

A Love You Can See

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 28 August 2022

Preacher: Raun Swafford

- [0 : 00] Let us pray. Lord, we stand here before you because truly our hearts do hunger for you. We thank you, Lord, that you loved us enough to not only become a human, but you left us with your Holy Spirit. You loved us enough that you wanted to be so close that you are inside of us, and we thank you for that.
- Lord, we ask that you would speak to us this morning. We need to hear from you. We ask that you would manifest your spirit, that you will allow me to preach today with your power, your love, and a sound mind focused on you.
- Lord, help us to be like-minded, having the same love, being of one spirit, and of the same mindset as you, Lord Jesus. Ask you for freedom to speak your word boldly, that your Holy Spirit might give increase.
- Oh, Lord, help our hearts this morning, please, to know what it means to be knitted together in love. Give us the full assurance of understanding and knowledge of who you are.
- [1 : 16] Lord, teach us what it means to put on love. These things I pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. What a joy it is to be here with you this morning and share with you the marvelous love that Jesus has for all of us.
- Amen. Amen. I want to thank you for being here this morning and thank the leadership, particularly my pastor, Pastor Kevin, for this opportunity.
- I will never take lightly the opportunity to speak to you all about Jesus. This sacred morning that I've been given stewardship over, I will never take it lightly. So thank you to my brother and to all of you all who have just been praying all week for this moment right here.
- There are so many ways that we are loved and we don't even realize it. All of the preparation and going through slides and things that are done all week long. Your church loves you and so do I.
- Let's see what God has to say in his word about love this morning. Amen. Let's turn to the book of Colossians chapter 3. Now we're going to start reading at verse 1. Colossians chapter 3, starting at verse 1.
- [2 : 34] If you're there, say amen. Not say, hold on just a second. All right. Digitally or actual Bible, Colossians chapter 3, starting at verse 1.
- And it reads, If then you have been raised with Christ, seek things that are above where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.
- Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.
- When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death, mortify, therefore, what is earthly in you.
- Sexual impurity, immorality, excuse me, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these, the wrath of God is coming.

- [3 : 39] In these you too walked when you were living in them, but now you must put them all away. Anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth.
- Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in the knowledge of the image of the creator.
- Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave free, but Christ is all and in all.
- Amen. Amen. Put on then as God chosen ones, holy and beloved. Such a powerful word. compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another.
- And if one has a complaint against another, forgive each other as the Lord has forgiven you. So also you must forgive. And above all these, put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.
- [4 : 48] And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. That is the reading of God's word.
- You may be seated. I like to preach from this subject, a love you can see.
- A love you can see. John Piper says, the goal of preaching is the glory of God reflected in the glad submission of the human heart.
- So there are two points of emphasis I'd like to raise from the text in hopes that the Holy Spirit would help us agree and gladly submit to them. The two points are, the one still holding first place and the way we should wear our love.
- The one still holding first place and the way we should wear our love. The book of Colossians was written primarily to declare that Jesus is enough.
- [5 : 53] That he and he alone is preeminent, meaning first and foremost in all things. It was written to declare that the believer is complete in him alone, not lacking anything.
- Because in Jesus we find all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And I like how the King James Version puts it. In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.
- The book of Colossians says believers have faith in him. That we were created through him. That we were held together by him.
- That we were delivered from darkness because of him. And receive reconciliation to God by way of his death. That we might be presented to God holy and blameless and above reproach.
- Paul wrote this letter while in jail. But I can imagine him, even in chains, feeling so free. Because he knows right theology and he worships the right God.
- [6 : 58] And because of the genuine love that Paul had for those entrusted to him for spiritual care. He couldn't wait to hear from them and see how they were doing. We see some amazing love talk here.
- It's like when a teenager is in love. And he's waiting for that text tone from that phone or that smart phone. You know, nothing is left standing if it's between them and getting to that device.
- From the beginning, there is a longing for a sense of togetherness and warmth. Coming from the lips of Paul. And it's also echoed from the heart of Timothy.
- Look at chapter 1 verse 1. It says, Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God and Timothy, our brother. To the saints and faithful brothers in Colossae.
- Grace to you and peace from God the Father. Verse 3. We always thank God the Father for our Lord Jesus Christ when we pray for you. Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints.

[8 : 03] What a joy it brings to a pastor's heart when the saints are loving Jesus and loving one another. Look at verse 9.

