

**HWMR: LOVING THE LORD AND LOVING ONE ANOTHER FOR THE ORGANIC BUILDING UP OF THE CHURCH AS THE BODY OF CHRIST, (Week 6)**

*Scripture Reading: John 13:34-35; 1 John 2:7-8; 3:11, 23*

**THE LORD’S NEW COMMANDMENT GIVEN TO US—THAT WE LOVE ONE ANOTHER**

John 13:34	A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.
John 13:35	By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.
1 John 2:7	Beloved, I am not writing a new commandment to you but an old commandment, which you have had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word which you heard.
1 John 2:8	Yet again a new commandment I am writing to you, which is true in Him and in you because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining.
1 John 3:11	For this is the message which you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another,
1 John 3:23	And this is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, even as He gave a commandment to us.

**Day 1**

*John 13:34-35 - A new commandment I give to you, that you **love one another**, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*

**I. In John 13, after the Lord Jesus washed His disciples’ feet to show them that He loved them to the uttermost (v. 1), He charged them to do the same to one another in love (v. 14); then He said, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also **love one another**. By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (vv. 34-35):**

- A. The commandment in verse 34 is the **new commandment** given to us by the Lord in the New Testament, which is different from the old commandments in the Old Testament:
  - 1. The New Testament commandments of the Lord (John 14:15, 21; 15:10, 12; 1 John 2:3, 4, 7, 8; 3:22, 23, 24; 4:21; 5:2, 3; 2 John 4, 5, 6) are not merely injunctions; they are **His words**, which are **spirit and life** as a supply to us—John 6:63.
  - 2. We should love God and His children with the divine love that is conveyed to us **through the words of the Lord** to become our experience and enjoyment.
- B. A way to receive, experience, and enjoy Christ is by **keeping His new commandment** to love one another for the expression of His love that all the people may know that we are His disciples—13:34-35:
  - 1. **Real love** is the issue of enjoying the processed Triune God in the divine dispensing—2 Cor. 13:14.
  - 2. When we are in the **fellowship of the divine life** (1 John 1:1-3), that is, in the enjoyment of the Triune God, the outcome of this enjoyment is the divine love with which we **spontaneously love others**; in particular, we love all those who are organically related to our begetting Father (5:1); this love is possible only because we have had the divine birth (John 1:12-13; 1 John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:4, 18).
  - 3. Here we have a **triangular love** involving God, ourselves, and all those born of God, which is in the organic union with the Triune God who is love (4:8, 16).

When we are abiding in the Lord, having fellowship with Him, our abiding in Him spontaneously issues in love for God and for the brothers. Therefore, the second condition, the second requirement, of fellowship is that **we love God and the brothers**.

The Greek word used for love in 1 John 2:5 is agape. This word denotes a love higher and nobler than that denoted by the Greek word phileo. Only agape with its verb forms is used in this Epistle for love. In this verse “the love of God” denotes our love toward God, which is **generated by His love within us**. **The love of God, the word of the Lord, and God Himself are all related to one another**. If we keep the Lord’s word, God’s love has been perfected in us. This is altogether a matter of the divine life, and this life is God Himself.

God’s love is His inward essence, and the Lord’s word supplies us with this divine essence, with which we **love the brothers**. The word itself is not this essence or substance. The word is what conveys this essence and supplies it to us. Therefore, the word supplies us with the very essence of God, which is the divine love. As a result, we have something substantial within us for us to participate in and enjoy. This means that eventually the essence of God’s being becomes our enjoyment. **Then out of this enjoyment there will be an issue—our love for God and His children**. (Life-Study of 1 John, chapter 16)

## Day 2

- John 3:16* - For God so **loved** the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that everyone who believes into Him would not perish, but would have eternal life.
- 1 John 4:9-10* - In this the **love of God** was manifested among us, that God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might have life and live through Him. Herein is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son as a propitiation for our sins.

