

A Heart of Love

by Keith Malcomson

This sermon emphasizes the importance of having a heart filled with love for God, highlighting the transformation of John the apostle from a zealous, ambitious man to the apostle of love. It delves into the biblical command to love God, truth, brethren, wives, and sinners, emphasizing the balance between truth and love in Christian living.

Scripture: 1 John 4:7, John 14:15, 1 John 3:14, John 13:34, 1 Thessalonians 2:8, Mark 9:38, Luke 7:36, John 3:16, Matthew 22:37

Topics: "Love for God", "Transformation through Love"

Description

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Transcript

Will you please turn with me to Mark chapter 12 here this morning as we go to this next message on dealing with the heart for God. And you're going to have to excuse me, reference an accident with a tooth. I've had a crown in for 25 years and on the last day of my holiday, my break, that broke, it shattered.

And I was wrestling over whether even to preach, it was hindering me a bit. But by God's grace, it's harder not to preach than to preach with problems with your teeth. So especially for those online, please show me a lot of grace.

Here this morning, the dentist had said it'll be about three weeks before they can see me. I've managed to get an appointment for Tuesday. So I'm hoping they can do something with it.

It's not until something happens that you're glad for a dentist, I want to assure you, but it's to make you aware. I don't want anything to hinder the word of God. If I thought that the inability to pronounce a T and an H or an S would hinder the word of God, I would rather not preach.

It's not out of embarrassment or pride. It's just, I love the word of God. I don't want a message to be lost.

And so I pray, that's my heart's prayer, in weakness, inability, that God wouldn't even allow something like that to distract from the word of God. It's too important. And you know, I'd say to brother, so Friday, are

you ready to preach here again? And I was going to do that, but yet the word of God is here.

I want to bring you here this morning to part nine in this series, A Heart for God. We took a much needed break for two weeks. I absolutely needed it.

And before taking this break, I had another three messages on this series that I want to preach. I'm glad brother Suf didn't preach them. And especially online, if you haven't heard the messages from the past two weeks, especially last Sunday morning, please go back and listen.

What brother Suf ministered on clean hands. What a powerful message, what a vital message. And it was almost like it wasn't Suf, it was the Lord.

And it's very precious when you are aware of God speaking and not a man. If all you heard was a man, you need to go back and listen to it because there's something wrong with you. You really, there's something wrong with you if you didn't hear what God was saying.

So I really encourage anyone online, go back and listen to that message on clean hands. But I want to go a step further here. Part nine, you'll remember part eight was a faith filled heart, a heart filled with faith.

Here this morning, I want to go a step further as I prepare to finish this series. So I did have until yesterday, three more messages. Now an extra one's been added that I've got four now and I'll preach that other one next week.

But these are such vital messages. And the last message I'll preach in this series is the most important of all. And I've preached on that verse before, but it's going to mean something totally different because of what we've dealt with in these weeks.

Part nine, a heart of love. Read in from Mark chapter 12, verse 28. And one of the scribes came and having heard them reasoning together and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, the first of all commandments is here, O Israel, the Lord God is one Lord and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind and with all thy strength.

This is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

Let's pray together. Father, I thank you for just even this time of worship, this time around your table, remembering your death, your blood that was shed for sinners such as us to redeem us and make us children of the most high God. We thank you for your love that you could love us that deserve nothing.

Lord God, if there is any love in any one of our hearts, if there's any realm of love in mine, Lord God, it's only because of Calvary. It's only because of the bleeding lamb. It's only because you first loved us.

And that's where the source of any love within us, to wife, to children, to husbands, to brothers, sisters, to family members, to the world, to sinners, Lord God, the whole source of love that flows in our midst is Calvary. And we bless you this morning. Help us to have a heart.

Thank you it was at Calvary that I received a new heart. Lord God, not a heart of hate and bitterness, of jealousy and unforgiveness, but you gave me a new heart in the new birth to love you, to love others, and to love sinners. And we bless you this morning in Jesus name.

Amen. We're continuing and we've dealt with very important messages on this heart that God is looking for, this heart that God actually responds to. And we've gone through these several aspects of the heart.

It's one heart, it's the same heart, and you get it at the new birth. You can lose the intensity of it after being saved, and it then becomes an issue of sanctification. The aspect I want to look at here this morning is a heart of love.

We looked at a heart of faith before, or a heart filled with faith. I want to look at a heart of love, a heart filled with love. It's vital.

Candice and I married 15 years ago, and there was a craze at the time concerning a book written by Gary Chapman, and it was called The Five Languages of Love. I think that was the right title. We got one for our wedding.

I didn't read it. I want to assure you I did not read it. Everywhere you went, this book was, and it's selling millions now.

I believe it's in the top 10 of evangelical books sold worldwide, The Five Love Languages. Gary Chapman had been a psychologist and a marriage counsellor, and he wrote this book, and it raised him to overnight fame. Unbelievable.

But when you begin to look at that book, there is a problem. See, it's a book about love between a husband and wife, or boyfriend and girlfriend, and how each of us have a different way to respond to love, five different ways. Some respond to gifts.

Some respond to words. Some respond to touch. Some respond to whatever else.

And so with your partner, you've got to find out which is the one of the five that you respond. That's how you work and function with love. And in fact, I could love you, but you may not feel I'm loving you because I'm using the wrong love language.

So I may be bringing you lots of gifts, but you need words or time. Now a lot of people were helped by this. A whole lot more were messed up by this.

Because you know what that teaching actually begins to do. If you do not give me what I want, or make me feel loved, then there's something wrong with you. And based around what I think I need, you are not giving me what I need.

And I've got to give you what you need, whether I want to or not. And they say, that's love. And you're responsible to make me feel loved.

