

The Activity of Love

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[0:00] I think your Bibles this morning and open them if you would to 1 Peter chapter 1 and find verse 22.

! 1 Peter chapter 1 verse 22. I had planned to read it a little bit later in the introduction, but let's just do it right now. 1 Peter 1 verse 22.

Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart.

1 Peter 1 verse 22.

This final command. And we'll get to that in just a moment. This final command of the Apostle Peter in 1 Peter chapter 1.

[1:48] Vince Lombardi was one of those legendary football coaches that had a knack for coining phrases. And so he was one of the most quoted football players, I would imagine, most quoted football players in the history of the game.

He said things like, if winning isn't everything, why do they keep score? Or show me a good loser. And I'll show you a loser. Or the only place success comes before work is in the dictionary.

That's a pretty familiar one. Maybe you didn't know it was Vince Lombardi who coined that one. And then I like this one. We didn't lose the game. We just ran out of time.

I like that one. Now, Lombardi was once asked what it took to make a winning team. And here was his answer. First, he said, teach the fundamentals.

[3:01] Teach the fundamentals. He said, a player's got to know the basics of the game. Second, discipline. Discipline. You've got to keep him in line.

The men have to play as a team. Third, you've got to care for one another. Interesting, huh? You've got to care for one another.

He went on. He said, you've got to love each other. This is a famous football coach, you know, saying you've got to love each other. He said, each guy says to himself, if I don't block that man, our guy is going to get his legs broken.

I have to do my job well so he can do his. And then he said this. The difference between mediocrity and greatness is the feeling these guys have for each other.

When you've got that sort of team spirit, you've got a winning team. Interesting, huh? Interesting. Teach the fundamentals.

[4:06] Discipline. Love each other. That's Vince Lombardi, his prescription for a winning team. And I would say to you that that lines up pretty well with the Apostle Peter's approach here in chapter 1 of 1 Peter chapter 1.

Same approach in a sense. And you might remember that Peter is addressing Christians who are living in a world of hurt because of Christian persecution. And Peter knows that they are in a battle against Satan and his world system.

And Peter wants them to win that battle. He wants them to win. Or we might put it this way. He wants them to live in victory. And his winning formula?

Well, teach them the fundamentals. That's where he began. Teach them the fundamentals. The fundamentals of salvation. Or the richness of our salvation in Christ.

That is salvation in the fullest sense. And that's what we have in verses 1 through 12. We've already studied those passages. Then second. Discipline.

[5:22] Discipline. Teach the fundamentals. Then discipline. And in verses 13 or verse 13 and following. We have Peter giving God's people a series of commands.

That they are to obey. Commands whose object of obedience is God. Hope in God. Verse 13. Be holy like God.

Verse 15. Fearfully honor God. In verse 17. And so teach the fundamentals. Discipline. And then guess what is number third.

Or number three. Love each other. Love each other. And that's what we begin to see here in 1 Peter chapter 1 verse 22.

Love each other. So what did Lombardi say? He said the difference between mediocrity and greatness is the feeling these guys have for each other.

[6:24] He said when you've got that sort of team spirit. You've got a winning team. Now I'll be quick to admit that Lombardi's words may be spirit inspiring.

That is spirit with a small s. But they were not holy spirit inspired. And yet I must also confess. That what Lombardi said does not contradict the biblical principle that Peter teaches us here in 1 Peter chapter 1.

And specifically in this text that I have chosen for this morning. Or the text that comes next in our study through this book. They don't contradict Peter.

And so Peter's words are both holy spirit inspired. And therefore spirit inspiring.

But now remember. What Peter tells us about loving one another. Comes to us in the form of a command. It's a command.

[7:29] He's not telling us how we ought to feel about one another. We ought to feel love for one another. But that's not what he's saying here. He's not talking about how we ought to somehow stir up an emotion of love.

That we ought to somehow discipline ourselves into a feeling and an emotion of love. He's giving us a command. He's not giving us instructions. It's not some point of instruction here.

Or some point of information. This comes to us in the form of command. He says love one another. It is by the way. To remind you.

