

# Loving God and Loving Our Neighbors

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[ 0 : 00 ] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfredo, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word.

Put your Bibles with me, if you would, to Matthew 22. That's where we'll be today. You remember they've been asking questions. They've been trying to trip Jesus up. Now, the Pharisees and the Herodians came, and they brought a political question, and they tried to trap Jesus.

Then the Sadducees, who do not believe in the resurrection, came and asked a ridiculous question to try to mix Him up. And now one of the Pharisees, who's a lawyer, has showed back up, and he asked a theological question.

He wants to know which is the most important commandment. And so we're going to read this passage today, and this is a great passage for us. As Christians, as we learn to live for Him, we want to learn to love God and love our neighbor.

Matthew 22, 34, the Bible says, But when the Pharisees had heard that He had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together. Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asking a question, tempting him and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

[ 1 : 17 ] And Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is likened to it.

Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. I'm excited today to get to share with you another beautiful, wonderful passage of the Word of God as we learn how to love God and we learn how to love our neighbor.

And that's what the Lord Jesus said all the law was about. So let's learn about that today. Let's have another word of prayer and ask God to bless you as you serve Him. I just real quickly interject.

If you're a parent and your children are going back to school, it's a big deal that you teach your children more than any school teach their children.

And the most important lessons, unless they're in home school or a Christian school, they very likely will not be allowed to be taught, but you can. Get them in church. Get them under the sound of the Bible.

[ 2 : 22 ] Help them memorize Scripture. Help them to get a worldview that's a biblical worldview so they know that there is a God in heaven. He is a creator God. He is the God of all the earth.

He's the judge God. Help them to learn that. Help them to learn that Jesus is the only way to salvation and that they must learn to trust Him. Help them not to fall into this world's mold.

The Bible says in Romans chapter 12 and verse 2, Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed. And that verse means don't let anybody push you into the mold.

Don't let anybody make you like the world. Don't think like they do. The world being those who don't love God. Those that are rebelling against God. Those that reject biblical teaching and biblical understanding and biblical culture.

So I hope you'll work it. Raising your children is the greatest gift you've ever had given to you after salvation. After your spouse was God to let you have children. Raise them for His honor and glory.

[ 3 : 22 ] Father, bless today. Bring honor to Your name. Thank You for these wonderful people. Thank You for the chance to serve You. And I pray to Your God today that You let this passage of Scripture be real and powerful and work in our hearts.

And I'll give You praise for all that You do. In Jesus' name, amen. Turn in your Bibles, if you would, back to Matthew chapter 22, verse 34. These verses and these truths are foundational to me living out who I am in Christ.

He saved me by His grace. I am His. But when he was asked by a lawyer, what are the two important things? What's the law? What's it?

Hang on. He gave the answer you're about to read. I want to take time to examine myself and work on expressing my love for God like never before.

I want to develop a testimony that shows me as a person that really loves God and people so much it's obvious to others. Maybe this lawyer came with a question as a trap because the Bible said he came tempting.

[ 4 : 27 ] Maybe it was a genuine question because of the way Jesus responded. But either way, I need to grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus. I hope you do. I hope that's how you feel today.

And so read with me, if you would, starting in verse 34 again. Here's the question that was asked. When the Pharisees had heard that He put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together.

Now, don't forget, man, Jesus is going to be dying in just a few hours. And they're just out to destroy everything about Him and His ministry. And so the Pharisees and the Herodians came.

And they tried to trip Him up. And they didn't. And so they were put to silence. And so there's like tag team wrestling there. They got beat up. They moved back on the ropes. And here come the Sadducees then.

And the Sadducees couldn't trap Him. They got put to silence. And now one of the lawyers, a lawyer that's a Pharisee, he comes. Look at verse 35. Then one of them, which was a lawyer, smart guy, well-studied, knows the law, knows the Old Testament, asked him a question, tempting him.

[ 5 : 31 ] Underline that. He's tempting him. And he said, Master, that's respect. That's teacher. I'm showing you. I realize that you're somebody who knows stuff. And it's probably a tad on the sarcastic note because he's got everybody trying to debate with him.