It causes you to give thanks and to pray. Chapter 1 verse 9 says, And so from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will and all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

And somewhere in the middle of that prayer, Paul gets infected by a case of the can't help it. No vaccine needed for this virus. It's not needed. He couldn't help but to praise God and to testify of God's goodness.

Look at chapter 1 verse 12. It says, Given thanks to the Father who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son in whom we have redemption for the forgiveness of sin.

Transferred us. He moved us from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light. The original language lets us know that it was an actual fact that happened, but we didn't have anything to do with it.

[9 : 21] Look up here on the screen. Ephesians chapter 2 verse 4. But God being rich in mercy because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ.

That by what grace you have been saved. Look at Colossians chapter 1. Look at verse 7. Just as you learned it from Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant.

He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf. And he has made known to us your love in the spirit. Epaphras. Let's just call him Pastor E. All right.

Pastor E. Seemed to have had some good preaching. Some powerful, Holy Ghost-filled, Christ-centered theology. And a holy lifestyle and a loving shepherd's heart to match.

But there was something else, it seems, going on with Pastor E. There seemed to be some heaviness in his heart. Like Frankie Beverly and Mays, pastors know a thing or two about joy and pain.

[10 : 30] I bet some of y'all do too. Although Pastor E. preached with joy and had good news to bring to Paul, he had to visit his father in the faith for advice because there was some mess going on in the church.

Heresy was being taught. And Paul seems to hint at issues of nasty attitudes and nasty talk amongst the church folks in chapter 3. I know that didn't go on here, but just in that church, it was happening.

This heresy was circulating. It attempted to devalue Christ. Gnostics believed in these things called eons, which they thought were the spiritual mediators between God and man, and that Christ was merely one of these spiritual beings.

These heretics were trying to elevate their own agenda above Jesus Christ. So let me make this statement. Whenever God's glory and his great love are on display, the devil will attempt to trouble the move of God.

Let me say that again. Whenever God's glory and his great love are on display, the devil will attempt to trouble the move of God. We see this happening even with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ himself.

[11 : 50] In John chapter 13, we find Jesus displaying one of the greatest acts of love and servanthood ever. He gets up and begins readying the hearts of his disciples for life after his death.

And at the same time, the devil was busy. In John 13, 1 through 5, it goes like this. It says, Before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew his hour had come to depart this world, having loved his own all the way to the end.

It's very interesting that during the same time, it says, During supper, the devil had already put in the heart of Judas to betray him. Same time.

But still, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hand, he gets up, he takes a towel, he gets a basin of water and fills it, and begins to wash his disciples' feet.

After all of this, in the same chapter, verse 21, it said that he was troubled in spirit. And if you're not careful, mess like this can trouble your spirit and consume a church.

[13 : 06] Being part of a body of Christ, a church, is both heavenly and hard at the same time. There's high times of worship and deliverance, but also difficulties, divisions, and devilish ways we sometimes have toward one another.

Yet, there is no other relationship between Jesus and humanity that is more important, because only the church has the authority to proclaim the name of Jesus and carry his message, mission, and love to the world.

I'm glad to be a part of the body of Christ. Those of us who have been redeemed, who have been bought with a price, the precious blood of Jesus Christ, those of us who submit to the word of the Lord, which is the Bible, and obey it, we are the church.

And what a privilege we possess to share and show the gospel. We serve the king who is in charge with saving authority.

And he is first place above all else. That's why Paul says in chapter 1, verse 18, and he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from among the dead, that in everything he might have, he might be preeminent.

[14 : 26] Which brings me to my first point. The one still holding first place. The one still holding first place. The word preeminent is so awesome.

It literally means still holding first place. Well, first place of what? Everything. Well, how does Jesus being in first place affect my life in real time right now?

Well, I'm glad you asked. Let's look at it. Peter lets us know in chapter 1, verses 15 through 18, that just as Christ is superior in the heavens, over the heavens and the earth, which is his natural creation, he is also sovereign over us, the church, which is his new creation, of which he is the head.

Amen? Paul also wants us to know that Jesus is in charge in the spiritual realm, as well as in the material realm. And his resurrection is proof of that.

He says again, he is the beginning, the firstborn from among the dead. I hope y'all get this. This is so awesome. In Romans chapter 1, Jesus is declared the Son of God.

[15 : 40] Let's look at it up here on the screen. Romans 1, 4 says, and was declared to be the Son of God and power according to the spirit of holiness by what?