This book has gone everywhere in the church world. And I'm only saying that because this book has messed up a lot of marriages. And I listened yesterday, just a little talk by two couples, two ladies who actually implemented this in their marriages.

And they began to talk through. And so they began, according to this book, you've got to sit down with your husband and say, you're so good, you're so faithful, you're so hardworking. That's not what you've been saying for the past five years or thinking until yesterday.

But you've got to sit down and commend me for all the things I'm not doing. These two ladies said, do you know what we found out? It was pure flattery, which the Bible condemns. You're lying.

It's manipulative because I am doing that so that you will love me. It's manipulative because you're trying to get something out of that other person. And so you say this thing or do this thing or give this thing because you want them to do things.

That is not love. If you get that book, throw it in the trash bin. If you have it at home, either keep it in the heretic section of your books or throw it in the bin.

But I understand there's people online being greatly helped by it. God bless you. What have we just read here? And this one I'm dealing with is a heart of love.

And we're going to cover every aspect briefly. You see in Mark chapter 1230, what did Jesus say when he was asked, what is the great commandment? What's the greatest of all? What is the most important? And now shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart. Notice how you love God.

This is the first commandment. Forget about everything else for a second. Everything flows out of this one commandment.

If you do not keep this, you do not keep any of the commandments. If you lack in loving God, you will lack in loving your husband, loving your wife, loving your brother, loving your sister, loving sinners. But it all begins with us.

Do you actually love God? Do you love him? This is the first commandment. And notice what he says. He doesn't only say, love God.

He says, love God with all thy heart. All thy heart. He doesn't want a divided heart.

Well, I give half to God and half to me. I give half to God and half to my partner. Then you don't love God.

You see, this is an exclusive love. I want all your love. God demands it.

I'm not asking for a little bit or a portion of it or one day a week or 10% of your love. He doesn't ask. He says, I want it all.

I want your heart to be filled with love to me. To love God with all your heart. This is the heart of our Christianity.

If you do not emphasize this and have this in place, you haven't even begun. When you get born again, you receive a heart to love God with all of your heart. You don't keep half of it back.

If I wanted a relationship with Candice and went in and said, now I love you. And I'll spend one day a week with you. And you've got access to about 10% of my money.

And we'll lay out some relations here. Let's write out an agreement. I'll do this and you do that.

And there's love. No way. Do you know what God says? I want you to love me with all of your heart.

He demands love. God expects love. God desires love.

But not only that, God gives you a new heart of love. You did not love God outside of Christ. You had to experience Christ and he gave you a heart to love him.

And notice Jesus goes further. He says, and with thy soul, your will, your emotions, your mind, and with all thy mind and with all thy strength. So the heart, the soul, the mind, and the strength are all distinct.

The strength is with your outward body. God is saying, I want you to love me with every area. And if I don't cover all these, one of you will say, well, I don't need to love with my mind.

I love you with my heart, but I don't have to love you with my mind. Notice the heart is distinct from the mind. And so loving God with the heart isn't only intellectual, only the thoughts of your mind.

Yes, you need to love with your thoughts, with your mind, but it's more than that. Neither is it just the soul. If we said love God with your soul, that's an emotional love.

You could say, I have feelings, I love, I am passionate. No, there's cold reasoning with this as well. It is the mind, it's the intellect.

Never set your mind aside in the things of God and say, well, I love God with my heart, it doesn't matter about my mind. No, you better bring that mind in as well. You see, God searches the hearts.

God is searching your heart right now. Do you love him? Or do you raise up idols in your heart? I know you actually think it's despicable for a man or woman to bow down before a statue or an idol. No, you think it's despicable.

Do you think it's despicable that you set up idols in your heart? See, the idols of the heart that steal love from God offend him. And so he searches the heart. Let me give you a warning as I go into this.

I believe this message is contemporary for the church of our day. And Jesus gives a warning in Matthew 24 verse 12 about love waxing cold in the last days in the church. What does it say, Matthew 24, 12? And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

Jesus warned right at the end. One of the 10 signs he gives in Matthew 24 that we've reached the end of is that iniquity shall abound and the love of many will wax cold because iniquity abounds. What is iniquity? Iniquity, the word used here means lawlessness.

It means a contempt for the law or the commands or the restrictions of God. It means you violate the laws of God. You break the laws of God.

You don't care about the laws of God. And it could mean just throwing off the laws of man as well. It means throwing away the law, not being restricted by the law, going beyond the law.

It says in 1 John 3 and 4, sin is the transgression of the law, lawlessness or iniquity. Jesus warned us that in this hour, and I believe we're there right now, that iniquity shall abound. One of the marks that we've reached the end, there's always been iniquity.

There's always been lawlessness. There's always been homosexuality, but not like today. For the very first time, iniquity is no longer restrained.

It is bursting the banks. It is breaking all realms of restriction. And Jesus said it would happen.

And because iniquity shall abound, in the schools concerning transgender, concerning everything, concerning abortion, all of these things, because it is exploding on a worldwide scale, because it's breaking into every area of society where it hasn't been before, because of that, because there's no longer limits to iniquity, no barrier to hold it back. It says the love of many shall wax cold. Now note, I'm going to explain this further, but the word love here is agape or agapeo.

The Greek word used for love here can only be used of a Christian. It is utterly unique. It's not talking about general love of sinners and our world.

What Jesus is saying here, because iniquity explodes, look what the target is. The love of many shall wax cold. The agape love of many Christians is actually going to grow cold, change temperature.

It doesn't say they don't have love. It says that that love grows cold. That's what he's saying.

And notice even in the context of these verses, it's in an atmosphere of betrayal. Brother will betray brother like Judas did to Jesus. And yet it's in the last days in the church worldwide.

