

# Thessalonians 3

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[ 0 : 00 ] We turn now to the passage we read and center our thoughts on words in the third chapter, 1 Thessalonians chapter 3, verse 12. The last two verses in chapter 3.

The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men even as we do toward you, to the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his sins.

Now we may replace our steps a little to gather the threads of our studies in this letter.

You remember that the letter was written to a very young church, many of its converts emerging from idolatry and heathenism. It may very well be the earliest of Paul's letters.

And we notice that when the apostles preached in a place like Thessalonica, where there were many heathen, that the emphasis of the preaching was on the judgment of God upon sin.

[ 1 : 33 ] And that may account for the emphasis that we have in the letters to the Thessalonians. That may account for the emphasis that we have there on the second coming of Christ.

He is presented constantly in the letters as the reigning Lord who is going to come to judge the world. And we have that constant allusion to the second coming of Christ.

As someone has put it, woven like a golden thread throughout its whole texture. And each section of the letter, whatever subject the apostle is dealing with in that section, is sure to reach its climax with a reference to the second coming of Christ.

And hence we saw in previous weeks in the first chapter that the young converts there were looking for the second coming of Christ. They had an expectation of his coming.

And then two weeks ago we saw that the preacher who was instrumental in the conversion of these people that he looked forward to the second coming of Christ because that was an event which conjured up in his mind the glorious and the happy prospect of standing with Christ, standing before Christ with those who were his converts.

[ 3 : 22 ] And in the second coming of Christ is presented as that which makes tremendous demands upon the lives, of people.

And here we come across the apostles' eager desire for the purity and for the sanctification of the Thessalonians at the second coming of Christ.

And he does so, he gets that eager desire for the cross in a way that is a favourite tactic of his right throughout his letters.

He shows on the one hand what people are to avoid and what they are to choose. He shows on the one hand what they are not to be and then on the other hand what they are to be.

And that is really the thrust of the first 12 verses or so of chapter 4. Now before looking at the verses of our text here tonight, just look at what the apostle here is saying to these people.

[ 5 : 00 ] Those of us who come to the Wednesday evening meets who have been studying the epistle to the Ephesians chapter 4, will remember that one way in which the apostle puts it to that church is this.

You've got to say put off the old conversation and put on the new. Put off the old practice and put on new practice. Or get rid of the old practices and embrace new practices as Christians.

And he's doing the exact same thing here. He's telling them what things to avoid. And in the first eight verses of chapter 4, he is really dealing with a very sensitive theme.

Sensitive in his day and sensitive in our day. And a theme that has to be dealt with great and considerable care.

It is the theme of impurity. Particularly sexual impurity.

[ 6 : 08 ] And focusing on what the practices which were rife in those days and in that area. The practice of illicit sexual relationships.

And what he's saying is this. He tells these converts to avoid that kind of life. And to make sure that they don't give place to lustful passions in their lives.

That's what he means in verse 5. Not in the lust of concupiscence. Even as the Gentiles which know not God. He asks them to exercise self-control.

And to remember that in the marriage bond. That they are to be faithful to one another. Every one of you should know how to possess this vessel in sanctification and honor.

It's probably a reference to the marriage bond. And he says, he reminds them that this is the will of God for them. Even their sanctification. And that they are to avoid all kinds of moral and sexual impurity and deviations.

[ 7 : 24 ] Now, the point here is this. That it was necessary for him to write like this to a church in that situation. Because the society in which the church lived looked on extramarital sexual relationships, for example, as perfectly normal.

It was more or less a part of life. And in many instances, these practices were legalized in these days.

What Paul is saying to the converse of Thessalonica is this. You have a new life in Christ. And because of your new life, you have new standards to aim at.

And you have new ideals to uphold. And he reminds them that nothing unholy is to be tolerated in the Christian life.

And that's why he emphasizes that God's will for them is sanctification. Verse 7. God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

[ 8 : 36 ] And he who despises these rules, he says in verse 8, is not despising man. He's not. If a person wants to break the rules that bound the marriage bond, he's not despising his partner in the union.