The fourth in a series of commands issued by the apostle. Here in 1 Peter chapter 1. And as I've already said. The object of obedience in the first three commands is God.

But the object of obedience in this fourth and final command in the chapter. Is man. Or specifically. One another.

[8:30] The brothers and the sisters in Christ. The object is us here. The object of obedience. Now we're obeying God. And obeying his command. But the expression of obedience to that command.

Is toward one another. This is a command. And now as was true of the first three commands. As we've already studied. Peter does not just simply throw out the command.

The bare command. And just leave it right there. Peter is very gracious to wrap around this command. Some very significant. Very important.

Important materials. Some supporting information. Some supporting instructions. So that we can understand what the command is. Exactly. And all about the command.

And also we can understand. How we're to obey it. And that we can obey it. And other things that he's going to tell us. And has been telling us. About each and every one of these commands.

[9:30] And so let's see how Peter packages this command. That's what we are going to focus on this morning. The command to love one another.

Let's see how he presents this. The package he puts the command in. So that we can understand the command. And so we can obey the command.

And so let's begin with the command itself. And with what I want to call. The activity of love. That's where it begins.

If we're going to understand the command. We need to focus on the command itself. And the word love by the way. And we'll get to that. And understand the activity of love.

The kind of love that's being commanded here. Is a love that is not felt so much as it is done. It's a doing thing.

[10:27] The activity of love. Now as I've said. And I want to keep reminding you. That this is a command. The verb love in the text. Is in the imperative.

It is a command. And so also I want you to notice. That Peter is not issuing some new command here. This is not just something coming from Peter.

It's not something he's writing. Out of his apostolic authority. And now Peter does write some things. That are new. That the Holy Spirit inspires through him to write.

And there's some new information. New instructions. But when it comes to the command to love one another. This is not new. This is not original with Peter. And that's important.

Because we need to understand. That what Peter is doing. Is passing on something that has already been given. A command that has already been issued.

[11 : 24] And it was issued by none other than the Lord Jesus Christ himself. Now that's important. Now that's important. Although I would quickly remind you.

That Peter's authority. When it comes to what he has written. Is binding. And what he commands through 1 Peter.

Is binding. But let's just understand. That there is a particular significance. Attached to this command. In that it is simply a command.

That came first from the Lord Jesus Christ himself. And further I think it's significant to consider that. Because I don't think Peter ever forgot that.

I don't mean just the command. I mean I don't think Peter ever forgot. The occasion. When Jesus gave that command.

[12 : 23] Do you remember anything about it? Well in case you don't. I want you to take your Bibles. And turn to John chapter 13. John tells us what happened there.

Peter never forgot it. In fact I have the notion. That when Peter was writing. This letter. And he got to this portion of it.

When he gave the command. And issued it in the form of a command. Love one another. I believe his mind. Was totally captivated. By the event.

That we're going to read about here. In John chapter 13. Look there. Starting with verse. Verse one. We'll skip a few verses along the way.

But look at verse one. And look at this very closely. Now. Before the feast of the Passover. When Jesus knew that his hour had come.

[13 : 25] What hour was that? His death. The hour of his crucifixion. His sacrifice. His hour had come. That he should depart from this world to the Father.

Having loved his own. Love. That's. The same word that Peter used. In first Peter chapter one. Verse 22.

Agape love. Having loved his own. Who were in the world. Speaking of his disciples. Here specifically. He loved them.

To the end. Now we see. Here in this one verse. A description.

The significance. Of the love of Jesus. For his disciples. His own. He loved them to the end. Now skip on down.

[14 : 25] Well let's not skip. Let's just keep going. And supper being ended. That is the meal they had together. The devil having already put it. Into the heart of Judas Iscariot.

Simon's son. To betray him. Jesus knowing that the Father. Had given all things into his hands. And that he had come from God. And was going to God. Rose from supper.

And laid aside his garments. Took a towel. And girded himself. After that. He poured water. Into a basin. And began to wash. The disciples feet. And to wipe them. With the towel. Which. With which. He was girded. Then he came to Simon Peter.

Now here's why I say. That Peter never forgot. This. Moment in his life. He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to him. Lord. Are you washing my feet?