We are going to see an explosion of iniquity and how you're going to discern it in the churches. You're going to watch the agape love. What agape love is, and I'm going to explain it very thoroughly here.

That agape love actually diminishes in the church and it's one of the marks we're at the end times. I want to warn you here very strongly. We are in the last days.

Prophecy is being fulfilled. How is your love life? You're to love God with all of your heart. Yet your love is under attack in this room.

Your love is terribly under attack from the internet. Not right. Your love for God, the internet, your WhatsApp, your Facebook, YouTube, and all the realms is attacking.

Do you realize the flood banks have been released in this hour like no other generation? And the target is your love for God. You're agape love. That's the target.

Why is it exploding and getting into the schools? You know why? The devil is after your love. And I assure you the flood of iniquity coming in, if it affects you, it's affected your love. You cannot be tainted by this world and still love God as you ought to.

The devil spews out of his mouth a flood of iniquity, immorality. You know what I'm saying? Look at the internet. Now kids at primary school, they actually, the door has been open that unparalleled, unrestricted immorality.

They have access to it. Little kids have right across our Western world. Do you not think that's going to destroy our generation? You see the devil has unleashed that on our young generation.

I didn't have to grow up with that, thank God. Had to grow up with sin, of course. But do you see it's burst on its banks? It's got extreme. If you don't love God, you won't walk through this.

Utterly impossible. It's getting so intense that if you do not have a heart to love God, no way will you be able to walk through this. You'll be flooded and carried away with immorality, with utter confusion, with desolation, with destruction and immorality.

It's so vital to have love. We know Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 13 in verse 1. He says, though I speak with the tongues of men and angels and have not charity. Can you speak with tongues and yet not have charity or love or agape love? Yes.

If you speak in tongues but do not have a motivation of this love, of God's love, there's something wrong with that. It's lacking. I don't care about your gifts.

I'm become a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. I know I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge. Can you imagine that? Someone sitting in our midst who says, I prophesy, I have the gift of prophecy.

I understand all mysteries really. Do you love your brother? Is that knowledge and understanding of all mysteries? Do you realize that could destroy you? You go, if only I knew more. Knowledge is power.

If I knew all the teaching of Bible prophecy, it could destroy you because if it's not handled with charity, it's nothing. I want to tell you I'm not looking for more knowledge or more gifts apart from charity. It's dangerous without charity.

He goes further and he actually says, I knew I had all faith so that I could remove mountains and have not charity. I am nothing. Do you realize you could have faith to remove a mountain and yet you do not walk in love? And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, that's definitely a person who loves.

Is it? But look, they give to the poor. They give all of their goods to the poor. They give everything to the poor.

They must love God. Not according to this. It says, if you do that and though I give my body to be burnt, I die as a martyr.

I'm not denying Christ. He must so love God. Not necessarily.

You could be a stubborn so-and-so and say, I will not denounce Christ. I'll not compromise with the antichrist system. I'm not going to drink your water from your plants.

And yet you do not have charity. It profiteth nothing. In 2 Timothy chapter 3 and verse 1 it says, this know also that in the last days perilous times shall come for men.

Look at the mark. He's going to describe what men are going to look like in the last days. And it's not only talking about men.

Included in that word men is women. Don't get into a feminist ideology. When it says men, if any woman sits by and says, not talking about me, you're cravely mistaken.

For men shall be talking about mankind. We still say that here. Mankind means all of us.

For men shall be, what are they going to look like? Lovers of their own selves. They love themselves. Have you heard it? You've got to love yourself.

Who said that? Where's the biblical teaching? But the mark of this generation, they love themselves. Do you know what? All of us love ourselves far too much. You love yourself far too much.

Because if you exalt yourself without thinking of others, then you love yourself too much. Covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents. Hear that kids? Unthankful.

Being unthankful is a mark of the last day. It's going to mark people. They're not thankful for the small things anymore.

Unholy. Notice the next one. Without natural affection.

And I want to home in on this term. It goes on further to say, truce breakers, or covenant breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good. Aren't we there? Traitors, or betrayers, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.

Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof from such turn away. And you know what? Let me shock you. All of these things are in the church of our day.

He's not talking about sinners. Sinners are always like this. It's talking about people getting into the church.

Because look what he says. Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. They have an outward form, but there's no power, no holiness, no purity, no clean hands, no heart of love.

And you know what? It marks this generation. But notice, without natural affection. That means, listen to what the Greek means here.

No family affection. You don't cherish. You're inhuman.

You're unnatural. It means that you do not have a normal family feeling, or think towards your children, or your parents, or your brothers and sisters in a normal natural way. I can actually find sinners who love their children better than some so-called Christians.

It means to be unsociable. No family affection. A mark of this art is we're going to lose, right across society, just a normal natural human affection and care for one another.

We're going to lose it. This is the hour. And Jesus said, as iniquity abounds.

Because you know what? They're confused. They don't know what love is anymore. I love my dog, but I hate you.

We put heavy fines against anyone that would kill the little baby in the womb of a dog, especially certain breeds. If you dare abort that baby within a dog, we will fine you. Or within certain animals across our world, you will get thrown in prison if you endanger a pregnant animal of a certain creed.

But yet they will criminalize you if you stand against aborting a human baby. This is a messed up. Little boy, you could be a girl.

You're five years old. Maybe you want to experiment. This is wicked.

This is evil. It is detestable. God help your generation, Andy.

My heart breaks for your generation. You need God. And we're seeing an explosion of this right across.

Do you see why I say we need a heart of love? We really, and you better define what that love actually means in a very clear way. When we dealt with a heart filled with faith, I said Stephen embodied that. He was a man filled with faith.