He is despising God who has made the rules and who has asked him to abide by them. And so the second coming of Christ is presented as that which ought to have this effect upon all who look for a second coming.

And you know that this thought runs right throughout the New Testament. In the teaching of Jesus and in the teaching of Paul. That those who look for the second coming of Christ are to live a life worthy.

We saw that two weeks ago. He said the same thing in chapter 2. They were to live a life worthy of the God who hath called them. By this holy calling to his own service.

Service. God has a standard. And you as Christian, he says, are to strive to attain to it. And you've got to work at it.

[ 9 : 51 ] There's one other thing that he tells them as well. He reminds them that as they look forward to the second coming of Christ. And as they avoid all these immoral and impure practices.

So at the same time they are to be careful. That in their relationships with one another. That they don't pry into one another's business. That they don't become, as he calls it here, busybodies.

And that they don't neglect the ordinary business of life either. Just as they are not to interfere. As those who are forever finding fault.

And who are critical. Of what other people do. Just as they are not to be like that. So they are to attend to their own business.

See that your studies is to be quiet. To do your own business. To work with your own hands. As we commanded you. That you may walk honestly towards end that or without. And that you may have lack of nothing.

[ 11 : 01 ] And what he's saying there is this. And this was one of the faults that crept into the church of Thessalonica. Thessalonica. That some of them were so taken up with the second coming.

That they decided that it wasn't worth their while to work. No, he has to correct that wrong attitude to the second coming. And he commands them.

As we just see later on in this epistle. And particularly in the second. He commands them. To work. To do what God has given them to do. And to leave.

The time of the second coming. In the hand of the only one who knows. When that coming is to take place. Namely the Lord himself. So these are the counsels he gives them.

A counsel towards. Exhorts them to. A pure life. And to right and pure relationships. To a. Moral standards of moral absolutes.

[ 12 : 02 ] He reminds them not to be prying. Critically. Destructively. Into the lives. And practice of other people. And he reminds them to work.

And to go up with their business. So that they would be exactly. As someone else has said. When he was asked. How would you like the Lord. To find you when he comes. And he answered.

I would like the Lord. To find me. Doing. My God. Given business. And that's exactly. What Paul is here. Telling.

The Thessalonians. But. We turn to these last two verses. Of chapter 3. Because. These verses. Really bring before us. What.

These people. Were to work at. And there are three things. I suggest to you. That we have in. Chapter 3. Verses 12 to 13. In the light of the context. That they were to work at.

[ 12 : 56 ] First of all. They were to improve their faith. Secondly. They were to increase their love. And thirdly. They were to have an assured hope.

In the light. Of his coming. First of all then. They were to have this. Improved. Faith. If you look at chapter 3. Verse 5. Paul says this.

When I could no longer forbear. I sent. I sent Timothy to you. To find out. About your faith. To find out. How you are doing. In the exercise of your faith. Lest by some means.

The tempter. Have tempted you. And our labour. Be in vain. And when Timothy. Came back. With the message. Paul says. I was greatly comforted.

By your faith. And now he says. I want to perfect that. Which is lacking. In your faith. So you notice there. The emphasis. On faith.

[ 13 : 54 ] And what he's saying is this. He counsels them to improve. Their faith. Now the question arises here is this. Why should this be necessary?

And there are two answers to that question that we have in the context. First of all. Because these Christians were being persecuted for their faith. And secondly. They were being tempted by Satan.

In the exercise of their faith. Now those of you who are here tonight as Christians. Will know that it is no easy thing.

To be persecuted for your faith. I don't think that. If a person is honest with himself. I don't think that that person would say. That he ever finds it easy.

To cope. With the laugh. Of the ungodly. With people who. Mock him. Or har. People who.

[ 14 : 53 ] Are quite prepared. To throw up perhaps. The most difficult texts. And passages in scripture. For the convert. To explain and to interpret.

