

Ten Spiritual Disciplines

by Phil Beach Jr.

God's love is an active force that produces action, purpose, and determination in our lives, and it is essential to cultivate a desire for God's Word and to submit to His authority.

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Scripture: Psalm 119:97-104, Romans 12:1-2, Galatians 5:19-23, Ephesians 4:22-24, James 4:7, 1 Peter 1:13, 1 Peter 2:1-2, 1 Peter 2:11, 1 Peter 3:15, 1 Peter 5:9

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Description

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the active nature of God's grace and love in the believer's life, arguing that true love compels action, purpose, and determination. He warns against passive Christianity, urging believers to engage in ten spiritual disciplines outlined in 1 Peter, which reflect a vibrant relationship with Christ. These disciplines include girding the mind, putting aside sinful behaviors, craving God's Word, and submitting to authority, all driven by the love of God. Beach highlights that a lack of action may indicate a waning love for God, and he encourages daily prayer for the fullness of God's love to maintain fervor in faith. Ultimately, he asserts that genuine experiences with God will lead to practical changes in one's life.

Transcript

I want to bring your attention tonight to what we have written here on the blackboard because it is essential that we understand the nature of grace and God's love. The nature of grace and God's love. I'm going to read this out loud and I just would like you to follow me and also I would suggest that it would be very advantageous to you to be able to meditate upon this and get a grasp of the meaning of what this message is actually saying because this will indeed affect your entire Christian life as we will discover tonight as we study the book of 1 Peter.

And also I want to encourage you to possibly make it a goal to read the book of 1 Peter privately in your devotions in order that you might be able to further grasp this message. Let's begin here from the top. Grace plus Christ's love equals action, purpose, and determination.

Passivity is not the product of heaven's love aflame in a believer. The character of agape love, the nature of agape love is that of producing action within the believer. It produces purpose within the believer.

It produces determination within the believer. As opposed to what some would consider to be passive love or passive grace. Passive love and passive grace is that love or grace that does not produce a change

within those who are apparently recipients to it.

My friends, there is nothing in the entire Bible that suggests that God's love and that God's grace is anything less than active. You see, the very nature of God's love, the very nature of God's grace produces a response in our mind and in our heart. A response to want to obey God.

A response to want to be determined to do everything that God would want us to do. This is how you know whether or not you are under the influence of the true love and grace that comes from Jesus Christ. This is the acid test to determine the nature and character of the love that you have in your heart.

Remember you who were here this morning. We mentioned that love is the love that the New Testament Christian is under. We've been delivered from the law of bondage.

We've been delivered from the law of the Old Testament. Keeping it to try and earn our salvation. That is not the way of the New Testament believer.

Now that we are Christians, we have had the Holy Spirit of God given to us and it is by the power of the Holy Spirit that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts and in our minds. And we showed this morning that since love is the prompting, motivating power that enables us to please God and to do those things that are right in His eyes, it is very important that we continue in God's love. That we seek to be filled with God's love in order that our love may not grow cold.

For if our love grows cold and it is the only power we have to do the things that please God, then we may fall from pleasing God. I am a very firm believer in the testimony of God's grace and how it is love that should motivate the believer. And I am opposed to a legalistic gospel.

And I believe the New Testament is opposed to the legalistic gospel. A gospel that is based on laws and rules and regulations and outward codes. As if by keeping them we can obtain holiness and righteousness.

I am opposed to that. However, I see a warning light flashing in the Christian circle. A yellow light which means approach with caution.

There is a lot of testimony among evangelicals regarding the revelation that we are not under the law. That we are under grace. And that God's love is what motivates us.

And I am in agreement with this. However, when people's love for God grows cold, then their zeal after God and their actions that are supposed to be pleasing God begin to fall short of pleasing God. For if it is by love that we please Him, then a lack of love means that we don't please Him.

So while it is true, I am in total opposition to a legalistic gospel. Yet, we must put the message of God's love in proper perspective. If God's love is what we are under as New Testament believers, then it would be worth our while to pray daily that we be filled with His love.

Lest the Lord Jesus would come to us as He did to the church in Ephesus and say, I have something against you. You've lost your first love. Friends, we are not under law.