What was the proof? His resurrection from the dead. The resurrection proves this. See, the resurrection was a demonstration of his kingdom power and authority that death and sin can't tell him what to do.

Y'all didn't hear that. Woo! Death and sin can't tell him what to do. Look at John chapter 10. Look at this. John 10.

No one takes it. This is Jesus talking about his life. No one takes my life from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have the what? The authority to lay it down, and I have the what?

The authority to take it up again. See, death and sin can't tell him what to do, and whoever the Father gives me, Jesus says, death and sin can't tell them what to do either because I have all authority.

[16 : 48] That's what it means for him to be in first place, to be the firstborn from among the dead. That means that if he can leave the death and the grave behind, so can we.

Aren't you glad that sin can't tell you what to do anymore? Yes, the presence of sin might be here, but its power has no rule over the church.

That can be your reality. Should he be your Lord and Savior and be in control over your life? Y'all remember? Peter preached about this in his sermon at Pentecost.

He said in Acts chapter 2 verse 24 that God raised Jesus up, loosing the pains of death because it was not possible for him to be held by it.

Man. Let me make this statement. There is some loosing that we got to allow God to do among us so that sin and the grave have no place here.

[18 : 00] And yes, I said loosing in a Presbyterian church. Firstborn from among the dead implies the idea of opening the way for others to follow.

It states a new relation into which Christ came into the course of time. This is all tied in to a better understanding of the New Testament and biblical worship.

The Son of God in human form was to become king of all things. See, this goes beyond celebratory worship and into submissive worship. All of us saying we magnify your name, oh Lord.

But the way we really magnify him is when we submit and obey to his word when it's tough. See, when there's also submissive worship, we allow Jesus not only to be supreme over who we are in him, but also how we behave because of him.

Which brings me to my final point. Let's do this quickly. The way we should wear our love. The way we should wear our love. Back in 2012, there was a movie came out.

[19 : 09] Some of you all may have seen it. It's called Zero Dark Thirty. Mark Strong plays George, a CIA agent. And in his opening scene, he walks in and stares at his staff who are failing at the capture of Osam and Bin Laden.

With a penetrating stare, there's a very uncomfortable pause before he says this. I want to make something absolutely clear. If you thought there was some secret cell somewhere working Al-Qaeda, then I want you to know you are wrong.

This is it. There's no working group coming to the rescue. There's nobody else hitting away on some other floor. This is it. And I want targets to eliminate.

Well, just like George, I want to be absolutely clear about something. If we think that there is something else that's going to help solve our problems or help us love correctly, we are wrong.

This is it. This is it. This is it. There's nothing else coming to the rescue other than the word and the spirit of God.

[20 : 22] If we are to love as Jesus loved, we have targets that we have to eliminate. And let's look at these targets in our text. They're found in chapter 3, verses 6, 8, and 9.

Let's turn up here. Chapter 3. We're going to start at verse 7. How are we going to start? I'm going to start. Chapter 3, verse 7.

In these... I'm sorry. We'll start verse 3. For you have died, and your life is saved with Christ. Amen. Amen. Amen. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Put to death, therefore, what is earthly in you, sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these, the wrath of God is coming.

In these, you too once walked when you were living in them. Past tense. All illicit sexual activity as God defines what illicit.

[21 : 30] Why? Because of a direct attack against God. A direct attack against God. I won't say this to us, and we included, but especially to our young people.

My heart hurts for me. We are just bombarded, sexually charged, and framed that once us to believe that the saints without God's love is amazing.

We don't pay. It's not. But Paul reminds us in chapter 3, verse 12, that we are holy. That we are holy.

One more. One more. One more. One more. I'm going to grab the other hand. That would be good.

All right, let me have that. I'll take the hand out. Yeah, the enemy really doesn't want us to hear this.

[22 : 42] So I'm going to rewind and let's play. Okay. Paul is referencing all illicit sexual activity because it is a direct attack on godly love.

I want to say this again to us, me included, but especially our young people. My heart hurts for you. We are just bombarded with sexually charged entertainment that wants us to believe that sex without God's love and intimacy is okay.

But Paul reminds us that it's not because we are holy and character matters. We don't hear that word a whole lot from pulpits anymore, especially in America.

Holiness. If we're going to love Jesus' way, then with the Lord's help, keep yourself pure in this sin-sick world.