And then walk away. Sniggering. When he discovers. That they are not able to do it. It's not easy being persecuted. Not easy being thrown at you.

That you are a Christian. Perhaps that you're weak minded. And weak willed. In having succumbed. To pressure that was brought to bear. Upon you. And there are people like that.

There are people in this island. Who firmly believe. That when young people for example. Turn to Christ. And turn to the gospel. That they turn. Because pressure is being brought to bear.

Upon them. By their children. By their elders. By their ministers. Some are connected with the church. And they find fault. With converts. Because of that.

[ 15 : 53 ] And they pour scorn upon them. That's the kind of persecution. That converts are open to. At school. In home. In their homes. At work. Or wherever. In the community.

There's always persecution. Against the Christian. And in these persecutions. Your faith. Has to be strengthened.

Because the foot of persecution. Is always. To weaken your faith. And don't run away with the idea. That everyone who is persecuted. Comes out of persecution.

Gloriously strong in his faith. There are people who have had. Whose faith. Has wavered. Greatly. In the face of.

Persecution. And as I've said often. I'm sure that the older Christians here tonight. Would certainly subscribe to this. That one's heart tonight. Goes out particularly.

[ 16 : 51 ] To young Christians. In certain situations. Which they find themselves. Nothing. Nothing. But the miracle. Of the power.

Of the grace of God. Can enable them. To withstand. The fish. Persecution. To which they are exposed. And then. Another reason. Why Paul was concerned.

About their faith. Was this. As he says here. The temptations. Of. The devil. The tempter. And. His. Temptations.

Now of course. We have to reckon with this. That in this world. There is. A devil. Satan.

Whose sole purpose. It is to frustrate. The work of grace. In the human heart. Whose purpose. Whose purpose. It is. To.

[ 17 : 45 ] Thwart. The purpose. Of God himself. Who is out to destroy. The church. Of Jesus Christ. You remember. Last year. Wasn't it. The general secretary.

Of the national bible society. Reverend Fergus MacDonald. Telling us here. That. There was. Satanists. Meeting. In Edinburgh. Who were. Praying.

To Satan. For the. Destruction. Of the marriages. Of prominent. Christian people. In society. Now we must reckon.

With the forces. That are. Arrayed against. Those who believe. In the Lord. Jesus Christ. Satan. Is out to set. Traps. For people. So that he can.

Trip them up. And bring about. Their downfall. Remember what he did. To David. King David. Remember what he did. To Peter. In the hall.

[ 18 : 42 ] In the high priest's hall. He set. Traps. For these men. And they didn't recognize. His hand. And they fell. And Satan.

Is out. To tempt people. He's out. To entice. People. Away from. Jesus Christ. And away. From the things. Of God. And from the gospel. And if you read.

Through the epistle. To the Hebrews. You'll find. The writer there. Writing to these. Christians. And exhorting them. To hold on. To the things. That they believed. And if they weren't.

Tempted. To give them up. There'd be no. Sense. In an exhortation. Like that. Hold on. To the things. That you believe. Hold fast. Trust more.

Look to Jesus. More and more. Don't give up. That's the first. Of the exhortation. They're so often. Addressed to them. In the. To these. Hebrew.

[ 19 : 34 ] Christians. And here. Paul is concerned. About their faith. I sent Timothy. To find out. If you are continuing. To believe.

And you know. That there are areas. In our own faith. Where. This question. Has to be addressed. To us. It could be addressed.

To you. Tonight. And to me. How goes it. With your own faith. How is it. How is it. Standing up. To the tests. Of 1988.

Do you still. Believe. The things. That are there. For you. In the word. Of God. What is the object. Of our faith. It is God.

The saviour. The Lord. Jesus Christ. He is the object. Of our faith. Where is he. Brought before us. In the word. Of his grace. And that is.

[ 20 : 29 ] The importance. Of the bible. And reading the bible. And studying the bible. And getting all the truths. Of the bible. And the moment. The devil. He will watch. For us.

He will wait. His moment. God. And the moment. He finds you. Neglecting the bible. And turning away. From the teachings. Of the truth. He will pounce.