[15 : 29] Jesus answered. And said to him. What I am doing. You do not understand now. But you will know. After this. Peter said to him.

You shall never wash my feet. Jesus answered him. If I do not wash you. You have no part with me. So Simon Peter said to him. Lord. Not my feet only. But also my hands. And my head. And Jesus said to him. He who is bathed. Needs only to wash his feet.

Translation. He. That is saved. Redeemed. Only needs his feet. Washed. And that's true of all of us. As believers. True believers. We've been washed by the blood of Jesus. And yet in this life. We continue to get our feet dirty. We need our feet. Cleanse. And so this is what he means here.

[16 : 32] He says. He who is bathed. Needs only to wash his feet. But is completely clean. And you are clean. Peter. You are one of mine. You are. But not all of you.

That is. Not every one of you here. For he knew. Who would betray him. Therefore he said. You are not all clean. So when he had washed their feet.

Taken his garments. And sat down again. He said to them. Do you know what I have done for you? You call me teacher and Lord.

And you say well. For so I am. If I then. Your Lord and teacher. Have washed your feet. You also ought to wash.

One another's feet. For I have given you. An example. By the way. That's why I don't believe. We have. A third ordinance.

[17:32] Prescribed here from. Established by. The Lord Jesus. There are those who believe. In foot washing. As an ordinance in the church. And if they do. That's all right. But.

Jesus was doing this. As an example. Example of what? Humble. Sacrificial. Self-giving. Love. I've given you an example. That you should do. As I have done to you. Most assuredly. I say to you. I.

A servant is not greater. Than his master. Nor is he. Who is sent. Greater than he. Who sent him. If you know these things. Blessed are you. If you do them.

And then. Skip on down. To verse 34. A new commandment. I give to you. That's something new. Brand new.

[18:25] Love. Now the word. Love is not new. The word. Agape. In the. Greek language. Was not new. Jesus was not forming.

A new word here. But a new. Spirit. New. Expression. New. Significant. New.

New. Spirituality. To love. A new commandment. I give to you. That you love. One another. There's the commandment. Love one another.

Peter is. Quoting. Jesus. In that sense. Love one another. As I have loved you. That you also love. One another. And then he adds this.

By this. All will know. That you are my disciples. If you have love. For. One another. See. I don't think Peter. Ever got over that moment.

[19:23] I don't think Peter. Is just simply writing. Here in his first letter. To these. Primarily Gentile Christians. Who are suffering persecution. I don't believe he was just simply.

Writing. Because. It was a truth. They needed to know. I believe he was writing. Because he never ever. Got over that event. That moment. He was there that day.

When the command was given. He was there. To observe. The. The illustration. Of the commandment. Itself. The foot washing.

Peter was there. To observe all of that. And Peter was there. When his feet were washed. By the Lord Jesus Christ. And he was there. When he had. And never forgot. That face to face.

Eye to eye. Contact. He had. With the Lord Jesus Christ. When Peter objected. No. Don't wash my feet. And Jesus said. If I don't wash your feet. You're not part of me. And then.

[20:19] Peter said. Wash my feet. My hands. And all. He said. You don't need. All of you. Clean. See. Peter was there. When. When. When Jesus. Confronted him. And taught him. A tremendous lesson. And also.

Gave him a heads up. That in the future. Very near future. He would understand. What was going on that day. Peter understood. This command. Love. One. Another.

Peter. He also understood. Now. At least on. The side of the cross. On this side of the cross.

As he wrote that letter. He understood. The ultimate. Demonstration. Of the kind of love. That Jesus was commanding.

John also knew it. That is the apostle. John. Though we are looking at. Peter's letter. I want you to consider. The apostle John. See.

[21:16] John was there that day. Too. As a matter of fact. The. The. Text that I read from. Out of John. Chapter 13. That event. That. That occasion. When Jesus washed their feet.

And gave the new commandment. Did you know. That John was the only one. Only one of the gospel writers. Who included that event. John was there. It was significant to him. John never forgot.

The importance. Of the command. To love one another. As a matter of fact. It seemed to dominate. His life. And his ministry. He became the apostle of love.