That's why the Bible is very clear that sex is only to be experienced within the boundaries God set, which is a heterosexual, monogamous, closed, Christ-centered marriage between a naturally born male and a naturally born female.

[23 : 53] Amen. Amen. Amen. It is symbolic of intimacy that he has with us. It's sacred. It's very enjoyable and it should be.

Amen. Amen. But it's also sacred. We are holy, set apart for God's purpose. Jesus values you, your life and your love relationship with him and with other people.

So we argue about Roe versus Wade and whether or not it should have been overturned when the real issue is that things were already messed up before and we didn't address the issues.

What's at the heart of it is how we define life and the value of it. We need to go all the way back to the beginning, to Genesis, and teach what God says about the value of human life, family, sexual identity, sexual practice, sexual purity, just to name a few so that our conversations about life and love might line up with his word as opposed to our personal convictions, preferences, and agendas.

Amen. Amen. The value of human life. That's how we're going to deal with stuff like these mass shootings and this anger that's harboring in the heart of our young people and in our hearts.

[25 : 21] Colossians chapter 3 verses 8 and 9, please, Isaiah. But now you must put them all away. Anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth.

Do not lie to one another. I'm going to park here for just a second but I'm going to keep the motor running because we got to do this quickly. Let's look at these words very, very quickly.

Next slide, please. Anger. A settled attitude of being upset. This is not talking about just the occasional anger. This is talking about when you decide to stay angry because you just want to be angry.

Next word. Wrath. The Greek word is actually indignation. It's a violent outburst of anger or rage that has been boiling on the inside for some time.

Next word. Malice. A tendency of mine that wants to harm other people. Next word. Slander. Blasphemy. Oh, have mercy.

[26 : 23] Injuring other people with words. Last word. Obscene talk. Disgraceful words or speech. Look up here, please.

Amongst other things, these words have the tendency in certain contexts to allow us to keep our own sin intact and blame somebody else for our problems.

The Bible has a zero tolerance, has zero tolerance, excuse me, for heresy, gossip, and ungodly speech.

As should we. Amen. Let's look at these next words here. Next slide, please. I'm sorry. These are verses I want to share. Leviticus chapter 19.

You shall not go around as a slanderer amongst your people and you shall not stand up against the life of your neighbor. I am the Lord. Ephesians 4.

[27 : 21] Let no corrupt talk come out of your mouths. None. But only such is good for building up and fits the occasion that it may give grace, grace to the hearer.

Proverbs 16. A dishonest man or woman spreads strife and a whisperer whisperer separates close friends.

Again, that is nobody here. But for our online listeners, maybe, you know, I know I've been guilty of this. So, Brother Ron, what does the Bible say about redeeming my heartache, about being honest about pain?

I've got to talk about it, but I don't want to sin by way of slander or gossip. Good question. There are two words that are at the heart of the ungodly display of the words we just saw.

Those two words are intentional harm. This is what God wants to avoid. He's just harming one another. Family, I get it.

[28 : 31] When it comes to relational pain, we need not lie and we need to be honest and talk about pain and sin. Amen. But we have to be graceful when dealing with one another and then be careful to do it according to the word.

Give it to Jesus and ask him to help us suffer well and give him glory in whatever situation we're in if he'd have us to remain there. Over my years of walking with Jesus, I've had the privilege of being around people who've done this correctly.

They're honest about what they're going through, but it's not slanderous. They get it out, they're honest, but then there's a beautiful moment of waiting and worshiping and giving it to the Lord and supernaturally the Holy Spirit works it out.

It can be done. We're to speak the truth in love, set boundaries, here it is, on ourselves and leave the rest to the Lord by way of prayer and then the Holy Spirit will reveal the truth in God's time if we harden not our hearts.

See, God is not really concerned about our rights. He's not. He's not so much concerned about our rights, but what is right according to Him.

[29 : 55] You get it? It's not about us first. It's about seeking first what? The kingdom of God. And that's better translated the kingship of God.

Who is in control over your life? No, no, no, no. That talk, that situation has the smell of rot or death on it.

Let me turn and turn my head toward the light. I can't entertain this conversation anymore. It's slanderous. We are at war, brothers and sisters, over who is in charge.

Do y'all remember the book of Acts chapter 19? The sons of Siva. God was doing some extraordinary miracles through Paul and then these Jewish exorcists came and they tried to piggyback off the prayer life of Paul and cast out demons where the evil spirit said to these exorcists, Jesus I know, Paul I recognize, but who are you?