He will get you. At your weakest. And he will move you. Away. From your moorings. Move you away. From your moorings. And he's got you. Just where he wants you.

And I think. That may explain. The reason. For there being. So many. What we call. Spiritual shipwrecks. In every age. People who. Bit by bit.

And drifted away. From the world. That brings before them. Supremely. The object. Of their faith. And he set the trap.

[ 21 : 25 ] And he caught them. Well. He says here to them. That they are to. Improve their faith. They are to make sure. That their faith is strong.

They are to have their faith. Fostered and nourished. And encouraged. They are to lean heavily. Day by day. More and more. Upon the Lord.

Jesus Christ. Faith. Is that which receives. Christ. As saviour. Accept him. As the only ground. Of their acceptance.

Before God. And clings to him. In the face. Of both temptation. And persecution. And even when the going is rough.

Will say with job. Though he slay me. Yet. Will I trust him. And we are to remember. As the Bible reminds us.

[ 22 : 24 ] So constantly. That the life of the Christian. Is not always one of sunshine. And bliss. There are times of. Aeon.

Darkness as well. Times of dismay. And times of distress. Remember the questions. Addressed to the church of old.

Who among you. Feareth the Lord. And listeneth. To the voice. Of a servant. And walks in darkness. Darkness. And has no light.

And this is the advice. Let him trust. In the name of the Lord. And let his stay be. Upon his God.

And that's all you and I can do. We are to look to him. And to hold on. To what he has given. And to say in the face. Of all temptations.

[ 23 : 21 ] Lord I believe. Help me. In my unbelief. That's the first point. Then he makes them. Improve your faith. And remember. In the light of his second coming.

Because we have to. Keep. On believing. And part of the trouble. Even with all of them. Peter wrote was this. That the coming of the Lord.

Was being delayed. So much. That the thought. More or less. That the Lord. Wasn't going to come at all. And they were. Tempted. To give up. Don't.

Says Peter. Keep on. Keep on. Secondly. They are to. Increase. Their love. The Lord. Make you to increase.

And abound. In love. One toward another. And toward all men. To the end. He may establish. Your hearts. Unblimber. And wholeness. Before God. Even our Father. At the coming.

[ 24 : 16 ] Of our Lord. Jesus Christ. With all his saints. Now notice that again. It is linked. To the second. Coming. Of Christ. I don't suppose.

That. There is no. Suppose about it. There is no. Element. There is no. Quality. In all. The word of God. That is highlighted.

As much as. Love. Love. If we had no other chapter. In the Bible. But John 13. John 21. And 1 Corinthians 13.

That in itself. Be sufficient. To prove. The point. Love. This is the supreme. Call.

To each one of us. Thou shalt love. The Lord. Thy God. With all thy heart. With all thy mind. And with all thy strength. As thy neighbor. As thyself.

[ 25 : 11 ] Now. Remember this. Every single. One of us. Here tonight. Every creator. Of God. Whether he be. A Christian.

Or not. Is called. To love God. There is no one. In this church. Tonight. Who can. Opt out. Of that demand. No one.

Thou. Shalt. Love. The Lord. Then. When you turn. To think. To study. This concept.

This feature. What exactly. Does it bring. Before us. Well. And remember. It is an exhortation.

To us. To increase. In our love. The pattern. Of course. Is God's love.

[ 26 : 06 ] For us. Those of you. Who have been married. In this church. Will know. That invariably. Ephesians.

Chapter 5. 22. Onwards. Is read. At a marriage service. Great passage. Dealing with love. The love of the husband. For the wife. And the wife.

For the husband. And you know. That there are. Great. Two great questions. Which Paul. Is dealing with. In that passage. And in its application. To your life.

Perhaps. I may say this. That. When you were married. And if that chapter. Was read. And if comments were made on it. I wouldn't be surprised. If what was said. Probably didn't register.

At all. Because at such a time. As that. It's not easy. For people. That is being said to them. But you know what he's saying. He's giving the husband.

