

# Loving Our Christian Family

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. Take your Bible if you would. Open the book of Romans, chapter 12. We are a body, the church, and he's put us together.

And we have spent 11 chapters in Romans and we have learned a lot of doctrine. And that doctrine leads to the way we practice. Doctrine is very practical. It taught us who we were.

It taught us that all of us were in sin and in the world and on our way to hell. And Jesus rescued us and saved us and set us apart from all those people that were on their way to hell.

We are his people and we are his church. And then he said, because of what I've done in your lives, Romans, chapter 12 and verse 1, I'm asking you, I'm begging you, I'm reminding you that you should be excited about presenting your body as a living sacrifice.

And you're going to find out as you let God's Word change your mind that my will is wonderful. And then you're going to find out that you shouldn't feel like you're any better than anybody else in the church because we're all God's children.

[ 1 : 0 5 ] We've all been saved. We're all born again. We're all on our way to heaven. And he has given us all different gifts. And we're going to be working in the church together. And we have got to be real careful about always being people that love each other.

And so the passage of Scripture we're about to read actually kind of starts off. And it's kind of almost like it's a set-aside message, almost like a parenthesis. And it's got this almost like a title right in the middle of the verse.

And it says this, don't fake your love. So the chapter is going to be about this, our passage is going to be about loving each other like a family, loving our Christian family. Something really special happened the day we got saved.

Can you say amen? And I've got a whole bunch of brothers and sisters. I've got them every color. I've got them every kind of nation. I've got them every kind of social level. I've got them all over the world.

I have the privilege of traveling a lot around the world. Everywhere I go, guess what? I find that I meet my brothers and sisters in Christ. You'd be shocked. I can land in Africa, not even speak the language, and yet there's something very special that God's put between brothers and sisters in Christ.

[ 2 : 1 1 ] I can land in China. Now, I actually get emails from people in China writing me and talking to me and asking me Bible questions. I get letters. I get letters in Arabic.

The guy writes me in Arabic, and then I use Google, and I try to figure out what he said. Sometimes what he said is really weird. And so I write somebody and say, could you translate that? It comes out it's not near as weird as it sounds when Google does it.

Amen? Google's not that good. But we've got a family. And so here's what he's going to say. There are four things that you're going to notice today. But here's the basis of it. Quit faking love. There's supposed to be something very special going on in this building.

The church. The church. The church of Jesus Christ. Brothers and sisters serving him together. So let's read, if you would, Romans chapter 12, verse 9, down to verse 13. The Bible says, let love be without dissimulation.

That means don't fake it. That means don't put on a hypocrite's mask. The actual word for dissimulation and hypocrite there is the idea of an actor. You remember those actors in the Shakespearean times?

[ 3 : 13 ] They used to take a stick and they'd have a mask on it. And so when they were somebody that hold the mask up to say that's who they were acting like, he said, I don't want that kind of love going on. No mask. No faking it.

No pretending. You are to love each other genuinely from the heart. Abhor that which is evil. Hate what's evil. Cleave. Hang on to what's good.

Be kindly affectionate. Be devoted to each other. Be in love with each other with brotherly love. In honor. Y'all supposed to be in a competition. Seeing who can out honor the other.

In honor preferring one another. Not lazy. Not slothful in business. Fervent in spirit. Serving the Lord. Rejoicing in hope. Patient in tribulation. Continuing instant in prayer.

Distributing to the necessity of the saints. Given to hospitality. Hospitality. One big long thought. All run together. To say this. Let's be for real.

[ 4 : 09 ] When we love each other. Let's bow our heads for a word of prayer. God. Teach your people. Teach us this morning to love. Teach us how to have the spirit amongst ourselves. I thank you that I feel like this church has a lot of that.

But I know I can grow in it. And I know my brothers and sisters can grow in it. Build us as a church. Let the world marvel at how we love each other. And I'll give you praise for what you do this morning. In Jesus name.