But when your heart is filled with love, you are filled with action, purpose and determination to do God's will and not your own. When you are filled with God's love, it compels you and it controls you and it captivates you and it possesses you to such an extent where you basically determine in your life and in

your heart that you are not going to serve yourself, you are not going to serve your own desires or your own aspirations, but you are going to know Jesus Christ and serve His cause and accomplish His pleasure for your life. Many times Christians use we are not under law as an excuse to live a selfish life, to do what they want when they want.

And what they've done is they've misunderstood that while it's true we're not under law and legalism, we're under a higher law, friends. We're under the love of God which demands selfless service to the King. And when you are prompted by God's love, it is not grievous to serve the Lord.

The Bible says that God's commandments are not grievous. Why? Because when our obedience is being prompted by the love of Jesus Christ, then there's no grief, there's no burden, there's no turmoil, but it's joy, it's pleasure, it's life, it's peace, it's happiness. Oh, it might be hard on the flesh, but the inner man is rejoicing.

The inner man is exceedingly glad. So therefore, in light of this biblical revelation on love, we want to take you to 1 Peter tonight. And we want to show you love in action.

Love in action. What happens when a believer testifies to the grace of God, testifies to having been born again, testifies to having placed their faith in Jesus Christ for the remission of their sins? What happens? May I suggest tonight that when you become a true born-again Christian, the book of 1 Peter makes 10 general characteristics of a believer who is being compelled by love. Love is an active force.

God's love is an active force coming by grace, which produces a divine enablement for action. The absence of action within the believer's life suggests that the believer is falling from an ongoing relationship with Christ, which could mean we are leaving our first love or we're growing lukewarm in our fervor for Jesus Christ. This is what we want to avoid.

Now, I want to take you to 1 Peter and show you, as I mentioned, 10 positive actions, 10 positive actions that you will be dearly involved in if you have an encounter with the grace and love of Jesus Christ. It is my prayer tonight that as a result of this study, two things will be accomplished. You will see the difference between biblical grace and love versus religious grace and love.

And number two, it will spur you on and provoke you to seek the fullness of God's Spirit and God's love every day of your life. That's what we're hoping that this will accomplish tonight. And I want to remind you that these 10 characteristics are the believer's responsibility.

The Lord will make provision by His grace and love, but we must cooperate with Him in order to fulfill these 10 characteristics that God is asking us to perform as believers. Now, I want to bring your attention to our first... And what we can do tonight is let's call these spiritual disciplines. Spiritual discipline.

I would like to first bring you to 1 Peter 1 verse number 13. Therefore, gird your minds for action. Gird your minds for action.

Our first spiritual discipline is girding the mind. Now, girding the mind... Listen closely... is an action the believer must participate in as a result of God's love working within him. To gird one's mind suggests the absolute alertness necessary for being sober in thought, word, and deed, and action by guarding the mind continually.

I'll read that again. To gird up the loins of the mind is an action that the believer must participate in by the enablement that comes by the love of God working within their heart. It suggests the absolute alertness necessary for being sober in thought, word, deed, and action by guarding the mind.

Now, this thought of girding up the mind is also found in Romans chapter 12. Romans chapter 12. We know the Scripture.

We've quoted it many times in teaching and in preaching. I'll begin reading in verse number 1. I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

One of the fruits of God's love working within a believer is an ongoing participation with God in the girding of one's mind. My friends, the mind is a battlefield in the day that we're living in. And I believe it's the will of Satan, your adversary and my adversary, to plant garbage in our mind.

Because he knows that if he can drop a thought in an unguarded mind, and that thought is not dealt with immediately, then it fixes itself within the believer's mind and it eventually influences and affects the actions of that believer. As soon as the mind becomes passive and at ease, it can become a place where Satan will put a nest. You've heard the old story, or the old saying, you can't stop birds from flying over your head, but you can stop them from making a nest in your head.

You can't stop the activity of the enemy in the heavenlies, but you can prevent him from coming into your mind and building a nest of filth, or doubt, or unbelief. Now listen, God is not going to put you in a bubble. And you're not going to be able to go around and walk around and say, Hallelujah, my mind is always free.

I just never have any kind of thought about anything that's unclean or impure, or that suggests doubting God, or suggests questioning the Lord. It's just a miracle. No, my friend, that's not the way it is.

And people who don't understand the need to gird up their minds with the truth of God, end up becoming captive to terrible thoughts, which begins to hinder the relationship with Jesus Christ. So this is the first activity. Remember, God's love produces action, purpose, and determination.