## II. **The love of God is God Himself; love is the inward essence of God and the heart of God—vv. 8, 16:**

- A. The **love of God** is the source of salvation—John 3:16; Eph. 2:4-5; Titus 3:4-5.
- B. God’s predestination of us unto the divine sonship was motivated by the **divine love**—Eph. 1:4-5.
- C. The love of God **accomplished salvation for us**; God’s giving of His only begotten Son to us that we may be saved from perdition judicially through His death and have the eternal life organically in His resurrection was motivated by the divine love—John 3:16; 1 John 4:9-10:
  1. In the love of God, the Son of God saves us **not only** from our sins by His blood **but also** from our death **by** His life—Eph. 1:7; Rev. 1:5; Rom. 5:10.
  2. **God loved us** and sent His Son as a propitiation for our sins in His judicial redemption with the intention that we might have life and live through Him in His organic salvation—1 John 2:1; 4:9-10; John 6:57; 14:19; Gal. 2:20.
  3. **God’s excelling love** is seen in His becoming a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins and the propitiation place for us to meet and be infused with God; God as love meets with us and speaks to us in the propitiating, redeeming, and shining Christ so that we can be **infused with Him as love, mercy, and grace** for His effulgent and radiant glory—Rom. 3:24-25; Heb. 4:16; Exo. 25:17, 22.
- D. The **love of God** causes us to **obtain salvation** (2 Cor. 5:18-20; Matt. 22:3; Acts 5:32; 2 Tim. 3:15) and **become His children** (1 John 3:1).

First John 4:7-8 says, “Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God, and everyone who loves has been begotten of God and knows God. He who does not love has not known God, because God is love.”

We must love one another, because **love is of God**. Those who have love are begotten of God. Those who do not love have not known God because God Himself is love. When God begot us, He also begot love in us. We were without love, **but today we have love**. Today the love we possess is from God. God has begotten love in everyone who is born of God. **God has given love to both you and others. This is why we can love one another.**

Those who are begotten of God have received a life—a life which is God Himself. God is love; therefore, those who are begotten of God have such a love begotten within them. The life which we have received from God is a life of love. **Everyone who is begotten of God has love in him, and everyone who has love in him spontaneously loves the brothers.** It would be strange if we could not love one another. God gave every Christian a life of love. He also gave him the commandment of love based upon this life of love: “Let us love one another.” God first gives us the love, and then He tells us to love. He first gives us a life of love, and then the commandment of love. We should bow our heads and say, “Thank You! God’s children can now **love one another.**” (*Messages for Building Up New Believers* (3), chapter 47)

### Day 3

*Romans 5:5* - And hope does not put us to shame, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

*1 John 2:8* - Yet again a new commandment I am writing to you, which is true in Him and in you because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining.

- E. The **love of God** **leads us** in our living—2 Thes. 2:16-17; Heb. 12:6.
- F. **God has poured out His love** in our hearts with the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5), who has been given to us, as the motivating power within us, so that we may more than conquer in all our tribulations (8:37 and footnote 1).
- G. The love of God works for us **eternally**—Jer. 31:3; John 13:1; Rom. 8:38-39.

**III. In 1 John 2:7-8, relating to the Lord’s commandment in John 13:34, the apostle John says, “Beloved, I am not writing a new commandment to you but an **old commandment**, which you have had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word which you heard. Yet again a **new commandment** I am writing to you, which is true in Him and in you because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining”:**

- A. The commandment regarding brotherly love is both **old and new**: old, because the believers have had it **from the beginning** of their Christian life; new, because in their Christian walk it dawns with new light and shines with **new enlightenment and fresh power again and again**—1 John 2:7-8; 3:11, 23; cf. John 13:34.
- B. The fact that the old commandment is new is true in the Lord, since He not only gave it to His believers but also renews it in their daily walk continually; it is true also in the believers, since they not only have received it once for all but also are enlightened and **refreshed by it repeatedly**.

*1 John 4:11-12* - Beloved, if God has loved us in this way, we also ought to **love one another**. No one has beheld God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.