Amen. First thing you might write down is this. Don't fake love. Don't be faking your love. Romans chapter 12 and verse 9. Let love be without dissimulation. Obedience.

We are living sacrifices. So we love. Because that's what we are to do. Look at Romans chapter 12 verse 1. That's the chapter you're in. And look what he said. I beseech you therefore brethren by the mercies of God.

That you present your bodies a living sacrifice. Now you don't know this probably. Maybe you've never even been to one of those churches. But man there are churches where people don't even talk to people sitting in another part of the building.

[ 5 : 07 ] There are churches where people look across and have a disdain towards the other one. But you and I are living sacrifices. We serve Jesus and he drew us together. He drew us together.

We are to love. We are to obey. And we're going to have a different mind. That's what Romans 12 too said. As I learn the Bible. As I learn the things of God. I'm going to find out how good God's will is.

And how sweet he meant everything to be. Now notice this. I hope you write this down. You are commanded to love each other. You remember when you were a kid. Did you and your brother and sister ever get in a fight.

And your mother come in and say. Hug each other and kiss and make up. Anybody ever had that happen to them? Okay. Only one. Thank you. Peyton's the only one in the room. Anybody ever had that happen to you? Come on. Be honest.

Anybody ever done that to your kids? Say amen. You know that's the cruelest thing. You know when your kid wants to kill the other one? Hug and make up. Kiss. Tell him you love him. I love you. It's not really too genuine often.

[ 6 : 02 ] But here's what he said. I want you to. You're commanded to love. You're commanded to love. The Bible says in 1 Peter 4.8. You can write this down. Look it up later. And above all things.

Have fervent charity among yourselves. For charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Peter reminds the church. Guys, y'all are supposed to have this extremely warm, stretching love that just kind of boils up inside of yourself.

It reaches out and it continues to reach out. In other words, it is stretching. You know there's always that crazy uncle in the family. It's always that guy in the family that's a little harder to love. But he's family and he's at every meal.

And you're going to love him. Here's what he said. I want you to stretch out. I want you to fervently. I want you trying. I want you working at loving each other. And it's a love that says, I've been forgiven.

So I forgive. You see, whenever you get the body together and everybody's doing the ministry and somebody over here might hurt your feelings or somebody else over here gets a little credit you thought you should get and maybe you get your feelings hurt.

[ 7 : 04 ] But here's what he said. He said, and charity, love will cover a multitude of sins. I'm not going to hold it against you. I'm not going to let your slights hinder my relationship. How many people have jumped from church to church because they haven't learned this?

Love forgives. Amen. And we can't go to church very much without somebody getting their feelings hurt. More people showed up at your baby shower than showed up at my baby shower. More people said nice things about you than said nice things about me.

I did all that work and nobody appreciated me. And he said this, he said, hey, love, stretch, stretch yourself to love each other. And by the way, and when something happens that might hurt you, love forgives the other person.

It doesn't matter what happened. Love forgives the other person. It doesn't hold the insults. It doesn't hold the slights and the mistreatment against itself. We're to love like he loved us.

Look in John 13, 34. You can just write that down. Look it up later if you want. In John 13, 34, he said, Jesus said, a new commandment I give you that you love one another. I tell you, I'm commanding you to love each other.

[ 8 : 08 ] And then he said, as I have loved you. As I have loved you. That's how I want you to love one another. The very next verse is one of the wildest verses in the Bible. Now look this way and listen.

When the world was going to know that they were people that loved Jesus, you know, what was going to be the big mark amongst them? It wasn't going to be the name of the church they went to. It wasn't going to be some outward external thing that they did.

It wasn't going to be some doctrine that they believed. He said in chapter 13 and verse 35, by this shall all men know that you are my disciples because you love each other and nobody loves anybody but themselves unless they get something out of it.

But y'all are different. I saved you and I'm telling you, I want you to be in love. He loved us and we didn't deserve it. We love, he loves us and he didn't expect anything in return.