[ 27 : 01 ] The ideal. For his love. To what extent. Should the husband. Love his wife. As Christ. Loved.

The church. To what extent. And in what way. Should the wife. Love her husband. Even as those. For whom Christ died.

Love him. And you know. You can fill these things. In yourselves. But that's really. What Paul is dealing. And when you speak of love.

And our love to God. And our love for one another. We are to think. Of the way. In which God. Loved us. He loved us. With a love.

That is supreme. With a love. That is eternal. With a love. That's centered. On those. Who are not deserving. Of any love. Do you think. That you deserve.

[ 27 : 56 ] God's love. Far from it. My friend. You and I. Deserved his wrath. But God. Commendeth his love. Toward us. In that. While we were yet sinners.

Christ. Died. For us. And he died. For the ungodly. And we are to love. One another. In that way. Greater love.

No man. Than this. That he laid down his life. For his friends. Ye are my friends. If ye love me. And keep my commandments. And hereby. Will all men know.

That you are my disciples. If you love. One another. You see the importance of it. And what is it? What are we meant to do? What is it?

To love God? Well what did God do for us? And our nature. He gave himself. For us. How am I to love God? I am to give myself to him.

[ 28 : 53 ] And God makes no. He makes no demand. Less than that on me. I have to give myself to him. That's what you do. In the interest of the one whom you love.

You become theirs. And they become yours. So we are to be. In our attitude to God. In our relationships with God.

In our respect for him. In our obedience to him. In our honor. In the honor that we bestow upon him. He is to have the supreme place in our affections.

You remember what the. We are to love him. With all our heart. With all our mind. With all our strength. And with all our soul.

We are to give ourselves. Unreservedly to him. He is sacrificing our nature himself for us. Love demands sacrifice.

[ 29 : 53 ] It demands our all. As the hymn writer puts it. It demands my all. My life. My all. Love. And no wonder that this.

That the apostle should say to these people. That they are to increase. In their love. Just as your faith needs to be strengthened. And developed. And nourished tonight.

So does your love. So many people complain. Oh my love is so small. My heart is so cold. Yes. That's true of us all.

And therefore we should strive. Towards. The exercise of this love. More and more and more. For him. The love that agonizes.

In his interest. And in his service. Just as he agonized. In his love for us. The love that constrains. To exercise.

[ 30 : 48 ] To act. Just as his love. Constrained him to act. So you. And mine. Ought to constrain us to act.

In his interest. And notice what he says. Not just towards God. But. Towards say. One another. And towards.

All men. We can't love. In the highest sense. Either our brethren. Or all men. Till we love him. Till we love him.

This is the great mistake. That some people make. When they say. That the important thing. Is to love your neighbor. My friend. You cannot do it. In a God honoring way.

Till you love him. And it is only as you love him. That you love them. And it is interesting. The way he puts this. In our love. Towards say.

[ 31 : 45 ] One another. And towards all men. You see. There are three ways. Or there are three objects. That your love is directed towards. God.

Those who love God. And all men. All men. And you are to act. As he acted. You are to act.

In their interests. Now of course. One has to say this. I hope. Without fear of contradiction. That there is a sense.

In which it is far easier. To love. Our brethren. In the Lord. Than it is to love all men. Or let me put it another way.

There are things. That your love. Can do. As it centers. Upon those. Who are the Lord's. That your love.

[ 32 : 41 ] Cannot do. As it centers. On those. Who are not his. That has to be established. Because the Bible. Speaks of loving.

The household of faith. Loving those. Who are our brethren. And our sisters. In the Lord. Jesus Christ. Loving those. Who are the. Well put it. Put it like this. You love.

For the members. Of your family. Your own family. Is something. Quite special. And quite distinct. From the love. That you have. For those who are out. With.

Your family circle. And that's the way. The Bible speaks of it. The love. Of the Christian. Church. Towards the members. Of the church. Or towards the members. Of the family.