To do what? First of all, to gird the mind. Secondly, let's turn our Bibles to 1 Peter 2, beginning with verse 1. Therefore, putting aside all malice, guile, hypocrisy, envy, and all slander. Secondly, the divine action of the believer is to put aside.

Now, to put aside suggests that it is our responsibility to work with the Holy Spirit in putting down the old man and all of his wretched, sinful deeds. This same thought of putting aside is also found in Ephesians 4, verse 17. Ephesians 4, chapter 17.

We can begin reading. This I say, therefore, affirm together with the Lord that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk in the futility of their minds. So, here we find the first discipline.

So, in order to put aside the deeds of the flesh, we have to be girding the mind at the same time. All of these you'll find envelop one another and work with one another. And they're interwoven one with another.

See, this is really, really exciting God's Word. It'll transform you. It'll change you.

It'll reveal Jesus to you. Verse 18. Being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart.

They having become callous have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. But you did not learn Christ in this way. If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him just as He is truth.

Listen to this. That in reference to your former manner of life you lay aside the action of the believer who is under the power of God's love. You lay aside the old self which is being corrupted in accordance with the lust of deceit.

And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind and put on the new self which is in the likeness of God and has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. We also find the same thought in Colossians chapter 3 verses 1 through 10 and also Romans chapter 6 1 through 14. So the second spiritual discipline that love will compel the believer to be actively involved in is the putting aside.

Listen. You do not tolerate what is not right when you are under the influence of God's love and God's grace. Tolerance of what is not right within the believer's life is simply a sign that they've lost sight of God's love.

They've lost sight of God's grace. You see the very nature of God's love will not allow you to tolerate what is not right. But you will go to Jesus and you will come to Him and you will allow Him to enable you to do these things on a daily basis.

Number 3. This is a good one. Beginning in verse number 2 of chapter 2. Like newborn babes long for the pure milk of the Word that by it you may grow in respect of your salvation. So number 3. We crave God's Word.

Now this is very interesting. The word crave in the Greek suggests an intense, strong desire. So the idea here is not well, I think maybe I'll check out God's Word in a casual way.

But the idea that Peter is trying to let the believers know because of the word that he chose is more than just a casual looking into God's Word. But it is an intense and incredibly intense desire for God's Word. You say, well my, how can I get such a desire for God's Word? Love.

Grace. That's it. So the idea here suggests that we are to crave and long for God's Word.

Psalm 119. 97-104. Psalm 119.

Here is an example of what happens to a man or a woman when God's love gets a hold of them. Psalm 119. 97-104.

Check this out and tell me if this is not a craving for God's Word. Oh, how I love Thy law! It is my meditation all the day. Thy commandments make me wiser than mine enemies, for they are ever mine.

I have more insight than all my teachers, for Thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the aged, because I have observed Thy precepts. I have refrained my feet from every evil way that I may keep Thy Word.

I have not turned aside from Thine ordinances, for Thou Thyself has taught me. Here we go. How sweet are Thy words to my taste! Yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth! From Thy precepts I get understanding, therefore, I hate every false way.

Wow! To crave God's Word, to so long for God's Word that it becomes sweeter to us than honey. Oh Lord, how I want the Holy Spirit to work this love into my heart so that I can crave His Word. Number four.

2 Peter 2, verse number 11. Now, we're going to go through the entire book of Peter and show you that Peter is made up of basically ten spiritual disciplines, which proves that when believers are filled with God's love, their life is one of action. Know how encouraging this is.

1 Peter 2, verse number 11. Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul. So we have number four.

Abstaining from fleshly lusts. Now, here we find that the implication when Peter says abstain, it implies to intensely hold oneself or to keep oneself from something. To intensely hold oneself or to keep oneself from something.

So the idea here, once again, is not the casual, nonchalant, well, I guess I'll try to abstain, but rather it is an intense grabbing hold of yourself so that you will not become a victim of fleshly lusts that war against the soul. In Romans chapter 13, Romans chapter 13, verse 14, Paul gives us some insight into this spiritual discipline, which is a very important one for us to understand. We find in verse number 14 of Romans chapter 13, But put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.

Another version says put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh so that you would fulfill its desires. In other words, don't provide an opportunity for your flesh to fulfill its desire when you know that what it wants is something contrary to what God's love and God's grace would want you to have. So we find the fourth spiritual discipline is abstaining from the lusts of the flesh.