To many. And it dominated his writings. When he wrote his letters. As a matter of fact. I want you to turn. To. First John. Chapter 3. And just see.

Just a. Sampling. Of how love. This commandment. From the Lord. Jesus Christ. Permeated. And dominated. John's thoughts. And.

[22:10] It was all. According to God's purposes. You know. And. And God. The Holy Spirit. Moved in. John's life. And. Formed this. Attachment.

This. Significance. Of love. In his heart. So that when he wrote. He wrote. Under the inspiration. Of the Holy Spirit. It. But I want you to notice. Chapter 3. Of 1st John. Look at verse 10.

And let's just kind of. Follow along here. For a moment. Let's let the. Scripture. Do the preaching. This morning. In this. He said.

He wrote. Verse 10. In this. The children of God. And the children of the devil. Are manifest. Here's how you can. Tell them apart. Whoever does not. Practice righteousness.

Is not of God. Nor is. He who does not. Love his brother. That's pretty strong. Language. Would you say.

[23:04] That John. Got it. That John. Understood. The significance. Of that day. When Jesus. Went around. And washed. The feet. Of all of the disciples.

Including. Judah's feet. By the way. You think. John. Got it. Is it. Here's how you tell. The difference. Between the disciples. Of the devil.

And the disciples. Of Christ. That you do righteousness. And we would guess. That to be true. Of course. Or. Or also.

Love the brothers. For this. Is the message. Look at verse 11. For this. Is the message. That you heard. From the very beginning. The beginning.

Of Jesus. Ministry. That we. Should. Love. One. Another. Skip. Down. To verse 14. We know. That we have. Passed. From death. To life.

[23:58] How do we know that? Because we love. The brethren. We love. The brethren. He who does not.

Love his brother. Abides in death. By the way. I do need to. Include here. The sisters. It's not. A commandment.

Exclusively. Given to men. To love men. This is. The brethren. In the sense. Of. The brothers and sisters. In Christ. The body of Christ.

And I think. Specifically. The application. Is for the local. Body. Of Christ. Highland Park. Baptist Church. Or Trinity. Baptist Church.

Over in Marion. Or West Memphis. Arkansas. Or other churches. New Testament churches. The application. Is there. That we are to love. Each other.

[24:52] One another. In Christ. Here. It's very clear. In John's. Writings here. It permeated. His thoughts. And his ministry. And his writings. He said.

We know. We've passed. From death to life. Because we love. The brethren. He who does not. Love his brother. Abides in death. That means. He's. Not saved.

I don't know. How else. To interpret it. That is. If there is not. This. Love. Love. And expression. Of the love.

Of Christ. For one another. If you don't love. Your brothers and sisters. In Christ. Then you're probably. Not a brother. Or a sister. It's pretty strong stuff.

Verse 16. By this. We know love. As this is how. You know what love is. Because. He. Laid down.

[25:48] His life. For us. And we also. Ought to lay down. Our lives. For the brethren. That speaks of the. Extent of this love. Just how far this love.

Is to go. And Jesus. Again. Of course. Is the. Example. We're not talking about. Some kind of. Mediocre. Kind of love. Though.

We do express. And do acts of love. That might be. Termed. You know. Common things. Mediocre things. Sometimes.

We're called upon. To do big things. For one another. Even. Lay. Down. Our. Life. Greater love. Hath no man. Than this. Jesus said. That a man. Lay down his life. For his friends. But. Whoever. Has.

[26:43] This. World's. Goods. Verse 17. And sees his brother. In need. And shuts up his heart. From him. How does the love of God. Abide in him. My little children.

Let us not love. In word. Or in tongue. But in deed. That's. Works. In.

Works. And in truth. And by this. We know. How do we know. That we love in deeds. And in truth. By this. We know. That we are of the truth. And shall assure our hearts. Before him. I tell you. And there's so much more. In. In John's letters.

Especially this first letter. About love. About the supremacy. Of this command. About the. The significance. Of this command. To obey. To love. One another.

[27:42] John said. Let me just remind you again. John said. Let not. Let us not love. In word. Or in tongue. That is.