He loved us first before we ever started loving him. And then he looked at me and said, Austin, love them like I loved you. Now watch this. Some of you are in the room and saying, well, you know, I'd really like to get involved in this church.

[ 9 : 09 ] I'd like to feel a part of this church. I really would, really would. But nobody's really making a move towards me. Well, see, here's what he said. You're to love like Jesus loved him. By the way, what did Jesus do? Jesus didn't sit around waiting to see if you'd come love him.

He said, he went over to Steve and said, Steve, I'm going to love you. I'm going to care about you. Whether you care about me or not, I'm going to be as kind to you and as nice to you as I can. By the way, Ty, I'm going to come your way and I'm not going to wait on you to love me. I'm coming your way.

And Lamar, I'm coming over there, buddy, and I'm going to love you. I'm going to be your, if you don't want to be my friend, that's why, because I'm going to love you like Jesus loved, like, like he loved us. Can you say amen? And by the way, if you're sitting in this room, you say, nobody's showing any love towards me.

That's not the question in this chapter. Here's the question in this chapter. Who are you showing love towards? Who have you been to this week and said, I care about you. I love you. I'm missing you.

I care about you. You're important to me. Who have you gone out of your way? Who have you stretched yourself to show love towards them? We've got to honestly examine our hearts. Do we love others without hypocrisy?

[ 10 : 06 ] Are we loving them? Loving doesn't mean being easy on sin. Look, if you would, at Luke chapter, at Romans chapter 12, if you would, the verse we started in, it says, don't you be faking it.

But some of us go way too far. You see, then we're all of a sudden like, oh, we're supposed to love. And the next thing you know, we're going around saying, everything's okay. Well, that's not what he said. Look at Romans 12, 9. He said, let love be without dissimulation.

Don't fake your love. And then he said, hate, abhor that which is evil. Cleave to that which is good. Hang on to the good stuff and hate the bad stuff. Loving someone doesn't mean excusing sin.

My love for God is so great that I hate what he hates. So in no way do I act like sin is of no consequence. There's probably one of the most exciting stories in the book of Corinthians chapter 5.

We studied that book. We went through that book verse by verse, if you recall. But in 1 Corinthians chapter 5, they were boasting and proud about their tolerating sin. They had this guy in their church and he was sleeping with his daddy's wife.

[ 11 : 07 ] He was sleeping with his daddy's wife. I mean, that's a perversion. And Paul wrote and he said, you are bragging about that. You're going around saying, it's okay. We're Christians and we love him anyway.

He said, I'm telling you, bless God. I want you to turn him over to the devil for the destruction of the flesh. I ain't putting up with that kind of junk. That's not what Christians do. That's not what Christians do. And so love doesn't mean you accept sin.

It means you love in spite of sin, but you hate that which is evil. And that love is to be expressed in how I treat my brothers and my sisters. Look at verse 10.

All this about faking our love. Look at verse 10. Be kindly affectionate one to another with brotherly love. In honor, preferring one another. The word love is like, or affection is like being devoted.

It's like being disposed to the other one. I have to do that with kindness. We're to be devoted to each other. We are to have the same kind of devotion like brotherly love here at our church.

[ 12 : 05 ] We're to prefer each other. The idea here about honor, preferring one another, you know what it really comes down to? It's basically almost like we're going to argue about who gets to honor who the most.

It's like this. I'm going to honor you. And then you look at me and say, nope, I'm honoring you. And I say, no, I'm honoring you. Nope, I'm honoring you. No, I'm honoring you. We're going to fight about who gets to treat the other one better. I'm going to treat you better than you treat me. No way. You ain't going to do it. I'm treating you better.

No. We're going to fight about who gets to treat who better. That's what was going on. And he said, hey, when y'all go to church, you don't not be walking around and say, hey, I'm somebody. They better honor me. I'm going to walk in here saying I'm honoring all of y'all.