Of the Lord. Jesus Christ. Is something. Different. To the love. That you have. Towards all men. But this is the point. I want to make. The more you love him.

[ 33 : 38 ] The more you love them. And the more your love. Will overflow. Towards. All men. We are even to love our enemies.

With a love of compassion. With a love. Of helpfulness. And the love of forgiveness. And we are to increase.

And to abound. In this way. It is. It is to flow out. More and more. In other words. And who wouldn't agree with this.

Our love is capable. Of development. And growth. Our love. Is to spread out. Far. And wide. Our hearts.

Are to become enlarged. So that we embrace. More and more. And more. With our hearts. That's what he's saying. To these Christians.

[ 34 : 36 ] In Thessalonica. See. That your heart. Is enlarged. Towards God. Towards your brethren. In the church of God.



And towards. All men. You know the story. That. Some of you have it. Better than I do. I know that I've.

Related here already. But I think it's well. Worth telling. The. Story of the. Missionary's mother. Who.

When her son. Told her that he was. Felt called of God. To serve the Lord. In a foreign field. Rebelled. She was a good woman. But she rebelled.

Against this. This. Decision. That he had made. She didn't want him to go. She was a widow. And she thought. That he would be far better. If he stayed. Either.

[ 35 : 31 ] In the area. Which was. As if. Somewhere. Within. Reach. But he felt. Constrained. To obey. God's call. So he went off. To the foreign field.

On his first furlough. They were together. At a meal. In the kitchen. And his mother. Said this to me. You know. She said. The day you told me. That the Lord. Was calling you. To serve him.

In a distant land. I have to admit. That my heart. Rebelled. But you know. She said. That since you went away. In his service. I feel.

As though the Lord. Has opened my heart. For the world. You see. That's what love does. It opens. The heart.

Wider. And wider. And wider. And I would say this. That the person. In this church. Tonight. Who loves. Jesus Christ.

[ 36 : 27 ] As his Lord. And Savior. Loves him. For what he is himself. Loves him. For what he did. And loves him. For what he has done. And is doing. Saving.

And blessing. And keeping. And ministering. The person. Whose heart. Is being won. More and more. To the Lord. Like that. I say this.

To you tonight. And perhaps. Especially to you. Who would say. That you are unconverted. And you feel. That this kind of sermon. Is not for you. At all. Well.

Let me arrest you. In your tracks. For a minute. And say this to you. The person. In this church. Tonight. Who loves. Jesus Christ. Is that person.

Who loves you. And who would. Give anything. To see you. Coming to Christ. With themselves. That's what love.

[ 37 : 21 ] Towards all men. Does. It remembers. All men. At the throne. Of grace. Wrestles in prayer. For your salvation. Because they know.

That the Lord. Is coming. You know that. One of the early fathers. Tertullian. Wrote in the third century. That. He said this.

It is mainly the deeds. Of a love. So noble. That lead many. He was speaking. You know. These early Christians. Were being persecuted. Put to death.

They were playthings. For emperors. And empresses. They were the sport. Of kings. And of the populace. They were put to death.

For their faith. And this is what he said. It is mainly the deeds. Of a love. So noble. That lead many. To put a brand. On us. See.

[ 38 : 19 ] They say. How they love. One another. For they themselves. He said. Are animated. By a mutual hatred. See.

See. See. How they are ready. To die. For one another. But these people. Themselves. Would rather. Put us. To death.

You know. That this is a test. For you tonight. And what a simple test. It is. May I put it to you. Before we go on to the last point. Do you love Jesus Christ?

Do you love those who love Jesus Christ themselves? And do you love Christ so much tonight? That your prayer is that the whole world.

Would come to Christ this instant. That's what love does. That's what increase of love does. And the apostle bids them.

[ 39 : 21 ] That they abound. In this love. More. And more. And more. Because the Lord.

Is coming. I came across these words. In the commentary. By William Hendrickson. On the gospel according to John. And I was struck by them.

And I'm going to read them to you. Four verses. From a Christian poet. And they're beautifully simple. And they speak about love. How can you lead.