**IV. In 1 John we see that the practice of the **divine love** is the outcome of our **enjoyment of the Triune God** as the all-inclusive Spirit, the One who is moving and working within us as the anointing in the fellowship of the divine life to saturate us with all that the Triune God is, with all that He has done, and with all that He has obtained and attained—1:3; 2:3-11, 27:**

- A. If we would experience and enjoy the divine love and have it become the love by which we love others, **we need to know God experientially** by continuously living in the divine life—vv. 3-6; Phil. 3:10a.
- B. In order to practice the divine love as a virtue of the divine life, **we need the divine life** that has been sown as the divine seed (1 John 3:9; 2:29 and footnote 7) into our being; **we also need the divine Spirit** (3:24); the divine life is the source, and the divine Spirit is the One who actually carries out the matter of loving others.
- C. We should love God and His children with the **divine love** and not with our natural love, which must be put on the cross; one difference between God's love and our natural love is that it is **very easy** for our natural love **to be offended**.
- D. **Our living in the love of God** toward one another is the perfection and completion of this love in its manifestation in us—4:11-12; 2:5.

First John 4:20-21 says, *"If anyone says, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from Him, that he who loves God love his brother also."* Here John shows us that to love one's brothers is equal to loving God. He who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. **We should love our brothers if we want to love God.** This is the commandment which we have received from God.

We must be careful not to do anything that will offend love. We should not offend our brothers lightly. **We must love one another and must honor the brotherly love that has been placed in our hearts.** We should not put aside such a heart. God has placed this heart in us so that we can use it to serve and help the brothers. We should allow this **brotherly love to grow**, to be **strengthened**, and to be **empowered**.

First John 3:17 says, *"But whoever has the livelihood of the world and sees that his brother has need and shuts up his affections from him, how does the love of God abide in him?"* John did not say, "How does the love of the brothers abide in him?" He said, "How does the love of God abide in him?" because the love of God is the love of the brothers, and the love of the brothers is the love of God. The love of God does not abide in a person who shuts up his love for his brother. He cannot deceive himself by saying, "Although I do not love my brother, I love God." **Our relationship with the brothers comes from our relationship with God.** If we are not related to the brothers, it means that we are not related to God. If we reject our brothers, the love of God is not in us. (*Messages for Building Up New Believers* (3), chapter 47)

## Day 5

*1 John 3:14*

- We know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brothers. He who does not love abides in death.

*Matthew 16:24-25*

- Then Jesus said to His disciples, If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wants to save his soul-life shall lose it; but whoever loses his soul-life for My sake shall find it.

### V. The church life for the organic building up of the Body of Christ is a **life of brotherly love**—4:7-8; 2 John 5-6; John 15:12, 17; Rev. 3:7; Eph. 5:2; cf. Jude 12a:

- A. The one who **loves God and the brothers** is enjoying the divine life; the one who **does not** love is abiding in the satanic death—1 John 3:14; cf. 2 Cor. 11:2-3.
- B. Just as the Lord Jesus laid down His soul-life that we might have the divine life, **we need to lose our soul-life** and deny the self to love the brothers and minister life to them in the practice of the Body life—1 John 3:16; John 10:11, 17-18; 15:13; Eph. 4:29—5:2; 2 Cor. 12:15; Rom. 12:9-13.
- C. We need to lose our soul-life by **not loving the world with its pleasure**; instead, taking in God and expressing God as love in the church life of brotherly love should be our joy, amusement, entertainment, and happiness—1 John 2:15-17; Matt. 16:25-26; cf. 2 Tim. 3:4; Psa. 36:8-9.
- D. Brotherly love in the church life is expressed practically **in our caring for the necessities of the needy saints without** any self-serving purpose or outward self-display; in the sharing of material things with the needy saints, the grace of the Lord's life with His love flows among the members of the Body of Christ and is infused into them—1 John 3:17-18; Matt. 6:1-4; Rom. 12:13; 2 Cor. 8:1-7.
- E. Loving to be first in the church is versus loving all the brothers—3 John 9.

We should not say that since we have the Spirit in us, it is sufficient to walk according to the spirit. **We must be open to others**. This is not to say that we despise the spirit within. Every truth has two sides, and we must not lean toward just one side. **We should be strong in our spirit as well as in our body**. We should not take care of our spirit and disregard our body. Similarly, we need to fellowship with the Lord to maintain a proper relationship with Him, and we also need to have a proper relationship with the brothers and sisters in the Body.