All of y'all are important. And every one of us walk around doing the same thing to each other. Going to make this place a really different kind of place. Say amen. We're going to be honoring each other and preferring each other and having an idea.

We're almost arguing about who gets preference. But not that I want it, that I want to give it to you. It means to honor them more than I want to be honored or expect to be honored. So number one, first saying, don't fake love.

[ 13 : 05 ] Don't fake love. Now you're in a meeting of believers. You're in a meeting of people that have decided to love Jesus and follow him. And this ought to be a place of love. And everybody in this room ought to be working on this.

I'm going to be loving to other people in this church. I'm going to do it like I would to my family. I'm going to prefer them. I'm going to honor them. I'm going to put them above myself. I'm going to say, no, you're first. And I'm going to work at it.

And we're not going to fake it. That's what he told us to do. He said, I don't know. I don't know if I can do that. Well, you're supposed to live a living sacrifice. And it might be hard to put yourself second, put them first. But you're called to live a living sacrifice.

Number two thing I want you to notice in the passage. Look if you went in verse 11. Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Be diligent in your love and service.

Write that down. That's the second thing. Be diligent in your love and service. Hard working about your love. And we come to church. Now listen to this. Listen to this. Hey, we didn't come to church to sit and listen.

[ 14 : 03 ] We came to church to be working and busy. You came in this morning. You're supposed to be loving each other and serving each other and honoring each other. And you could easily walk in and say, oh, I've been having a hard week all week long.

And I'm tired. I'm just going to sit down and listen. He said, no, no, no, no, no, no. You walk in that door and you're supposed to be going, I've got to love you. I've got to love you. I've got to love you. I've got to love you. I've got to love you. I've got to serve you. I've got to serve you. Woo! I'm going to work hard. I'm going to be diligent about it.

Not lazy, but I'm going to be diligent about it. Not lazy in your service for the Lord. Not lazy in the way you love your family. 2 Corinthians chapter 12 and verse 15. Paul said this when he talked about the church at Corinth.

He said about this church. He said, I will very gladly spend and be spent for you, though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.

You ever felt like that? You ever come to church and said, man, I do and I do and I do and I serve and I serve and I serve and I'm kind and I'm kind and I give and I give and I do and I do and nobody ever does back for me. It seems like they love me less. It seems like they just get where they take advantage of me.

[ 15 : 02 ] Never been there? Some of you have been in church a long time. Some of you have been serving a long time. You might have been thinking that. Well, here's what the apostle Paul said. He said, don't you fake your love and don't you get lazy in your love. And he gives me an example of that when he said this.

I will gladly spend for you. I will even be spent. I will wear myself out serving God and loving you. I will. Even though you won't do it back for me. And sometimes it seems the more I give and the more I pray and the more I study and the more I love you and the more I serve you and the more I honor you, it seems like you just get like I just take him for granted.

Everybody in this room could feel that. We could all feel that. But guess what? We don't fake love and we keep on working at loving each other. It means giving of yourself, thinking of others, putting yourself second.

Don't be lazy. Don't be lazy. The idea here is to work with a heart boiling over with love. Look at the word fervent and spirit. That word fervent, it's that word stretching.

It's the idea of boiling up inside of you. It's the idea that, man, God's love is so great in me. The Bible says in Romans chapter 5 and verse 5, Hope makes not a shame because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts.

[ 16 : 14 ] Because the love of God is shed, because the love brought is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. There was a story, a testimony, a true testimony years ago, probably 30 or 40 years ago now, of a young guy who got saved.

And he was in a gang in New York City and he had a heart full of hatred and he hurt people and he cut people and he beat people up. Dogs scared and ran from him. Children hated him.

And he went in and he got saved. And he turned to the preacher and led him to Christ. He said, I don't know what's wrong with me. I just feel like crying and I feel happy and I feel like I love everybody. And I've never felt this way in my life.