We don't just pay it. Lip service. You understand what he means. There's not any mystery here. No need for some kind of. Deep interpretation. We understand what he's getting at. He says. Let us love indeed. The things we do. And in truth. By this. By this. We know. That we are. Of the truth. See. This is why. I've labeled this. The activity of love. It is so crucial. That we understand this command. In terms of action.

Of activity. Not just emotion. In fact. Per se. That is. Specifically. This kind of love. Is not emotion. At all. Though it can be associated.

[28:38] With it. We are emotional beings. And we ought not. To shy away. From feeling good. About things. When we love one another. But it's not about emotion. The command is not.

To have an emotional love. You can't command emotion. Anyway. Can you? Can you? No. This is. An activity.

And. Let's just consider. For a moment. The word love. Here. In Peter's command. It's a famous word. Isn't it? Now. The phrase. Just before this.

We have. The word love. But it's a different kind of love. Different word. It's phileo. Delphos. Brother love. And we're to express that. To one another too.

But the word. That he's getting at here. And the word. That is chosen. For the command. Is the word. Of course. Agape. Or in the text. It's agapetas. Or agapao. It's agape love.

[29:35] And we have heard. Sermon after sermon. On the word agape. Haven't we? And we understand. What that is. And we. We've heard about agape. And eros love. And phileo love. And we understand. The difference.

Between these things. Because we preachers. Like to preach on that. And talk about that. And so we understand. That agape. Is the highest form of love. Isn't it? The highest form.

It's the God. Kind of love. We understand those things. But did you know. That. That. Has not always been the case. With the word agape. It is not always.

Had that kind of meaning. That kind of. Significance. Did you know that? As a matter of fact. Prior to the coming of Christ. Agape. Did not possess. Any extraordinary meaning.

Whatsoever. In that interview. And that's true. Of a lot of the great. Doctrinal words. That we hold so dear. They had mundane. And secular uses.

[30:32] And agape. Was simply. A kind of a generic word. Prior to Christ coming. There wasn't anything. Significant about that. They didn't have. Preachers throughout the Old Testament.

Preaching sermons on agape love. As opposed to eros. And phileo love. Agape was just. A general word. Agape. Possessed no extraordinary meaning.

William Mounts. In his dictionary. Of old and new testament words. Said this. And I quote. Before the time of Christ. Agape. Was a colorless word.

Without any great depth. Of meaning. It was used frequently. As a synonym. A synonym. Of eros. Sexual love. And phileo. Brother love. Just used as a synonym. Of those things. Kind of interchangeable. And so. It just depended on the context. If someone was speaking. About eros.

[31:30] Love. They might use the word. Agape. And the context. Would let people know. They were talking about. Sexual love. And it might be used. Interchangeably. With phileo. And so.

Instead of phileo. Brother love. They might use the word. Agape. And the listener. Would understand. That that's just a generic word. And the context. Of the discussion.

Would let them know. That we're talking here. About brother love. And so. It had no significance. In that way. I go on. With mounts. He said. It's meaning. Now this is significant.

It's meaning. It's meaning. It's meaning. It comes not from the Greek. Though it is a Greek word. It does not come from the Greek. But from the biblical. Understanding. Of God's love.

You understand that? That agape. Cannot be understood. Apart from knowing God.

[32:28] And I would go a step further. It cannot be expressed. Apart from knowing him. Agape does not gain its meaning.

From some dictionary. That's not where he got it. You can't go back. And study. The evolution. Of the word agape. Or the etymology.

Of the word agape. The meaning. Is not etymological. It's theological. Because it's wrapped up. In the divine nature. Of God. The only way. You're going to understand.

The meaning. Of the word agape. Is to go back. To the cross. But it is. To go further. Than that. To go upward. To the very nature. And character. Of God.

It's a supernatural. Love. And you've heard. Preachers say that. That agape. Is supernatural. Love. And indeed. It is. That is. It is. Supernatural. Love.

[33:21] In the meaning. That it has taken on. Since the cross. Because it reveals. The true nature. And character. Of God.

The cross does. The love of God. Is expressed. At the cross. And so. We understand. The word agape. Based upon the cross. Listen to.

The apostle. John. Again. It is. John. Is saying. It is. God's. Character. That defines. Love. In fact. In first.