We should not look down on either aspect. We stress our fellowship with the Lord, and **we should equally stress our relationship with the brothers and sisters in the Body**. We should give equal attention to our spirit, soul, and body in order to be strong in our whole being. We need a change in our service. In the past, as long as we were humble, made no mistakes, and did not offend others, we were satisfied. But from now on, we should serve as players on a team; we should serve in coordination. This requires harmony and oneness. (*Serving in Coordination and Washing in Love, chapter 2*)

## Day 6

*John 15:5*

- I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

*John 15:12*

- This is My commandment, that you **love one another** even as I have loved you.

- F. **Loving one another is a sign that we belong to Christ** (John 13:34-35); if we desire to have the ability to influence people concerning the Lord and to bear fruit, we must have love for one another and become one in the church life; the best way for us to bear fruit is to love one another by taking Christ as our person and life (v. 35; 17:21, 23).
- G. The genuine preaching of the gospel is a matter in **fellowship** (Phil. 1:5) because it is a matter of the Body; the branches of a tree bear fruit in a way of fellowship (John 15:5, 12, 17); the more we live in the Body life and have the reality of the Body life, the more we will be fruitful.
- H. The condition of the vital groups in the church life is that of **loving one another in oneness and with one accord**; for the practice of the vital groups, the saints need to be trained how to have fellowship that is altogether based on oneness and one accord— Acts 1:14.
- I. In the church life of brotherly love (Rom. 12:10; 1 Thes. 3:12; 4:9; 2 Thes. 1:3; 1 Pet. 1:22; 4:8), we **receive** one another (Rom. 15:7), have the **same mind** toward one another (v. 5), **pursue** the things for building up one another (14:19), **bear** one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2), bear one another in love (Eph. 4:2), **comfort and build up** one another (1 Thes. 5:11), **confess** our sins to one another and **pray** for one another (James 5:16), **forgive** one another (Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13), and are **subject** to one another (Eph. 5:21).
- J. The proper church meeting is a "one another" meeting, a "round-table" meeting, in which we **speak** to one another (v. 19), **teach** and **admonish** one another (Col. 3:16), **consider** one another and **exhort** one another (Heb. 10:24-25), and **listen** to one another (1 Thes. 5:20); we need to learn to have a proper mutual care in the meetings (1 Cor. 12:25-26).
- K. **We need to be dealt with and built up by the Lord** (8:1) so that our administration of the church and our ministry of the word will result in the brothers and sisters spontaneously loving one another for the building up of the church; when the saints genuinely grow in their spiritual life, the experience of the divine life will result in an increase of love, because love is the issue of life (1 John 3:14); this will cause the church life to be living, prevailing, functioning, and powerful.

First John 4:16 says, "God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God and God abides in him." This is the second occurrence in this Epistle of the phrase God is love. Because **God is love**, He wants us to **love the brothers and abide in love**. As long as we abide in love, we abide in God.

Verses 17 and 18 say, "In this has love been perfected with us, that we have boldness in the day of the judgment.... There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear." First John 4 is the only place in the entire Bible that tells us how to stand boldly before the judgment seat. It tells us the secret: Abide in love. **To abide in love is to abide in God**. We will have boldness in the day of judgment when this love is perfected in us.

**We must have only one thought toward our brothers and sisters—love**. We must gain them and seek their highest benefit. There must be no hatred, only love. This practice is an exercise for us. One day our whole being will abide in love, and love will also abide in us. Then our lives on earth will be free from all fear. There is no fear when we love. When we stand before the judgment seat, we will not be afraid of anything. This life of love will operate among us until fear is gone. The fruit of the Spirit—love—will give us the boldness to stand before the judgment seat.

We have already seen that to love the brothers is to love God. Our love for the brothers will cause the love of God to be perfected in us. We can love the brothers to such an extent that there is no more fear in us toward the brothers. **Loving God and loving the brothers always go together**. We must love the brothers on earth if we want to love God. If we do, love is perfected in us, and we will have the boldness on the day of judgment. This is a wonderful thing.

May we all give ourselves to learn to **love the brothers** from the very beginning of our Christian life. May the **life of love** find an outlet in us. (*Messages for Building Up New Believers* (3), chapter 47)