He said he started out of the church after service was over. And he started out and dogs didn't run and kids didn't cry. And he said, something weird happened to me. But that's what happens. God changes our spirit.

God changes our heart. And I'm to have love. The love of God boiling up inside of me. The love of God spilling over out of me. God loves me. And I can't hold it back. And it makes me love you.

[ 17 : 14 ] Serving the Lord is referring to us as servants or slaves. We serve him at his pleasure. He wants me to love others. He wants me to work at loving people.

Look at what it said in that verse. Look at what it said in Romans chapter 12 and verse 11. It said, not slothful. Don't you be lazy. Get at it. Fervent, boiling over and serving. Now listen to what I'm going to tell you.

Now listen to this. When we come to church, it ought to be an attitude here of, I didn't come to get. I came to give. I didn't come to be served. I came to serve. I came here because I'm called by God to love other people.

And I'm going to show my love around this building. I'm going to show it in my neighborhood. I'm going to show it everywhere I go. I'm a servant. I serve God. And God wants me to be totally different than I ever was before.

So don't fake love. Don't fake love and don't get lazy in loving. Number three, if you would, write this one down. Have the right attitude while you do it. Have the right attitude while you do it.

[ 18 : 11 ] Look, if you would, at Romans chapter 12 and verse 12. Romans chapter 12 and verse 12. Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer.

We rejoice in hope. It means we find our joy in our hope. I need you to look at this. Wait a second. We're Americans and we've got a real problem. You know where we find our joy, don't you?

The amount of money we have, the house we live in, how good our finances are going, how good our retirement is, how healthy our family is. We find our joy in things that are temporal and things that are right here in front of us.

You want to make somebody happy, buy them a diamond ring. You want to make somebody happy, give them a car. You want to make somebody happy, do something financial for them. But here's what he said. You guys are to find your joy in your hope.

You're to find your joy in your hope. That word hope is like in your faith. In what you're expecting, what you're hoping for, what you're looking for in Jesus. The Bible says in Habakkuk chapter 3 and verse 17.

[ 19 : 09 ] This gives this wild story. Habakkuk chapter 3 and verse 17 gives this wild story that would have worked for all of us. And the prophet says, even though, although the fig tree doesn't blossom and there's no fruit in the vines and the labor of the olive fails and the fields yield no meat and the flocks cut off from the fold and there's no herd in the stall.

Verse 18. I will rejoice in the Lord. I will rejoice in the Lord. I will joy in the God of my salvation. Let me put that in.

Let me put that in Tennessee Hillbilly terms for 2013. Lose my job. Got problems at home. Health is failing. Things are going wrong in my life.

Everything seems to be falling apart in me. But I will rejoice in the Lord. He loves me. He loved me before I got started in this. And he loved me afterwards.

And he'll always love me. I love Jesus. My joy is in the Lord. And we can be on our bed dying of cancer and full of joy.

[ 20 : 14 ] We can be on our bed dying of cancer and full of joy. We can be going through financial problems right now and full of joy because our joy is found in Jesus, not in things.

And so Paul said, hey, get the right attitude. Rejoice and hope. Now let me just say something. You know what that means? Everybody in this room ought to be happy. Everybody in this room may be not happy like the world calls happy.

But you walk in here and you got joy in your heart and you had a rough week. But you're not rejoicing in that you had a good week. I said, how's it going for you? Your attitude isn't, well, you don't believe how bad this week is.

You're walking and you're saying, I'm excited. I am saved. I'm born again. I'm on the way to heaven. And Jesus loves me. And I meet up with one thing. I serve a good God who loves me no matter what's going on.

Rejoice in hope. He said, rejoice in hope. Our hope is Jesus and what he did on Calvary. Our hope is knowing that a big, great God has everything under control.

[ 21 : 12 ] Our hope is that the God that saved us has given us the strength to do the will of God and will reward us for his service. Our hope is that he is a God that hears and answers prayers. We're excited.