Now, I would assume most of us know this, but it won't be monotonous, in my opinion, to go over it. Let's turn our Bibles to Galatians chapter 5. And Paul gives us a very vivid, clear list of what lusts Peter is referring to when he tells us to abstain from them. Galatians chapter 5, beginning with verse number 17.

These are the lusts that Peter says you better abstain from them. Don't give yourself an opportunity to fulfill these lusts because they war against the soul. Verse number 17.

For the flesh sets its desires against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. For these are in opposition one to another, so that you may not do the things that you please. Verse number 19.

Now the deeds of the flesh are evident. Immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery. That means horoscope.

Enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. Let me tell you something. Jesus gives us a new heart when we're saved.

Now you remember what Jesus said regarding the heart of man? What is in it? What did He say was in the heart of man? Pleasant things? Jeremiah said the heart of man is deceitfully wicked above all things. Jesus said from within the heart of man comes forth what? Adultery, fornication, backbiting, hating. That's

what you are in your heart.

Now when you become born again, the Bible says that you receive a new heart. All things pass away. Behold, all things become new.

But in receiving a new heart, the old nature is not taking away. If it was, then why is Paul writing to believers, telling them not to make provision for the flesh if the flesh isn't there any longer? Why would Paul tell them not to make provision for something that's not there? See, the difference that we have now as believers is we have a new love and a new life working in us. Whereas before, we had no choice but to be servants of that sinful flesh.

But now we are new creations and we have the love and the grace of God working in our life. Therefore, when the flesh suggests through its inordinate desires to want to make us do something, we can say, as the Bible says, the grace of God has appeared under all men, teaching us to say, No! We can say, No! No! I'm not going to submit to this because I've been free, not from the presence of the flesh, not from the temptations of the flesh, but I've been freed from being a slave to the dictates of the flesh. Therefore, I can say, No! By the grace of God.

No, by the power of God. I will not yield. I'd rather choose to yield to God and His Word.

Thank God we're free, friends. Thank God you don't have to be captive. You can, by the power of God, experience newness of life.

Number five. Fifth spiritual discipline. I want to invite you to turn to 1 Peter, chapter 2, beginning in verse number 13.

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to the king as to one in authority or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers. Then number 17. Honor all men.

Then number 18. Servants, be submissive. So we find three disciplines here and we're going to just call them the discipline of submission.

The discipline of submission suggests that the believer is willing to be under God's authority whatever and wherever it may be. Listen. The root of pride is rebellion.

When God's grace and God's love is working within a believer's life there is an ability and a desire to be submissive to one another, to be submissive to the authorities at hand, to be submissive to Christ and His Word. A submissive spirit, a teachable spirit, a spirit that is willing to give honor to whom honor is due. This is the product of God's love working within our lives through the power of the grace of God.

Romans chapter 13 also explains to us this spiritual discipline of being submissive. God requires us to be submissive to our bosses on the job, various other different spheres of life. So remember, when we have God's love it expresses itself.

Girding, putting aside, craving, abstaining, and now submitting. Let's check out another one. This is found in chapter 3, beginning in verse number 1. Chapter 3, beginning in verse number 1. In the same way you wives, we see submission again here, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the Word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives as they observe your chase and respectful behavior.

I've entitled this the spiritual discipline of example. There is a place and a time within every believer's life when God calls them to be a silent witness. A silent witness, according to Peter, is one who is witnessing the gospel not by word, but by deed and action.

Now in context, Paul is referring to a wife who has an unbelieving husband. And he said, now listen wife, you be submissive, you love your husband, you act right, you react properly in situations, and even though he doesn't believe the word, he'll watch the word in action. He'll see your spiritual discipline of example and by your example, you can win him to the Lord.

An increase of God's love in your life enables you to be able to be silent when you can't talk about the gospel, but you can live the gospel in your example by your behavior. And often times, this is much more effective than the words that we speak. Now Paul taught this in 2 Corinthians 3. 2 Corinthians 3, verses 2 and 3. You are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read by all men.

Being manifested, that you are a letter of Christ, cared for by us, written not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God. Not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts. Let me ask you a question my friend.

What are people reading when your book is open before them? You say, well, I don't have a book. I've never opened up a book. Yes my friend, you are a book and every time you are with people, they are reading your book.

What is your behavior telling unbelievers? What are your actions telling the people at work or the people in church? What is your example preaching? I'm not interested and most unbelievers are not interested in what you tell them. What are you telling them? In your example. Oh my friends, this is one of the most powerful and effective ways to be a light for Jesus Christ.