And he thinks they can whip him. Everybody thought they could. And he said, which is the great commandment in the law? There's been an attempt to confuse, destroy, and overthrow Jesus at all of his work.

The Pharisees, the Herodians, and their political question, the Sadducees, and their doctrinal question. But they've both been put to silence. The muzzle has been placed on them. They could not accomplish their purposes.

The lawyer comes. He wants to discuss the law. Now that might not sound so to us. We're like, well, not a lot of laws, only ten laws, which the Ten Commandments was he talking about.

But the rabbis supposedly had determined that there were 613 separate laws in the Pentateuch. They'd studied Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, the Pentateuch, the books of the law, the books of Moses.

[ 6 : 36 ] And they'd come up with what they claimed were 613 separate laws. 365 were negative. That's interesting. You got one negative thing for every day of the year.

Amen. And they had come up with 248 that were affirmative. Some were considered heavy or binding laws, while others were light and less binding.

They were in a constant argument among the masters, among the teachers, among the rabbis, about which was the most important laws and what you ought to do.

And so now they come to Jesus to get his opinion. And here's the question. How often do we come with questions that are meant to deceive? You got to remember now, this is our third question.

You got to remember this is our third attempt to deceive Christ. They're using questions. I'm afraid you might be doing that. I'm afraid I might do that. We come to God with a question so we can feel good about ourselves.

[ 7 : 33 ] We're looking for a way to dodge conviction that comes from hearing the word of God. We want to play word games with God and with the Bible just like the lawyer did.

We're ready to argue. We're our own defense attorney. I stand to preach and open the Bible and immediately your defense attorney stands and says, Hey, wait a minute. This guy's not going to make me feel guilty.

This guy's not going to show me. The Holy Spirit's not going to deal with me. And immediately we come to our own defense. We are here to defend ourselves when we should come to humble ourselves and remind ourselves that we're not okay and we need the Lord.

We must listen to the answer so we'll see our sin and turn to the Savior. So if you came today and you're not born again, if you came today and you've not been saved, I ask you to stop defending yourself.

Listen to what Jesus is going to say. Read the other verses and be open to the Holy Spirit of God doing a work in your life. Lay down your defenses a minute and let God deal with your heart.

[ 8 : 33 ] So there was the question. Here comes the answer. Look if you would in verse 37. In verse 37, Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.

This is the first and great commandment. And the second is likened to it. Thou shalt love thy neighbor. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Now, they couldn't argue. If they knew the Old Testament at all, the most quoted part of the Old Testament was Deuteronomy chapter 6 and verse 4, among about three or four others, that he uses one of those.

Very biblical, quoting directly from Scripture. Deuteronomy chapter 6 and verse 4 said, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord, and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

And these words which are commanded this day shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children. You shall talk about them when you're sitting in your house, when you're walking by the way, when you're lying down, and when you get them up.

[ 9 : 42 ] When you get up, you should bind them on your hands. You should hang them in front of your eyes. You should write them on the doorposts to your house. They should be on the gates of your city. You should be on the gates of your house. And he said, I just quote what you guys know. He went straight to the Bible.

He went straight to the Bible. They were to love God with all that was in them. They were to love their neighbor as herself. Every other law, he said, was clearly attached to them. Can you notice that Jesus doesn't fall into the trap?

And can I remind you that when Jesus talks, he's not ashamed to use the book? When Jesus talks, he's not ashamed to go quote what the Bible said. He doesn't come up with something new.

He doesn't do some kind of magical trick. He doesn't call down fire from heaven. He doesn't make doves talk. He just says, let me quote the Bible. You guys ought to know the Bible. So if I know God himself and human flesh talk that way, maybe I ought to be a student of the Bible.

How about that one? I ought to be working on learning the Bible. Our problem is that we love ourselves. We don't have such a love for God that it affects our lives, our time, our talent, and our treasure.

[ 10 : 42 ] We don't love others except for what's expected in polite society. We hear the answer but would still rather be categorizing our rules and figuring a way out of our sin.

Why should the answer go straight to our hearts and show us our failure? We ask questions that trap him but most often fall into our own traps. So the lawyer asks the question, which is the most important commandment?