I'm going to mention a man here who I believe in scripture, and you need to study this man carefully. I believe he embodies being a man who had a heart of love in a very unusual way. I believe he's preeminent in scripture, only second to Christ as a man who knew how to love.

You know who his name was? John the apostle. You may say, was he really more filled with love than any other? I believe so. Not everyone loves God in the same way to the same degree.

Not every Christian loves his brother to the same degree. Yes, it's the same love. Listen to John.

He talks here and he's talking about love in his gospel, the gospel of John chapter 21, and listen carefully. I've mentioned this, even taught on it before, but I want you to turn to it if you can. John chapter 21 verse 15.

I want you to get this so strong as I impress it on you here this morning, because it is so important. John 21, John, who is called the apostle of love, who speaks about love more than any other writer in the New Testament. No one even comes close.

He is the preeminent teacher on what love means. Now look at chapter 21 of John, and here's the context. It's after the resurrection.

Jesus has risen from the dead. Peter took the other disciples back to fishing, said, we go fishing. Let's go back.

I've blown it. I denied Christ. Three times Peter denied Christ.

And so he goes back to his fishing, back to his old life, back to work. And he said, yes, I'm forgiven. But do you know what? I've blown it all.

And what you have is they're out fishing and there's Jesus on the shoreline and he calls to them and he makes a little fire and gets some fish and some bread and he's cooking the fish for them and says, come and dine. They're almost scared to say, that's him. But listen to what happens.

Verse 15. So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? And I'm not going there in that question. Don't ask who are these? Everyone gets caught up in that and misses the rest.

He saith unto him, yea, Lord, thou knowest I love thee. And he does this three times. Christ does this three times.

He says, Peter, do you love me? And we read in our English Bible, yes, I love you. And there's certain people out there who teach you only need to read the English translation, King James preferable. And you know, I'm a King James man.

And they said, if you have a King James Bible, you never need to look at the Greek. That's rubbish. That's rubbish.

Do you know why these verses, you can't even understand them if you don't go to the Greek. Reading it in English, you're utterly restricted. You'll never understand what's just been said here.

In the English, three times Jesus says, do you love me? Three times Peter says, yes, I love you. And you go, what's the problem? But that isn't what it is in the Greek. You see, there's different Greek words used here.

Notice first Christ says to Peter, Peter, do you agape me? Do you love me? How does Peter respond? Yes, Lord, you know I phileo you. It's a different Greek word. Both are love, but it's two different kinds of love.

Do you know what Peter couldn't say? I agape you. Peter, do you agape me? Yes, I agape you. Couldn't say that.

Is he born again? Yes. Has he been forgiven for his failure? Yes. But yet, speaking of Christ, he cannot say with his heart, I agape you with all my heart.

He cannot say it. So the second time, Jesus says, do you agape me? He says, yes, I phileo you. Third time, Jesus says, he's brought it down a level.

Do you phileo me? Master, you know I phileo you. It's in the Greek. That shows me that just reading the English, sometimes you need to go a bit deeper.

Do you know what you have here is Jesus probing the heart to go, do you agape me? I'm looking for agape love. Peter, the greatest of the apostles, the preacher of Pentecost could only say, I phileo you. Now let's look for a second, and I've already lost my message, okay? You'd need to stay here until this evening.

But listen, I want us to catch this. It's okay if we don't get into all the teaching and details, this message. We need a heart of love.

The issue Christ is dealing with, Peter, is there's a kind of heart I want in you. You could be saved and you can't go beyond phileo love. That's not my will for you, especially in this hour.

Do you know what had happened to Peter? Iniquity had abounded around him. It was the darkness of night. Satan had come in.

Temptations are everywhere. Everyone flees, apart from John. The 11, or should I say the 10 fled.

One betrayed him, Judas, and hung himself that night. But John didn't. John didn't flee.

John stayed there. Do you know what kept him? Love, agape love. Peter downgraded what Jesus warns of in Matthew 24, of what's going to happen in this hour, right now, right across the church, worldwide, is happening now.

You're going through, you're being faced with what Peter got faced with. Jesus is taken. I try to cut off an ear.

I'll die for you. Then you deny him three times. I don't know him.

You're one of those limerick folk, aren't you? Me trying to disguise my accent. Oh, I don't know what you're talking about. I'm from Northern Ireland.

No, no, no, no. You're that guy on YouTube. I'd know your face anywhere.

Do you know what Peter then done even with curses? A little girl comes, says, I know you're one of his. I'm not. And he curses.

He makes vows. He says, I swear unto you I'm not. I don't know him.

This was not a man running from Christ, or running from God, who did not want Christ, or who was not born of the spirit. This was a man who fell flat in his face in the darkness of night, and when it was cold. You know what it says? It says, he drew near their fire.

It's a cold night. And the soldiers, and this little lady, and others, they get in around that fire. And Peter drew near and began to warm his hands at their fire.

Dangerous place to warm your hands by the fire of the world, the things of this world. Very dangerous. In the Bible, in the Greek New Testament, we have these two words for love, phileo and agape.

What is phileo? Remember the church of Philadelphia was the church of brotherly love. It actually means friendship. It's a social warmth.

This is not everybody. Phileo is for those who you choose to be your friends. You have a common bond, or a common interest.

You have an association. You like the person. You love the person.

You enjoy being with the person. That's phileo love. That's what it is.

It's a very nice thing. I'm not condemning it. I hope you have phileo love here.

You're commanded to have it. But there's two words that got used in society, never used in the New Testament. One of them is eros love.

The Greek language has various words for love. So there's eros love. That means physical or sexual love.

And it was used all through the Greek culture, Roman world. Every time, every village, every school, every person knew what eros meant. It means erotic.

