And sacrificially. And sacrificially. In the flesh. John said. We know. That we have passed.

From death to life. How do we know that? Because we have love. For the brethren. By this. We know. Love. Because.

We. We. Lay down our lives. For our brethren. Let us love. Indeed. And true. And by this.

[46:44] We know. That we are of the truth. That we have love. One for another. Amen.

Amen. Amen.