Jesus answered, love God, love your neighbor. And I'd just like to take a little bit of time and talk to you about those two things. The third thing, if you're writing things down, is I want to figure out this morning how do I express my love for God?

Let me tell you something that was always frustrating to me. As a young Christian trying to grow up, they would say, you should pray. But they never told me how to pray. They said, you should love God.

And they never told me how to love God. I can't hug him. I can't sit in his lap. I can't, you know, I mean, how do you love God? So I would like to take just a few minutes and talk to you about how to express love to God.

[ 11 : 51 ] And we're going to use several Bible verses. Now he said, if you want to take all the Old Testament, if you want to take all the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible, the books of the law, the books of Moses, if you want to sum them all up, they can be summed up in two things.

Love the Lord God with everything in you and love your neighbor like you love yourself. Love God with everything in you and love your neighbor like yourself. So how do I go about expressing love to my wife?

It says in verse 37, Jesus said unto them, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. Now before I go on, let me explain. This same thing works in your marriage.

It works with your children. Would you listen to it real quickly? Did you know that just because you feel love, if you don't express love, people don't know you got the love? You know, you're kind of like the guy who got married and he said to his wife, I love you and if I ever change my mind, I'll let you know.

That's not the way it's supposed to be done. You ought to be expressing love. I grew up in a home where my folks rarely ever said, I love you. About the only time I ever heard I love you was when they were going to whip me, they pulled off the belt and they said, I love you and this is going to hurt me worse than it does you.

[ 12 : 58 ] I used to think, I wish you didn't love me so much and I don't believe you. Amen? But so how do I love God? How do I express love to God? What's the Bible say about how to express love to God?

Go with me to Psalm chapter 18 and verse 1. We can demonstrate our love by meditating on who God is to us. Psalm chapter 18 and verse 1.

I wish you'd look it up. I wish you'd underline it because I think you do love God and I think you're like me, wish somebody would say to you, this is how you do it. This is how you do it. Number one, you do it by focusing on Him, by meditating on Him.

If you have a happy marriage, you have learned to think about your spouse in the right way. If you have a happy marriage, you have learned to let your thoughts control your heart.

You don't let thoughts control you. You control your thoughts. And you say, I'm going to think the right thing. And so you learn to think the right thing about your spouse. You learn to think the right thing about people that you love.

[ 14 : 00 ] Too many of us are victims of our thoughts. We're victims of our thoughts. We don't think what we're supposed to. Philippians chapter 4 verse 8 ends by saying this, think on these things.

And He gave a whole list of what you're supposed to think on. And basically, if you really want to sum up all of them, He said whatever's true, whatever's lovely, whatever's just. If you want to sum all that up, He'd be like, think about Jesus. Think on that. That's really what it was like.

So read with me, if you would, Psalm chapter 18 and verse 1. I will love you, O Lord. I will love thee, O Lord, my strength.

The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God and my strength in whom I will trust, my buckler, the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.

I will call upon the Lord who is worthy to be praised, so shall I be saved from mine enemies. I want you to go back through that passage. You got your Bible open there? You see, when you think about the God of heaven, you want to think about, now listen to me, you want to think about who He is.

[ 15 : 05 ] In other words, the way to express love, it's that sweet, quiet, intimate time with your wife. When you're talking to her and you say to her, boy, I love you, you got the sweetest, cutest little lips in the world.

I love your eyes. I love your hair. And you're expressing that. That makes you feel more in love. That makes her feel love. You're expressing love. How about taking some time to do this?

Look at 18.1 with me. I love you, Lord. I love you, Lord. You are my strength. I stopped thinking about me. I stopped thinking about my power.

I stopped thinking about my ability. And I started thinking about how God. I couldn't save myself. I couldn't get myself out of hell. I couldn't get myself back on the right road. I couldn't do it.

God is my strength. In Romans chapter 5 and verse 6, when we were yet without strength. When we were yet without strength. When we were ungodly, He died for us. Amen. He's our strength.

[ 16 : 01 ] Can you say amen right there? Tell Him that. He's my rock. He's my foundation. He's my stability. He's what keeps my life on an even keel. He is my rock. He's my protector.