And that is, don't talk it, walk it. That's what they say down south. Don't talk it brother, I say walk it now.

Are you walking it? Number seven. Chapter three, verse number 15. Chapter three, verse number 15.

But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence. Number seven is to sanctify Christ. Now to sanctify Christ in your heart is basically this.

It's a daily affirmation that you make before God in prayer. And in your affirmation you are reaffirming that it is your supreme desire for Christ to reign as the Lord and Master and King of your entire life and that whenever asked upon by anyone to give a reason for the hope that lies within you, you are willing and ready at any time to give a testimony about the grace of God that has changed your life. It's to sanctify Christ.

That means to set Him aside. To sanctify something is to set it aside. So when you sanctify Christ as Lord, you set Christ aside as the Master of your life.

Not just as an acquaintance that you have rocking relationships with, but I do things my way at times because, you know, no, no, no. You sanctify Him as Lord. In other words, He's my Master.

He's my King. He's my everything. Sanctify Him as Lord.

Number 8, verse number 16, chapter 3. And keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. The eighth spiritual discipline is keeping a clear conscience. Now this suggests that all of your dealings and all of your actions with both saints and unbelievers may be good and acceptable and pleasing to the Lord Almighty.

This is how you keep a clear conscience before God and man. You do it by making sure that all of your dealings and actions with both saints and unbelievers may always be good and acceptable and pleasing in God's eyes. This is so when you are slandered and made fun of because you're a Christian, they don't really have any grounds to pin you down.

Because they say, well, even though they are fanatics and their whole life revolves around Jesus, you've got to give them credit. They're kind. They're compassionate.

They're fair. They're honest. I don't ever hear them gossip.

I don't ever hear them backbite. I don't ever hear them talk about Joe or Sally or Anne. They conduct themselves in an upright fashion.

So even though they slander you, ultimately they'll be ashamed because they'll have no good reason. But let me tell you something. If unbelievers are talking about you, not because you're a Christian, but because you're impatient or you're a slanderer or you're a gossip, then that's nothing to be proud about.

See, that's nothing to be proud about. So keeping a clear conscience. Number nine.

See, we're going through the entire book of Peter. See, this is how you... I hope that through this too, you'll learn how to study your Bibles. This is a method of studying your Bible.

And you can really understand Peter's heart when you understand it in light of this. See? Number nine. Verse number 14.

I'm sorry. Verse number 1, chapter 4. Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin. Number nine is arm yourself to suffer.

Now in 1 Peter 4, verse 1, when the Scripture refers to arming yourself or preparing yourself to suffer in the same way that Christ did, the Scripture's suggesting that you are to fix your eyes upon Christ as the chief example to follow. When the Scripture says Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, it's suggesting that you should determine from the very beginning that Jesus Christ is your chief example. And if He had to suffer in the flesh and deny His own desires and seek to know the will of His Father, then that is something that we need to determine we will do by the power of God's love and God's grace.

Always remember, these spiritual disciplines are not something that God leaves you to do by yourself. They are the result of, they are not the promptings of your own heart. You cannot do these things, you'll fail.

That's why it is essential that the believer seeks to be filled with God's love. Because the very nature of God's love will prompt you and empower you to do all of these things on a daily basis. And it will become a lifestyle.

And it's a lifestyle that enables you to be a victorious, overcoming Christian, Roger. And you can have His power working in your life. The last spiritual discipline, these are not all inclusive, they are general disciplines.

But each one of these disciplines involve the entire Christian life. The last spiritual discipline is found in chapter 5 verse 9, 1 Peter. Chapter 5 verse 9. We'll begin with verse number 6. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your care upon Him because He cares for you.

Be of sober spirit. Now Peter told us that way back at the beginning. Girding the mind so that we can be sober.

So see, they all intertwine with each other. Be of a sober spirit. Be on the alert.

Your adversary the devil prowls like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour. But resist him firm in the faith. So our last spiritual discipline is resisting Satan.

Now, most of you know all about that. If you don't resist Satan, he will growl and bark and seek to devour you. Is that right Roger? Another scripture that suggests this same spiritual discipline is found in James chapter 4 verse number 7. James chapter 4 verse number 7. Submit therefore to God.