We have joy. We're in love with him and we're serving him. Now listen here. That doesn't mean you don't have bad weeks. That doesn't mean you don't have bad weeks. But let me explain something to you. I have often times dealt with and deal with discouragement and depression.

Sometimes being a preacher, it's one of those discouraging things because your job is like to be upbeat and excited and pressing on and telling people how good Jesus is. And so you live this life in front of everybody like, yes, yes, God is good, yes.

And then all of a sudden you're at home all by yourself and you're alone and you're like, no, no. I'm tired. I'm tired. Tired. And things don't seem to go well. And nobody said amen.

And nobody moved. And nothing happened in the invitation. And I don't know what's going on. And here's what he's saying is, where do you find your joy? Where do you find your joy?

[ 22 : 12 ] Ed and Kristen and Mary Angela sang just a second ago, if he took everything away from me, I'll still love him. We can say it so easy, but it's not necessarily so true.

But that's what he's saying. Rejoice in hope. How many of you know this? How many of you can say to me today, my sins have been forgiven, my name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life, and I'm on my way to heaven when I die.

If you can say that, say amen. Say amen then. Be excited. You know what? I'm blessed. You say, well, I had a rough week. Did it change your salvation? You say, I didn't get enough money this week.

Did it change your salvation? Did it change your relationship with God? You know what? He loves you. Rejoice in the hope you have. Man, I'm excited. I love Jesus. I'm even more excited he loves me.

Say amen. I'm more excited because I don't always do my loving too good, but he always does his loving real good. So rejoice. So rejoice. The second thing he said was be patient in tribulation.

[ 23 : 09 ] Well, that's a wild thing. He said be patient in tribulation. There in Romans he said rejoice in hope and patient in tribulation. Now what in the world does that mean? I thought we were supposed to have everything going good.

We love Jesus. Everything's going great. He said, nope. Not happening. You're going to have a lot of junk going on in your life. You're going to have a lot of tribulation. You're going to have a lot of hard days. I don't want you faking love.

I want you working loving. And I want you to keep the right attitude. But I will tell you now, you can just go ahead and expect it. There's going to be some rough days ahead. Winds are not going to blow your way. Finances aren't going to be what they ought to be.

Your family life is going to have some trouble. Things are going to be rough. So I challenge you to be patient. And that word patient means endure. Endure. You ought to mark that word patient. Draw an arrow to the margin and write endure.

It means enduring. Putting up with suffering and temptations. Don't run. That's what Joseph did. Now listen. I need you to listen to me.

[ 24 : 05 ] We've got Bible stories. Oh, Joseph is 17 years old. And God lays on his heart that he's going to do something big with him. It will be 13 years of honestly horrible circumstances that will take place in his life.

For 13 years, he'll either be a slave, falsely accused, forgotten. 13 years. 13 years. That is a long time. How many of you think 13 years is a long time?

What if you were sentenced to jail today for 13 years? How many of you would say, no problem. It'll be over real quick. Nobody in this room would think that. But old Joseph rejoiced in his hope.

And he was patient in his tribulation. And he realized someday God's going to take me out of this mess. And do in me what he said he's going to do in me. And 13 years later, when he's 30 years old, it starts to happen.

He was patient. How about King David? Old David was at his house. And actually he was out taking care of the sheep. And the prophet comes to anoint the future king. And when the prophet walks in, his daddy doesn't even bring David in the house.

[ 25 : 06 ] He doesn't even bring David in the house. Because he knows there's no way God would ever choose David. And so the prophet looks at the old man and said, not him, not him, not him, not him.



And finally he looks and he says, have you got any other kids? He said, yeah, I got old Dave. I left him in the field. I didn't even tell him to take a bath and cut his hair or shave or clean himself up. I didn't tell him, you know, I mean, goodnight, you're not going to want him.