John. Four. Eight. We have. That famous. Little phrase. Three letter. Phrase. God. Is. Love. Now. What does that mean? Well. It means. Love. Is what God is. That God. Defines love. The nature.

[34:16] And character. Of God. Is what defines it. You want to understand. How to obey the command. Love one another. Then you need to understand. What the word love is. And just what this command. Is asking of us.

Not. Asking. But demanding. Of us. To love. Like God. Because God.

Is love. Love. Is what God is. Further. John. Tells us. That it is. God's saving grace. That defines love. In first.

John. Four. Nine. This is how God. Showed his love. Among us. How did he do it? He sent his one. And only son. Into the world. That we might live.

Through him. He goes on. In verse 10. In this. Is love. Not that we love God. But that he loved us.

[35:11] And sent. His son. To be. The. Satisfaction. For our sins. The propitiation. For our sins. That's what love is. That's how you know love.

This is how God. Showed his love. Among us. He sent his son. Sacrificed his life. Upon the cross. In this. Is love. Not that we love God.

But that he loved us. And sent his son. To. Satisfy God's. Holy. Righteous. Demands. Because of our sin. That's what Jesus. Did at the cross.

God. You see. Acts. With love. Toward. Undeserving. Sinners. Like you.

And me. And that's what John says too. In first. John. Three. One. Behold. What manner. Of love. The father. Has bestowed on us.

[36:10] Behold. Look. See. What manner. What kind of love. God has lavished. Upon us. That we should be called. Children of God. That's what God did.

That's what his love is. Verse 16. Of that same. Chapter. Ironically. That. John. Three. Sixteen. Most famous passage.

For God. So loved the world. That he gave his only begotten son. That whoever believes in him. Should not perish. But have everlasting life. And in first. John. Three. Sixteen. John says. By this. We know love. How do we know it? Because he laid down his life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives. For the brethren. They see.

How they're attached. Here. The cross. On the one hand. Established the true meaning. The full meaning. Of agape. Love.

[37:06] It had no real meaning. Prior to the cross. It. It. It. It gave it the full meaning. Prior to the cross. It was just a general word. And so listen. Love is what God is.

It's a supernatural love. But more important to us. Here this morning. In relation to the command. That Peter has given us. Here. Is that love. Is understood. By what God. Has done.

Love. Then you see. Is. An active. That's what gave definition. To the word. Agape.

God. God. Not our coming. To the place. Where we understood. Emotionally. And maybe even intellectually. God's heart of love for us.

Is where we came to the point. Is where we came to the point. Where we understood. That God expressed that love. In a most unusual way. That he would send his son.

[38:10] To pay. The penalty for our sin. that he would with that payment redeem us to be his personal possession and beloved children.

That's how we understand love. Agape love. Because it's an activity. It's an active thing. And it is a willful thing.

Unlike all the other forms of love. It's a willful thing. And that's how Jesus and Peter and John and the New Testament writers as a whole could command us to love.

Command this kind of love. Because it's something you do. We've got to get that down. We've got to understand. We're never going to get anywhere with this command if we don't understand that this is a commandment to do something.

To do something. It's not a commandment to feel something. In fact, that's what makes agape so unique now. From all the other forms of the word love in the Greek language.

[39 : 24] It makes it unique because it is an act of the will. It's a willful thing. You cannot command an emotion. Can you?

No, you can't command an emotion. God is not commanding us to feel a certain way. It's not the thought is what counts.

You can't command an emotion. You can't command a feeling. You can only command a will. A willful act.

And that's what God is doing here. You command an activity. You command a behavior. And so, I give the first point of the sermon on the back end of the point.

Though I don't really have that much more to say. So don't get nervous. The point is that we're to love willfully. That's the whole point here.

[40 : 27] Love willfully. To act of the will. Something we do. Is something we do. Second, according to this imperative phrase, love one another.

As we go on out with the phrase, love one another fervently. So, we're to love willfully. And we're to love fervently.

So, what does that mean? Well, I borrowed the word from the New King James Version here. And it lended itself quite well to my outline.