Resist the devil and he will flee from you. So, to resist Satan requires submitting oneself to God. You know I've often chuckled when I've seen my own attempt and the attempt of other Christians to resist Satan without first submitting to God.

You see, you have no power or authority or right to resist Satan if you are not in submission to God. So it is a useless attempt to say, Satan I rebuke you! Yeah, and you're walking down the beach and everyone's naked. Satan I rebuke you! All these terrible thoughts.

Satan I rebuke you! Why don't you get out of there? Submit yourself to God and do like Joseph. Run. Remember what Joseph did? When Potiphar's wife... You better get out of there, you know.

You've got to submit yourself to God. Or you're watching a program on television, which I wouldn't recommend because I haven't found any programs worthwhile watching. But how can you resist Satan when you're sitting there watching him in all of his garbage with most of the stuff on television? I'm just showing you.

I'm just trying to show you. You can't resist Satan from planting garbage in your mind if you fill your brain with it. You know, that's like walking into an icebox in your shorts.

I resist this cold. I resist it. Cold, you get away from... Why don't you get out of the freezer? And it might not be so cold.

I know that's foolish, but the point is made. Make sure you're submitting yourself to God before you try to resist the devil. So, let's just look at this real quick here tonight.

Grace plus Christ's love equals action, purpose, and determination. The action and purpose and determination is seen in ten spiritual disciplines. Each one of these spiritual disciplines are the result of the love of God working in your life.

You cannot succeed in any of these spiritual disciplines without first having received the Lord Jesus Christ and a portion of His love. And then once you taste and see that the Lord is good, you will forever be determined to seek to be filled with the grace and love of Jesus Christ. As a Christian believer, forget about being a preacher, forget about all that.

As a Christian believer, my greatest desire today, May 21st, 1989, is to experience and know the love of Jesus Christ, not in some passive way where it's a mystical experience and I walk around, oh, the love of God, the love of God, hallelujah, but yet I remain the same. But I want that love that enables me to gird my mind. I want that love that enables me to put aside the flesh and to crave the Word of God and abstain from fleshly lusts and to submit myself to authority.

I want that love that enables me to move for God. I want that love that enables me to put on the armor of God and to walk clothed in the Lord Jesus Christ. I do not want passive Christianity.

I do not want an experience with God that doesn't affect me practically. If I am not affected in my practical life, I don't want the experience. And my friend, I submit to you that any experience you have from God will indeed affect you practically.

And if it doesn't, it probably wasn't from God. Because the nature of God's revelation changes people. You see, Isaiah saw the Lord and his tongue was cleansed.

See? Paul saw the Lord and his life was transformed. Peter saw the Lord and he said, I want to be crucified upside down. You see? God's grace and God's love produces action.

Not fleshly action. Not works to try and earn our salvation. No.

But works that result from our salvation with Jesus Christ. Oh, okay. Well, there are some in 1 Peter chapter 5. I'll just go over these real briefly.

And then we want to give you an opportunity to pray. But there's three spiritual disciplines for leadership. If you ever want to set your heart on leadership, and in the church, this is what you need for God's love to produce in you.

First of all, the Bible says to shepherd the flock of God. That means to feed and tend the flock of God by following the example of Christ Jesus. Number two, the Bible says that we are to take the oversight.

And what that means is to fulfill the responsibility of tending to the flock. Which means to care, to heal, to bear the burden, to lead to the chief shepherd. One of the greatest, and brother George will confirm this, one of the greatest catastrophes in the body of Christ today is the leadership is no longer leading the flock to Christ, but they're leading them unto themselves.

Making them dependent on them rather than turning their hearts to the chief shepherd and to the word of God so that they learn to follow Him. And that's one of the responsibilities of being a leader, and that is to take the oversight by leading the flock to Christ. And third, we're commanded to be in samples.

And that, this is a very interesting Greek word, that denotes to leave an impression by a blow. Our Christian testimony as leaders should be so astounding and so filled with the power of God's love that it's like knocking a person which then leads them to an impression. And by doing it, we set an example.

So our example should not just be in word, but it should be in such a life of yielding to Christ, it's like a blow. It's like knocking someone down. Wow! That's really left an impression on me.

There's an example. Get the idea? Isn't that something? Well, when I looked into that, I said, Oh Lord, help us to have a punch in our testimony. Well, you say, well, how can I have a punch? Fall in love with Jesus.

Sister Collette, could you come? You know what song has been on my heart all day? I keep falling in love with Him.

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