The physical, natural, sexual love. It never gets used in our New Testament. The apostles rejected it and were careful, never, not once to use eros.

And yet they do teach that physical relations within a marriage is not only healthy, it's commanded. Commanded. It's not a choice.

It's not a decision. It's not to do with your genes or DNA or anything else. Too late if you're inside marriage.

You're changing your thinking the wrong place. There's also a word called sturgeon or storge. Sturgeon actually means love.

And that's more of a family love in the New Testament. It's not mentioned once, but the negative of it is, it's condemned twice as we've already said, where it says without natural affection. That's that family love towards brother and sister, mother and father and children.

Do you know when you see a parent not have normal love for their children, there's something terribly wrong. Sinners have natural love. So where you see an absence that there's something really wrong where you don't have that natural love.

But there is agape. What is agape love? It isn't a love based on you give me what I want and now I'll love you. Or I've chosen you because I like you.

I like to be with you. Therefore I love you. Your friends usually don't do too bad on you.

You may love me just wait till I crush you and I'll find out if you've got agape love. Say something or do something or make a decision. If you still walk in love towards me, it means you're operating in agape love.

You see what is agape love? It is sacrificial. It is loving someone unconditionally. It is loving someone without you saying I've loved you now you've got to love me.

That's not agape love. You see agape love actually loves you to the point of great cost and great sacrifice and will lay down if I'm operating in agape love I will lay down my life for you. I will suffer for this church.

I will suffer for my wife and it is marked by a humility. It's not just a feeling it is a decision a choice. That's why a couple who feel well we loved each other when we got married it was great it was exciting we had emotion.

It was like heaven and earth and then a year and a half down the road we don't love each other anymore. You don't even understand the concept. You're probably lustful proud desiring that your needs be met but you never really loved that person if that's what you thought.

You've actually got no concept. You see this author of the five love languages and I watched a bit of him yesterday and he said oh every marriage goes through it you love each other for a year and a half then you hit this point and then you hit the ground and amen brother go rubbish 15 years. I love Candice more now more than any point and I loved her continually for 15 years.

It's been problems at times but you know what that love is unconditional. It's not just emotion it's to the light to choose to the light and the object to choose to give of yourself without looking anything in return. If you begin to understand this kind of love it'll radically change how you operate towards your wife your husband your brother your sister your church your pastor your preachers sinners work colleagues whoever.

You see something's been unleashed in our world that wants to destroy agape love. Loving I don't care if you hurt me I'm gonna love you. I don't care if you fail me I'm gonna love you.

That love is consistent and it's a remarkable love. Let me say about John the apostle here he was one of the first of the 12 called to follow Christ. One of the first we can't know exactly.

He is the youngest we do know that the absolute youngest of the 12. He is the only one who stayed with Christ when all the rest fled. He was the only apostle to be there as an eyewitness at the cross.

Peter wasn't. Matthew wasn't. John was.

He actually lived the longest over 70 years of ministry. Ministry 70 years of ministry. All the rest of the apostles were dead.

He lived to be the oldest. He lived till about 96 AD and you know this John writes more of our New Testament than any other of the 12 apostles. None of them compare.

Only Paul the apostle who wasn't one of the 12 compares with John. After Paul John is the biggest writer of the New Testament. He wrote a gospel called the gospel of John.

He wrote three letters called John's epistles and he wrote the book of Revelation. God used him and listen he's a man that wrote more about love than any other person in the entire Bible. He mentions very strongly about love 80 times and then he teaches all around that defining what it means.

But I want to encourage you before I close. He wasn't always like that. You see he is called by all the great scholars and teachers and preachers the apostle of love.

Well wasn't Peter? Yes he is. And Matthew yes. They all loved.

They all agape but not like this man. He is outstanding but he wasn't always like that as a Christian or as a preacher. You know you see these paintings of John.

Remember he's the one at the last supper. He's the youngest. He's almost childlike in his looks and he leans on the bosom of Jesus and he's snuggled reclining at the table.

He looks a bit effeminate, young, wet behind the ears, soft, delicate, hasn't done a day's work in his life. You couldn't be more wrong. Do you know who this John was? He's the second son of Zebedee.

Zebedee was a fisherman with a business. Young John grew up from a child on the seas, pulling in the nets, fishing. He was hard, muscular, on the ball, a hard worker.

His dad had other hard servants. I'll show you. John's hands were rough sitting at that table.

He's a tough guy. Don't underestimate size or age for lack of toughness. He was a tough young guy.

We read that him and his older brother James were called the Sons of Thunder. You'd only have to cross him to find out why. Jesus said, we're nicknaming you, we're giving you the title or surname, Sons of Thunder.

It was well placed. Do you know that we first see John as a disciple of John the Baptist? That's what he'd come in on this. He heard the preaching, the fiery repentance preaching, laying the axe to the root of everything.

That's what that young man heard. When he heard it, maybe 15, I don't know. When he heard it, he said he repented.

He had zeal. His heart broke under repentance, dealing with his sin at a young age. You remember later as apostles ministering with Christ, how they were going into Samaria and the preaching of Christ was rejected.

We don't want to hear. We don't believe that. We're not following your Christ.

Do you know what James and John said? Master, we'll deal with this. Let's just brush off the dust. Let James and me call down fire from heaven to consume them all and they'll all die.

Zeal, fire, truth, righteousness, power, but no love. Do you know Jesus rebukes him at that point and says, John, James, you do not know what manner of spirit you are of. Sinners reject the gospel.

They laugh. They're disinterested, and you want to burn them up with fire. You don't even know what love towards sinners is.

You don't have a right to be like that. Oh, but I know the truth. I follow Christ.

You know nothing, and Christ exposed it. We also see him. He was a part of the debate.