And the evil spirit mastered all of them and overpowered them. Question, are we on demons, are we on demons radar because of our prayer life and love or will we be overpowered like those exorcists were?

[31 : 17] Satan wants to play us like a banjo at a hoedown, but that's the devil's job. That's what he's supposed to do, but let us be the church and do what we're supposed to do, amen? Because greater is he that is in us than he that is in the world.

And this brings me to my final point here. How we should wear our love. How we should wear our love.

Look at verse 12, it says in chapter 3. Put on then as God's chosen ones holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another in love.

In duo, put on, it means to clothe oneself. It's the same word used in Ephesians chapter 6 verse 11 where it says put on the whole armor of God.

My brother and mentor, Dr. Elliot Green, helps me with this section here. He explains this. Paul borrowed this language from stoic philosophers. When they spoke about virtue, they would talk about a sense of wearing the virtue.

[32 : 34] So virtues like compassion, kindness, and humility, they existed before Paul. But Paul takes them and says, yes, these are great, but now all the more because there is something special about the risen Jesus Christ.

Because when Jesus rose from the dead, he started a new era, it's not that people didn't know what meekness, and patience, and virtues were, but they couldn't understand them in the way that they would function under the dominion and reign of Christ.

We have to understand that when it comes to being chosen, holiness, and righteous living, we have that as a gift. But the gift, it has a goal.

Dr. Green goes on to explain that salvation is a gift with a goal. It's not just a gift. And usually we get stuck on the gift. We have too much fixated at theology and emphasis on what the cross does, but we forget that the cross is aimed at the resurrection.

And we have to be careful with this, especially as Presbyterians and how cerebral some of us are. Yes, we better have a high view of God, but if all that does is get us to think highly of Scripture, but does nothing to help us submit and obey and love in real time, we've missed the whole point.

[34 : 00] There's nothing wrong with deep thought if it's coupled with deep submission and obedience to the Word of God. Amen. And yes, we have to preach the cross.

We have to preach the blood that Jesus shed for me way back on Calvary. The blood that gives me strength from day to day. It will never lose its power.

Yes, the cross is important. The cross represents Jesus' payment for our sins, but the resurrection is saying the payment is in full and now the benefit of the resurrected life is what Jesus was aiming for, to give his people life, not just paying off our debts, but also giving us life.

And brothers and sisters, we have to get that because Western Christianity and theology puts a lot of emphasis on the death of Jesus, but nowhere near as much on the resurrection and life of Jesus.

So let's do this quickly. Jesus is Lord over our salvation, both what we do and what we say.

[35 : 10] when Paul picks this up here and speaks of this great gift we received, he wants us to know that this gift of salvation has benefits. When Paul uses the word put on, he means wear your salvation in such a way that your salvation can be seen.

Your salvation should show up now in your thoughts, your decisions, how you pray, how you speak, how you do business, and according to the text, above all else, how we love.

Chapter 3, verse 12, again. Put on then as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.

These are powerful, powerful love words here. Beloved means having been loved. The original language would have you to read the first part of verse 12 like this.

You have been intentionally set aside for God's purpose, selected because you are of the best quality, outstanding, and because of this, you have both privileges and responsibilities different from all other people because you have been loved like no one else will ever be loved.

[36 : 37] That's the original Greek language. Do you hear the love just dripping from the text? This is what holiness means, pure and sacred.

Men, this is how we are to love our wives, like Jesus would love them, single folks. That's why you abstain sexually into marriage because you are precious to God.

When we think about being loved by Jesus like this, it should be hard to harm one another. You should not sleep well if things are not right between you and your brother or your sister.

Let's look at Matthew chapter 5. This is the Amplified Bible. I like how they put it here. It says, So if you are presenting your offering at the altar and while there you remember that your brother or sister has something against you such as a grievance or a legitimate complaint, leave your offering there at the altar.

First, make peace with your brother and then come present your offering. Did y'all see that? My dear brothers and sisters, that's literal.

[37 : 49] It's not figurative. And what a beautiful sight to walk up into the house of prayer. That's what this is. And you see people dropping their offering or whatever but before they come in they go find Sister Betty or Brother Scootin' Boot and say, Hey, I know we had some stuff going on.

Can I just pray with you? We ain't got to work it out right now but I want to let you know that I love you and our worship and unity is much more important than anything else at this moment. What a powerful display of love.