So, I just used the word fervently. Some of you might have some other words that are used there.

Some might have the word earnestly. In your particular version.

Some might have some other words. The word, though, is a very strong word. Greek language. We might substitute the word intensely. In fact, I thought about using that word instead of fervently.

[41 : 36] That gets closer to the impact of the word. We're to love one another intensely. Or maybe I could use another word.

And I would not do damage to the meaning of the word fervently. I could use extremely. Extreme love.

Now, when you think about it. In the context of the local church. This church, for example. We have many, many, many opportunities to love one another. Some of them very small things.

Little things. You know, acts of kindness. Meeting some small need. Or just simply being friendly. There are many opportunities within the church.

To express. Or to obey this command. And Peter using the word fervently. Does not exclude all those other occasions.

[42 : 36] Where they're just little things that we do. Little things that don't really even cost us much. He uses the word not to exclude those opportunities.

But he uses the word to identify. The extent of this love. That we're commanded to express to one another. That it goes all the way to the extreme.

To the ultimate. Just like Christ. The ultimate. Was to give his life. As a ransom for our sin.

Now, you can't give your life as a ransom. For anyone's sin. But maybe. Quite possibly. God might. Want you to give your life. For the life of another.

And though that probably would not happen. That's beyond our. Anything conceivable to our minds. And yet we do need to consider. That that is exactly what Peter is saying.

[43 : 35] When he says. Ultimately I'm saying here. Love one another. No matter what. That means. No matter what it means. Fervently.

Fervently. Fervently. To the fullest extent. A love. That knows no limit. Let me ask you something. Just as a little footnote here.

Is it possible to love in that way? Outside of a relationship with Christ. Outside of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit of God.

In your heart and life. Is it possible to love. Agape love in that way. No it's not. No it's not. The ultimate.

That's what Peter is saying. We're to love in the little bitty things. The little insignificant things. The little things. And love all the way to whatever God demands of us.

[44 : 31] Love. Love. Love. Love. Love. Love. Love. Love. Love. Love. Love.

Purely. I mean this whole phrase is just. It's just rich. With. Deep.
And strong words. That qualify the commandment. We're to love one another. Love one another.
To the fullest extent. Knowing no limit. And we're to love one another. Purely. With a pure heart.
Pure heart. What might that mean? Well. I think it means unconditionally. That's a part of the
meaning there. I believe it means.

[45:28] Selflessly. And I'm not just coming up with those thoughts on my own. And just maybe
trying to conceptualize it in my own mind. I am borrowing those words from my understanding of
how Christ loved us.

Unconditionally. Selflessly. Selflessly. Selflessly. Selflessly. That's why this is a supernatural love
we're talking about here. It's a love that's expressed.

With no ulterior motives. This is where we have big problems. Because we'll express an act of love
toward another.

But we have. Some secret ulterior motives. Maybe known only to ourselves. But this kind of love.
Means acts of love. That expect nothing in return. No reciprocating love.

[46:35] Though it's nice to have that. I mean you know. When you express love for someone.
You. It really is kind of a nice thing to have them to love you back.

How many years did. Jesus love you. And you express no love for him. In fact. The Bible says. That
he commended his love toward us.

In the while we were yet sinners. Christ died for us. See we're talking about a kind of love. That
expects nothing in return.

Demands nothing in return. Not. Not. Not. Not just reciprocating love. But it demands no praise
either. Oh no. Wait a minute. We can't have that.

I mean. You know. Have you ever heard yourself thinking or saying. You know. You did something
for someone. And say. You know. They didn't even tell me. Thanks. You see. If I. I do anything for
them again.

[47:40] And maybe. You. Would never say that. Not out loud. But. Inside.

You know. It's a supernatural thing. It's a spiritual thing. To be able to love someone. Purely. No.
Ulterior motives. No.

Expectation. Or demands. For reciprocating love. No thought. Or need. For any praise. Or any
glory.

From man. Or from God. To love one another. To love one another.

In this way. Then finally. We're to love spiritually. He says.

[48:44] Here. The command is worded this way. Love one another. Fervently. With a pure. Heart.
With a pure heart.