Who's the greatest? John, little John. I think I'm the greatest. That's impossible.

Read his writings on love. Is this the same John? Yes. Peter, I think I'm the best.

Why do you think Peter didn't like John? You say Peter didn't like John. They had to have. No.

When they are traveling as the apostolic band, Peter, John always annoyed Peter. Master, what about him? What's this young scallywag going to do? It's a Keith Malcolmson translation, okay? Do you know what Jesus turned around to Peter and says, never you mind whether he's going to remain until I return again. Never you mind what I do with him.

It's none of your business. You know, believers can be very nosy. Lord, what about him? And he's done that and they should be doing this.

Mind your own business. Do you know a lot of Christians could do with, how much do you love God? What's your love life like? You're intruding your nose and everyone else's business. What about you? What is it when you point a finger, how many are pointing back? That's an old cliché, but it's so true.

You know what? You've got no right to judge someone else about their love life if you're not judging your love life. Peter was trying to judge John. Jesus said, mind your own business, long nose.

And do you know what he said to Peter? I'll tell you how you're going to die. You're getting someone else's case. I'll tell you what's coming your way.

But this John, so he was talking about, he was in the debate over who's the greatest. Remember as well, when James and John came to Jesus one day, in fact, we have two different stories. One of the stories is they sent their mom or their mother came and said, master, now my two sons, James and John, I want you, I want you to promise me that when you come in glory, that James and John are going to sit on your left and your right.

You can choose which way around, but I'm asking you, some of you mothers better be careful over your kids. You're asking things not even knowing. I want this master.

Then in another place we read it was James and John themselves come directly to Jesus and said, Lord, when you return, can we sit on your left and right side on thrones? This is John the apostle, an apostle, a miracle worker, a preacher, the friend of Christ. You know what Christ said, I can't even give you that.

They are asking for something that Christ can't even give.

Christ doesn't even claim the authority to say I can give it to you. And yet they are claiming the right to possess the greatest thrones. Do you see how topsy-turvy this is? Back to front.

Or what about another time? Oh, there's a lot about John. I'm going to preach on him Sunday. In Mark chapter 9, 38.

And John answering Jesus saying, master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not with us. He's not in our church. He's not in our denomination.

He doesn't come to our meetings, but he's casting out demons. And we, probably James and John, forbid him because he followeth not with us. Jesus rebukes him again.

He says, just leave the guy alone. Do you see what John was? He was rugged, intolerant, filled with zeal, filled with ambition, narrow-minded, consumed with truth and righteousness, but not love. Do you realize you can have everything that's good, but if it's not handled with charity, agape, with love, you could be a nuclear bomb in the church.

When you go back to the gospels, John never mentions his own name in his own epistle. When he talks about a story where he appears and he records the story, you know what he calls himself? Him whom Jesus loved. He hides himself.

He disappears. He doesn't want to be seen. This is him writing years later.

He wouldn't have done that if he'd written as a teenager. Never write when you're a teenager. Wait for 30 years.

John was the one marked out more than anyone else in the New Testament. The one who Jesus loved. Many years ago, some 30-odd years ago, we actually had a church in Scotland.

And you know with everyone there, one of the young ladies, she proved me, challenged me to new ends with her questions. And she'd come with scriptures, say, Keith, it says this here, and it says that. She'd come with questions like, does God love everybody all the same? Does God love every Christian all the same? That's quite a question to ask even as a preacher.

Does God love everybody the same? And I actually give one of those Keith Malcolmson answers. Well, it depends. It's not simple saying yes or no.

What do you mean? Yes, God loves all the world. Every sinner, generally, he has love because he sent his son to die upon the cross. But you know, in the church amongst Christians, do you think that Jesus loves all of you to the same degree in this room this morning? Logic would say yes, because after all, he won't love me more than he would love you.

And he won't love you more than because God's so fair. Do you know what John teaches? He says, if you keep, said Jesus taught this, if you keep my commandments, my father and me will come to you and we'll manifest ourselves to you. We will love you.

There is a love that loves you unconditionally as a sinner when you haven't done it. He loves you. But see, as a believer, not all of you are experiencing the same level of the love of God.

God's love is the same. God's love is unconditional. I guarantee all of you are restricted in experiencing that love.

You may say, I don't feel God's love. Since when do you discern God's love by feelings? If you try to discern love by what you feel, you're going to get deceived. You'll end up walking away from God going, I don't have a feeling.

I don't know. God, send a bird down so I know that you love me. Lord, do something.

Get someone to email me now. You will never perceive that or understand true love by that way. John the apostle, he'd been a son of thunder, but Christ made him the apostle of love.

He incessantly preaches, teaches, talks, embodies love. Do you know what? He had the ability to receive the love of God. Therefore, he could give the love of God.

Do you know how you get a heart of love? You receive it from God. He was the only apostle amongst the twelve who knew Judas was about to betray Jesus. The only one.

Peter didn't know it. Peter wanted to know it. Remember at the last supper, do you remember again? Now again, you don't get this in the English.

Peter turns to John and says, John, ask Jesus. So you can see the seat in order. They're all around the table.

There's Jesus. There's John. Here's Peter.

And Peter says to young John, why didn't he ask Jesus directly? He says to John, you ask Jesus who is going to betray him. Remember he said, one of you is going to betray me. One of you sitting here right now is going to betray me.

So Peter wants to know. They all said, is it me? Then Peter gets inquisitive. I can't believe this.

Some of you are like that. He says, John, you ask Jesus. And John turns to Jesus and says, Master, who is it? You have to see this.

Why is it Peter didn't know and John didn't know? And why did Peter ask John and not ask Jesus directly? Do you know what happened? Peter whispered, John, you ask him. John turns to Jesus. Jesus, who is it? Jesus turns to John, the one who dips his bread with me.