And the prophet says, hey, God doesn't look on the outside. He looks on the inside. Go bring him in here. And he got picked and anointed. But it's going to be years, years with him running for his life.

People trying to kill him every day with his own best friends turning against him before he ever gets what God said. But we rejoice in hope.

I got saved in 1962. And I'm supposed to hope that I will be in the presence of God. I'm supposed to hope that God hears and answers my prayer. It's a long time.

[ 26 : 03 ] So hang in there. This is not like you get saved and winkle, winkle, tickle, tickle, like the little witch she used to do when I was a kid. Bewitched. She'd twinkle her nose and the house would get clean. And it's all over.

This is not a microwave thing. You serve God. And it takes forever. We're going to live a long time. Amen. Amen. It ain't like you're going to get saved and bam, you're up in heaven. Woo! I accepted Jesus and look at me.

I'm living in glory. That's not how it happens. You wouldn't even like it if it did. Well, you are right now. Because if God were coming right now to pick people up and go to heaven, everybody in this room, he said, Ho, ho, ho, ho. I didn't put my name on that list.

Come back in 50 years and we'll talk. Amen. Tell the truth. And so he said, hey, patient. Patient. Staying and doing right no matter what's going on around you. Waiting on God in the middle of trouble and things go wrong.

Patient. Having peace when everything around you seems to be falling apart. Having peace because you have hope. You know who you are and you know who you're trusting. And you keep on praying.

[ 27 : 00 ] I remind you of a verse everybody in this room knows by heart. Psalm chapter 37 verse 5 says, commit your way to the Lord. Trust and he'll bring it to pass. He'll bring it forth. Verse 7. Rest.

And wait patiently. Just wait on God. Be patient for God to bring you out. And then keep on praying, he said. Keep on praying.

He said in Philippians chapter 4. Rejoice in the Lord always. And again I say rejoice. And let your moderation, your gentleness, your patience be known and all.

And let everybody see. It looks like he ought to be upset. But he seems to have everything under control. Because the next verse you make your request known to God. And when you say to God, God I need you to work in my life.

I say thank you Jesus. Because you're going to answer my prayer. I let my request be made known. And the peace of God floods my heart. I've been in trouble before.

[ 27 : 55 ] I needed some help. There have been times I needed some financial help. There have been times when I needed somebody just to be my friend. And I picked up the phone and made one phone call. And a friend said to me, don't worry about it.

I'll take care of it. You know what? When I hung the phone up I was like, it's okay. I got his word. He said he'd take care of it. He's going to send me that check. He's going to help me buy that piece of land.

It's taken care of. And I got off the phone and no more worries. People came in and said, I know you're upset and you're concerned. I said, not anymore. Not anymore. It's all taken care of. I made one phone call.

He said he'd take care of it. I said, thank you. That's done. And here's what God said. You got problems? Pray. Trust God. Say thank you. And know he's going to take care of it. Say amen. That's what's going on here.

I'm going to trust God. The Bible says in Hebrews chapter 11 and verse 6, Without faith it's impossible to please him. For he that comes to God must believe that he is. And he's a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

[ 28 : 52 ] Last thing. Love is not a feeling but an action. Love's not a feeling but an action. In Romans chapter 12 and verse 13 it says, Distributing to the necessity of the saints given to hospitality.

What's happening is this. You need to understand something. Most of us don't understand love because here's what we think love is. We've watched way too much TV. We think it's getting goosebumps all over us.

We think, you know, when I was a kid there was a program called My Three Sons. Black and white. Back before most of the people in this room were born. And one of the boys came home and he told dad.

He said, dad, I have met the woman I'm supposed to marry. And he said, how do you know? He said, dad, every time I looked at her today she was in a wedding dress. And I heard music. He said, okay, that's her.

That's how you know. You're like, that's TV. Yeah, it is. But that's almost how you live in it. You walk into church and you go, I don't feel no love here. Well, since when are you supposed to feel love?