To Christ. Best life. Boy, unless Christ's methods you employ, there's just one thing that you can do.

It's let that boy see Christ in you. Have you a husband, fond and true? A wife who's blind to all but you?

[ 40 : 21 ] If each would win the other one, that life must speak of God's dear son. There is but one successful plan by which to win a fellow man.

Have you a neighbor, old or new? Just let that man see Christ in you. The church that hopes to win the lost must pay the one unchanging cost.

She must compel the world to see in her the Christ of Calvary. Agape. Love.

Love to Christ consuming you and lifting you up and opening your heart to embrace the world.

And I cannot but make this comment as I think on his words. And who wouldn't agree? Oh, how un-Christlike we tend to be.

[ 41 : 34 ] Let us increase and abound in our love. Finally, this. They are to cultivate an assured hope.

And this is what love does. And I deal with this very briefly at the close, just in a minute. That to the end that you may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his sins.

Now, the heart here is the inner man. The place where these hidden mortals of our life and conduct take place. We are to be wholehearted in the access of our faith and our love.

We are to show that we belong to God. And this is going to establish us. This is going to make us secure. This is going to confirm us. And this is going to enable us to cope with the fluctuations of life.

With the ups and downs. With the rough and the smooth. With the persecution and the temptation. With the darkness and the light. With all these fluctuations. When we are assailed by doubt.

[ 42 : 43 ] We are to love him. And to love our fellows. And that will establish our hearts unblameable in holiness. You see, faith feeds love.

And love feeds hope. They are inseparably linked together. And this will make sure that we stand unblameable in holiness before God.

Now, I just want to say this at the close. He is dealing here with two, right throughout this passage with two concepts. Sanctification and holiness. Now, the difference is this.

Sanctification is the process. The work that God is doing in his people. Culminating in the end product of holiness.

Sanctification is the work that is going on towards the end of holiness. Which is perfection. Conformity to Christ. Conformity to the will of God.

[ 43 : 46 ] What Paul calls in Ephesians. Filled with the fullness of God. That's the end product. Now, what he says is this.

May you be unblameable in holiness. Unblameable. That is the disposition. Which holiness will create in the soul when it will be freed from all that disturbs it today.

You see, you and I are not blameless, knight. We are not unblameable. We are not as stable as we ought to be. We can be moved.

We can be shifted. And the moment you move, you expose yourself to blame. So, unblameableness is that disposition when you'll be free from the things that move you tonight.

The things that disturb you. The things that oppose you. The things that distress you. All the elements of evil in this world. This is the end to which you and I ought to be looking.

[ 44 : 54 ] The goal before us. Unblameableness. Unholiness. That will stand the scrutiny of God. Because notice it is before God.

We will stand before him. We are before him tonight. His demands are upon us. But at the end of the day, we will stand in his presence.

And he will be the judge. His eye will survey. And his assessment is irrevocably true. There is no appeal from the decision and from the judgment of God.

He is coming, says Paul. See that you cultivate faith. See that you increase in love. See that the process of sanctification towards holiness is developing.

So that you will reach that mark. Where there will be nothing in your life. And nothing out with you. That will distress you. Or disturb you. Or annoy you.

[ 46 : 06 ] Or move you. Evermore. From the object of your faith. And that is the goal. And that these are the demands.

That the second coming of Christ. Places. Upon. The heart. Of each one of us. Here. This evening.

Let us pray. O God. Have mercy upon us. Bless us with thy presence. And with thy peace.

Fill us with thy love. We pray thee. O how cold our hearts tend to be. Do thou grant that.

They may go out anew. To thee tonight. In faith. And in hope. And in that love. And we pray. That each one of us.

[ 47 : 02 ] May be one to thyself. More and more. Draw near to us. Young and old. And draw us to thyself. We pray thee. In faith.

And commitment. In whole hearted. Devotion to thee. For thou didst give thine all. For us. Part of thy blessing.

And forgive our sins. And holy things. For Jesus sake. Amen.