That's the one. That's a sign. So Jesus gave to John the sign of the one who's going to betray him, where the devil is.

How do you give it to the one who loved him so much? John didn't tell Peter. Let me close here. And these are my six points of message never got to them.

The holy gap we love. I'm talking about a heart to love God. And there's six areas where you're given clear biblical teaching.

I've taught entire messages, if not series on these things. Number one, loving God with all of your heart. It is a command.

Number two, loving the truth. You'll see in 2 Thessalonians 2, we receive a love of truth. You don't just have it.

You don't create it. God gives you a love for his truth. If you love God and are born again, if you're born again, you love God and you love truth.

You can't love God and not love truth. So if you don't love truth, I know you don't love God. I only met Brian on Friday night, never met him before, never seen him before.

I sit down and all I do is, so how did you meet the Lord? I can walk away from the day. I've never met him in my life. I didn't walk home with him.

I haven't spent a week with him. And I go, I think he's a family member. In fact, I'm pretty sure he's definitely a family member.

I've just discovered another family member because I'm sitting with someone who loves truth, loves God, loves souls, loves his brothers. And that's not the only marks. Thirdly, loving your brethren.

Boy, love one another. Love one another. It's not a feeling, but I don't feel loved.

How do you discern love? Oh, you should be phoning me every night. You don't love me. Do you think I've got time to phone? I wish I could phone all of you every night.

I wish I could meet up for cups of teas and meals every week. I honestly do. I can't even tell you how much I desire that.

That's sentiment. That's feeling. That could even be filial.

That could be fraternal. I really do desire that sincerely. But you know what? I'd never stand and preach like this.

This is agape. Agape puts me here. That is more than a feeling.

How do I know God loves me? Jesus died on the cross for me. That's how I know. I don't need to feel it.

I know it. How do you know God loves you? I don't feel his love. Who said you had to feel it? It's lovely when you do, and I have.

But you don't need to feel his love. You need to believe the truth of God. Loving your brethren.

What's it say in 1 John? I wish I could go through all these scriptures. Listen. 1 John 3.14. We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren.

He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Or listen to this about the truth. I don't want to miss this.

What does Jesus say constantly? Read John's writings. Jesus says, if you keep my commandments you love me. He goes into more detail.

He says, if you don't keep all my little commandments and words, you do not love me. I've met lots of people in the church say, oh I love God. I say, no you don't.

I do love God. You don't care less about God. You have a feeling you love God.

You want to love God. You want to be loved by God. But you know what? You hate God.

You're the enemy of God because you get drunk. You're immoral. You blaspheme.

You swear. You're a liar. You hate God.

Oh no, no. I've got this feeling. You're deceived.

Number six. Sorry, number four. Loving your wife.

Number five. Loving sinners. I've got so many scriptures to go into.

Remember the woman with the alabaster box? Jesus walks in. It's the house of a Pharisee and she comes broken. Doesn't say one word.

She's an immoral woman. Broken over her sin. Going, he's the saviour.

And she comes. She can't even talk. She is so broken.

But God knows the heart. Remember, she breaks it for him. Do you know the owner of the house is a man called Simon who's a Pharisee? Not Simon Peter.

It's a different one. And he's thinking in his mind, huh, if he was really a prophet, he would know who this woman was and wouldn't let her touch his feet. And then, of course, Jesus knows everything.

Says, Simon speaks right into it. Do you know what? You don't know love if you don't know this Christ. Or what about the woman caught in adultery? What are you saying there? The law condemns her.

She's got to die. This is holiness. This is the word of God.

This is scripture. And agape love steps in. I'm talking about a man loving sinners.

Or what about the dying thief? One minute, he's cursing Christ. The next minute, he's saying, remember me. That man's heart changed.

Or what about the rich young ruler? This is where a lot get it wrong. The rich young ruler is a good sinner. Master, what must I do to inherit eternal life? Just say a sinner's prayer after me.

Lord Jesus, come into my heart. Now you're saved. And if you have any doubts, it's the devil.

Is that what he done with the rich young ruler? He said, keep the commandments. Oh, I kept them all from my youth up. He's very sincere, zealous, running.

I want this. He's got money. Boy, that'd be good in the church, wouldn't it? What's Jesus saying? Just one thing.

Go sell everything that you have and give it to the poor. Not to the synagogue, to the poor. The only time Jesus ever said that to a man.

Didn't say it to everyone. Do you know what happened? It says he was sad. He turns around and begins to walk away.

Do you know what it says next? Any of you know what it says next? Jesus loved him. You're looking at a gappy love and evangelism. See, love isn't always reaching out to sinners.

Love is letting someone like that walk away when they do not want to do the will of God. I can't make the gate broader. I cannot say people are saved who are not saved.

One man who's now in hell, sat in this church and he got so angry with me. He said, you will not accept me as a Christian. Remember that? And he stormed out, sitting eating our food, sitting in our seats.

And because I wouldn't say, yes, you're a good born again Christian. The previous time I was with him in a car, we drove 45, I'm trying to help him, 45 minutes and he cursed incessantly. And he wants me to believe he's a Christian.

I can't do that. And so he got angry with me. Why not get born again? And how many people, I used to hear it when I was young, a good church I was in, the pastor would say, people get offended because I didn't shake their hand this Sunday.

There's 150 years. Says, you know what? I don't shake your hand. I haven't spoken to you this week.

And you go and sit in the back row, offended. I'm glad for preachers like that, that I sat under. He says, you in the back room, move over.

I'm going to come sit. You didn't shake my hand. I used to hear them say, we used to laugh at the things he used to say.