[ 29 : 53 ] You're supposed to do it. You're supposed to come in loving others, not expecting. I mean, some of you would think, hey, I want the church to be a place where when I pull up it's going, We love you. We love you.

You are so important. We love you. We love you. This is what he's saying. No, you come in loving. It's an action. And look at the actions he gives you.

Distributing. That means giving. Giving to the necessity of the saints. We come in saying, hey, I'm a giver. Isn't that the opposite of what we thought? It's not I'm a taker.

It's that I'm a distributor. I come in giving it out. It means I walk in the door and I pull out my wallet and I'm like, all right, I'm giving it out. Giving it out. Giving it out. Giving it out. No, not really. Don't anybody come in. Well, you can if you want to.

But it's not like you're supposed to. But you ought to come in and say, man, I'm here to love these people. You ought to come in and say, I'm here to meet people's needs. We ought to walk around with that attitude. And we're given to hospitality.

[ 30 : 47 ] It's like, I want you to come to my house. I want to invite you over. And I want to be good to you. I want to take care of you. The Bible says in Galatians 6.10, do good to all men, but especially those that are the household of faith.

Hebrews 6.10 says he will not forget your labor, your work and labor of love, how you serve the saints, how you minister to the saints, and how you do minister, how you serve. So let me stop by saying this.

There's something really wild supposed to go on at this church and every church around everywhere. We're supposed to love each other like a Christian family. I have a special, I'll just confess, I really love my brother.

I have a brother, he's been my brother all of his life because I'm the oldest. And I really like him. I call him, I usually call my brother at least once a week. I say, what are you doing? I say, what's wrong with you?

You jerk, you haven't called me in a while. I'm on the phone. Call me, tell me what's happening. I've been busy. Well, you can't be too busy for me. I'm your brother. You hear that? I call my sister. How's it going? Oh, it's going fine. I love them.

[ 31 : 50 ] I love them. And you know what? And I enjoy being with them. I just really do. I like going, we'll go sit and eat and cut up and laugh. And the other night we just met in Canton with my sister and we just sat there and made all kind of racket and laughed and everybody in the place probably thought it was crazy.

I just love my family. You know, some of you might not have that privilege. But let me just say what's supposed to happen in here. You've got a family. You're supposed to be in love with them. You're supposed to love them and don't fake it.

Work hard at loving them. And can I just tell you it's pretty easy? My brother that day said, I need you all to come see us. And I called him. I said, you know, all the years you've been alive, that's always been me going to see you. Get your rear end in the car and come see me.

Amen. See, here's what happens. Love costs, doesn't it? I mean, if you're going to love somebody, you've got to make an effort. He said, hey, love and don't fake it and work at loving.

But know that things aren't always going to be so easy. So keep on keeping on. And realize that loving is given. Loving is work. It's an action.

[ 32 : 53 ] Let me give you a couple of verses and I quit. 1 Peter 4.9 says, use hospitality one with another without grudging. Don't have people in your house and be upset about it. Hebrews 13.2, be not forgetful to entertain strangers for thereby some have entertained angels.

Do you genuinely love your Christian family? Do you work at serving and loving others? Some of you aren't enjoying Vision Baptist Church like you ought to because you come expecting instead of giving.

You're saved. You're going to heaven when you die. But if you come in this room and say, man, I'm fixing to love these people. They're going to know I'm here because they're going to know I love them. It'll change the whole deal. And we all got ministries.

We all got things going on. We all got lives to live. But he said, hey, I saved y'all. Y'all are very unique people. Well, I pulled you out of hell itself. And I gave you salvation.

And I'm so good. I put y'all together. I'll go love each other. Father in heaven, I love you. I thank you for the chance to serve you. And I pray that your name will be honored and glorified in our lives. And I pray you'd help us to grow in our love for you and for one another.

[ 33 : 54 ] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfredo, Georgia. For more information, log on to [www.visionbaptist.com](http://www.visionbaptist.com), where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recordings.