Not everyone can love in this way. Next Sunday. We'll get to. That. Reality. See. Because. Peter
does.

Speak of this. Where you and I. Even get the ability. To love this way. The ability to. Obey this
command. Only the redeemed.

Who are able to love. In this way. Because it's a supernatural love. It's a. Spiritual love. Not
everyone. One can do this. Primarily. Because it comes from the heart.

The heart. You know that the heart. Is where the will is. We think things. Intellectually. But we make
decisions.

[49:46] From the heart. And the decision. To love. To act. To obey. The command.

To love one another. In an active way. The decision. The will. Comes from. From the heart. Comes
right here. And I say. It's a spiritual thing. Because. It is. The fruit of the spirit.

Love is. This kind of love. In fact. If you will look. Very quickly. To Galatians. Chapter 5. I believe.

I can show you this. Very clearly. Galatians. Chapter 5. In verse 18. Verse 16. We got to put all this
together.

And understand. Very quickly. What Paul is getting at here. Paul says. Verse 16. Walk in the spirit.
Walk in the spirit.

[50:47] It means live your life. Everything you do. Everything. From decisions. To activity.
Everything. Live your life.

According to the. Control. Lordship of God. Lordship of God. In your life. Walk in the spirit. And you
shall not. Fulfill the lust of the flesh.

For the flesh lusts. Against the spirit. And the spirit. Against the flesh. And these are contrary. To one another. So that you. Do. Not. Do. The things. That you wish. One of those things. Would be to obey this command. To love. But if you're not walking. In the spirit. You're not walking. In the spirit. You're walking. In the flesh. And it's walking. In the flesh. That keeps you. From doing. The things you. Want to do. Or that your. Spirit. The spirit of Christ. In you. Wants to do.
[51 : 48] But if you are led. By the spirit. Verse 18. Now follow along. This is important. If you're led. By the spirit. You're not under the law. Now the works.

Of the flesh. Those are the works. By the way. That would be manifest. In your life. If you're not walking. In the spirit. These.

This is something. Christians can do. Those things. That are manifest. In your life. Begin to become manifest. In your life. When you're not walking. With the spirit. Are these.

And he lists. Them here. Adultery. Fornication. Unclean.

Luden. Idolatry. Sorcery. Hatred. Contentions. Jealousies. Outbursts of wrath. Selfish ambitions. Dissensions. Heresies. Envy. Murders. Drunkenness.

[52 : 43] Revelries. And the like. So he didn't. Didn't give us a whole list. And the like. Of which I tell you beforehand. Just as I also told you in time past. Of those who practice such things.

That is if. These things are the dominant. Dominant. Controller. Of your life. You will not inherit the kingdom of God. You're not saved.

But. The fruit of the spirit. Fruit of the spirit. Is a direct result. Of a life. Of the Christian.

Who's walking in the spirit. The fruit of the spirit. Is. What.

Tell me. Love. It's love. This is the activity. Of love.

[53 : 45] The command. Is to love one another. And the very meaning of the word love. Whose significance. Comes from the cross.

Informs us. That this is a willful love. So if you want to start obeying this command. Right here. In the context of this body. And start doing it.

Loving one another. Actively. Willful. And be willing. Prepared on the front end. To obey that command.

No matter what is demanded. It's not your pastor giving you counsel. This is what Peter is saying. Be willing at any moment.

To go to the fullest extent. If God demands that of you. Gives you that occasion. You do it. No matter what it costs. Can you imagine what kind of. Church.

[54 : 49] Highland Park would be. You might imagine what kind of churches. The churches in America would be. If we had that kind of love for one another.

Jesus said by this. The whole world will know. That you're my disciples. That you have love one for another. The dominant principle. Of witness to the world.

Is that we love one another. That's the first level. And without that. They cannot. And we could not expect them. To believe our witness.

Can you imagine what kind of church it would be. If we'd be willing. To love one another. To whatever extent. Whatever. And to love.

Purely. Without any ulterior motives. Without any expectation of a return. And to love. Spiritually.

[55 : 55] As we're led by the spirit. And walk in the spirit. And express the fruit of the spirit. First on the list. Is love. What kind of church.

Would this be.