You don't know what goes on in these churches. How many people we've seen walk in this door? The ones we gave most time, they're not sitting here today. We give them time.

We give them prayer. We give them everything. There was one guy trying to kill himself.

Paul and Supe were there. I phoned them. I jumped in my car, come in.

He was really going to commit suicide big time. Some of you may know the story. And we drove in immediately, got to that building and we paced upside.

It was freezing. And we sat in that car and we prayed and we said, we're not letting him get out of this building. As soon as he gets out, he's going to the Shannon.

We stopped him. Do you know that Candice and I, we took him home. I think it was the next or a couple of days later.

He was stinking. I didn't know the guy. So I didn't trust the guy.

Not many trust people. I'm not, I'm, I'm responsible to love everyone, not to try. I don't trust you if I don't know you.

You say that's wrong. No, it is not. I don't have to trust everyone.

And we took him home, hid the knives. He was stinking. He was messy.

And we've got a nice new bed with beautiful clean white sheets. He's going to sleep in our bed. He's going to stink that room out.

And I'm not going to tell him to take a shower first. Do you know why? Love within me says, I don't want someone dirty lying on that bed. I don't want a smell coming down that corridor.

I don't want someone in my house who I don't even know, where I've got my wife, who I love with all my heart, and that's it. We locked the door that night. But do you know what? I love him so much.

I care about his soul. I agape him. I'll make sure my wife is, because I'm meant to, I agape her.

And I care for her. I made sure the knives are locked away and our door is locked. Not because I'm scared, I'm just, love my wife.

And you know what the natural human Keith Malcolmson thought is, maybe you could say, would you like, maybe you'd like to have a shower. Isn't that natural thinking? It's not sinful. But it's pretty rotten at that point.

Well, that guy's going to go into lost eternity. And I'm thinking about a white sheet. That's stinking.

Remember in Romania, that little Romanian boy that comes, slept on the streets, never used a knife and fork in his life. And every day I'd have little chocolates in my bag for him. They all come and I'd share Jesus with them.

And in that healing meeting, he came down and it was his leg he wanted prayer for. See, when I was in Romania, all the rest of the times God touched and healed them. In that occasion, he healed my heart.

Because as I went to kneel down to pray for him, the smell, I smelled something I've never smelt in my entire life. It hit me halfway down. It was so unbelievable.

He lives on the street. He doesn't have a change of clothes. That I went to stand up again and I had the rebuke of the Lord.

How dare you? How dare you? Did you think more of that than his soul? And I fell on my knees. I don't know if God healed him. All the rest I can tell you about.

Instantaneous miracles all over the place. I wasn't, I didn't even ask him because I went, God's just changed my heart. Don't you ever, ever do that again.

I'm finished. And I'm sure there was others on that list I've missed. But I'm talking about a heart to love God.

And if you love one another, I'm going to know it. Because you keep his commandments. We don't broaden this calling it love.

We just love you and you can sit in here. Rubbish. If you're a danger, we threw you out.

If you cause division, you're not welcome. If you disobey the word of God, I'm not even to have a cup of tea with you. If you're proclaiming to go to heaven and be born again, I'm not even to stop and talk with you.

The Bible commands me. That's love. Anyone who walks disorderly, avoid them.

There's lots of people you should be avoiding. And yet you go, oh, I love people too much. I've just got to take the call and I've just got to sit with them.

That isn't love. Do you know what that is? That's your sentimental, carnal, fleshly feelings. And it's selfish.

You disobey God's word. You don't believe what we preached here. You don't believe what the Bible says and you call it love.

It's not love. Amen. Can we just stand, lift our hands as we close.

Lord Jesus, Lord Jesus, Lord Jesus, Lord Jesus. Father, we ask of you, oh God, that we wouldn't have love without truth, neither to have truth without love. Both of them are so destructive, so damaging, so false, so anti-biblical.

Lord God, we do want to walk in truth. We want to be consumed with truth. But Lord God, we want to be consumed also with agape love.

Father, I pray as a church that we wouldn't be a people. Lord God, in Jesus name, pray we wouldn't be a people. Lord God, that are lopsided or imbalanced.

Lord God, I pray in Jesus mighty name, will you work deeply in our hearts. Will you reveal right now. Lord God, if you could work in John's heart.

Lord God, to make this son of thunder, an apostle of love. Lord God, I pray, will you sanctify us. We need it, oh God.

We don't want to lose our agape love in this hour of iniquity and sin and of darkness, oh God. Lord God, I pray in Jesus name, that we are going to burn bright as a fire. Lord God, as John did on that night, when the devil come in as a flood, when darkness covered the entire scene, when the devil was revealing himself in power, when friends denied their knowledge of Christ, when some betrayed Christ, when many fled away.

Lord God, you had a young man called John, who loved you, who agape'd you. Lord God, who was steadfast in loving you. Father, I pray for us.

Lord God, make us a John church. Make us a people like John, who are going to walk in the love of God, in Jesus mighty name. Amen.

Jesus. Jesus. Jesus.

Jesus. Jesus. Just pray church.

Lift your hands. Pray. Let the spirit of God draw out your heart.

Have you been an all love man, and yet not walking in truth? Have you been an all truth man, not looking, walking in love? Are you there with the truth, always wanting to correct others, your wife, your husband, other Christians, this church? All truth, you don't have love. Truth will kill. It can be truth, and it can kill, and it can damage, and it can hurt, if you don't handle it in love.

But I assure you, it's just as bad to be all love, love, love, and you are not filled with truth. Sometimes love turns over tables, lifts up a whip, calls a man a fox. It's love.

I want both saints of God. Amen. Let's worship here.

Jesus, we need you.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/IACXk9iyv0k.mp4>

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