Think of what that would say to newcomers, to people who are unbelievers that are coming in checking things out and checking the culture and the climate of our body life. Next slide, please.

We'll end with this. Compassionate hearts bowels of compassion, deeply felt affection, sensitivity to people in need. This is something that comes way deep from down inside and it's sincere.

Kindness, sweetness of disposition, humility, a proper estimate of oneself. I think the Bible says something about thinking not more highly of ourselves than we ought.

[39 : 08] Meekness, a gentle in your approach. This is very important to people that are hurting. People that are hurting are extra sensitive. So how you handle them, you have to do it with meekness when they're hurting.

Patience, long-suffering. And last word, bearing. Polite or patiently restrain an impulse to do something for bearing with one another.

Me and Friedman were talking about this not too long ago. You want to do something. You want to give them a piece of your mind but the Holy Spirit pauses you and instead you give them a piece of your heart.

I'm learning this on a very, very deep level right now in my personal life. Just because you have the right to say something doesn't mean you should. Love may say, not yet.

In order for us to demonstrate these virtues, we have to put them on and wear our salvation in a way where others can see it.

[40 : 17] I shared this with you guys some time ago, a few sermons ago, that the late, great Reverend CBT Smith, he said this to us preachers at one conference, he said, if you got God in you and I've got God in me, me and God ain't going to jump on you and God.

God don't hit God. God does not gossip about God. God does not slander God. So if two people got a problem and they both got God in them, somebody lying.

Okay. If we have the Holy Spirit within us, let's put on our love and wear it in a way that we can see it.

chapter three, verse 14, put on love above all things. The original language literally reads like this, to all and these the love.

All of the virtues, they have to be under the umbrella of love. Let me give you a definition. Love is embracing and doing what's in another's best interest as God defines what those best interests are.

[41 : 34] Let me say that again. It's embracing and doing what's in another's best interest as God defined what those best interests are. He ends by saying, just be thankful.

Galatians 2.20, he loves me. Aren't you glad that you have been loved by God and then you have the privilege and the honor of showing that love to other folks.

This is such an amazing thing that we have to share. There's a gentleman that worked with me. His name is David. David was a pretty stocky guy.

he caught COVID and he almost died. He was in the hospital and there was not enough care for the staff because they were stretched thin.

When David got out of the hospital, I went to his home to visit him. He said, you know what? I was as good as dead unless someone was there consistently with me who loved me until I was strong enough to breathe on my own.

[42 : 45] He was glad he had somebody there. While I was there visiting him in the hospital, you could hear the conversations of hopelessness and see people observing the sick and the dead. David became sick and got down literally, literally to skin and bones.

David's a Mexico so he's got this machismo about him and to see him wither down like that was very, it was very hard for me to see. But David's sweet wife, Raffaella, was by his side the whole time.

She wasn't at the hospital to document how short-staffed they were or to pass along and a gossip she had heard amongst the hospital staff. No, she did not have time for that because her husband was dying.

Her primary and only concern was to do whatever that helped edify, encourage, and support the life of her husband. Why? Because she loves him.

Yes, Raffaella voiced her concerns with regards to her husband's health, but it wasn't about her comfort or her personal preference. I don't care about all that. My husband has to live and be healthy is what she said.

[44 : 00] My charge to us is I end. May God help us to love as he defines what love is in a way that emphasizes and binds everything together with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another in love.

These virtues, this love needs to be directed by God and affirmed within the community of believers because we are self-swindlers. There are some times we think we're very loving, but our love is pointed inward so much and not pointed outward, so we think within our circles that we're being loving enough.

But God requires more. He wants us to love as he loved. May God help us to get busy and stay busy submitting to his word and do our part, whatever the Lord says that is, to be laser focused on the kingdom of God by way of allowing the Holy Spirit to teach us how to put on love every day, wearing our salvation in a way that others can see.

Let us pray. Father God, we thank you so much for your love. We thank you that you loved us so much that you allowed your son to die on the cross for our sins.

Lord, I pray that you will never allow that to get old, that the greatness that we have, the thankfulness of that love, that you allow us through your Holy Spirit to demonstrate that love in our everyday life and everyday relationships.

[45 : 33] your word says that the world would know we are Christians not by how well we sing or how well we preach, but how we love.

We ask these things in your name. Amen. Please stand with us as we sing our closing song. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.