He is my fortress. He's the one that takes care of me. He's the one that's my deliverer. He gets me out of trouble. He's the one I'll trust. I won't trust me. I won't trust my wife. I won't trust the church.

I won't trust other people. I know God is the one who I can trust. And He is worthy to be praised. When you pray, when you talk to Him, you tell Him, boy, I love you.

You are wonderful to me. You know, that's a good way to express love. You talk about it. You get it out of your heart. You think about it so it's inside of you. In Psalm chapter 31 and verse 23, Oh, love the Lord, all ye saints, because it's the Lord that preserves the faithful.

How are you going to stay right? How are you going to stay holy? How are you going to live all the way the day you die and get across the river of life into heaven? How are you going to get there? It won't be you. It's the Lord.

[ 17 : 04 ] God, I love you. I just want to tell you I love you today. I want to thank you for saving me. By the way, when you sing these songs, sing them from your heart. He preserves the faithful. Second thing you can do, spend time with God.

Psalm chapter 63 and verse 1. These psalms are often written as ways of David and other psalmists expressing their love. Chapter 63, verse 1. Open your Bible there, please. Underline it.

Oh, God, thou art my God. Oh, God, you're my God. Early will I seek thee. My soul thirsts for thee. My flesh longs for thee in a dry and thirsty land where no water is.

In the summer of 1973, I was going to get married to my girlfriend, who's been my wife for almost 42 years. We would get married on August the 18th, 1973.

And I can promise you that's the longest summer on record. Because it was like every day took forever. So I would work, and then I'd go to bed as quick as I could.

[ 18 : 06 ] Time passed faster when I was asleep. Because I was hungry to see her. I wrote her a love letter every day. She never wrote me love letters.

For real. Maybe once a week. Once every two weeks. I wrote one every day. She was all I could think about. There was a young married couple sitting right back there. They probably got an idea of that. That's what he's saying here. He's saying, man, I'm thirsty.

My flesh longs for me. God, I want to know you. God, I want to spend time with you. God, I'm going to get up early and have some time with you. Look at what it says in verse 2. Because I want to see your power and your glory.

God, I got children. I want to see them grow upright. I need to see you work. I want to see you save people. I want to see you show yourself. Verse 3, he says, because you're sweet. You got love and kindness.

You got love and kindness. That's not how you think about God. Some dingbat preacher made you think he was a mean God. You ought to read the book. He's a God full of love and kindness. I want to spend some time with you.

[ 19 : 06 ] My lips shall praise thee. I will bless thee while I live. I'll lift my hands. God, I love you. I want to spend some time with you and tell you I love you.

And my soul will be satisfied. Verse 5, my mouth will praise you with joyful lips. God, I love you. God, I love you. When I remember thee upon my bed, so I go to bed at night.

Now, see, here's what happens. When I go to bed at night, I'm supposed to be thinking, man, isn't God good? What you do when you go to bed is I got a lot of problems. You toss and turn and can't sleep because you're thinking about the wrong thing.

Think on these things. He's a good God and he got you through the day. Say amen. He's a good God. He takes care of you. He said, hey, love me. Remember me when you go to bed.

But meditate on me. Consider me. Think about me. Verse 7, because God, you've been my help. And that's why I'll be happy and I'll rejoice. God, my soul follows hard after you.

[ 20 : 05 ] I'm chasing you. When I met Betty, I'm the redneck from Tennessee from the great city of Bucksnot. That's the exit off of Interstate 40. And she had no interest in the redneck.

She's a little socialite from Atlanta. And when I wanted to date her, she only went on the first date with me so she could be with another guy. It was a double date. She went on the double date with me so she could be with Gergen.

Juergen. I ought to be Gergen. And Juergen was with Sally and Austin's with Betty who wants to be with Juergen. But my soul followed hard. And I won.

Amen? See, that's what's going on here. God, I'm after you. You say, sometimes I don't feel like God listens to me. Chase him. Look for him. Spend time with him in prayer. Third way you love him.

Love his word. Love his word. It's him talking to you. Man, them letters used to come from Betty. And I'd go, they didn't come very often. Y'all can talk to her about that afterwards.

[ 21 : 06 ] 42 years I'm still bitter. Amen? I'd smell them. I'd read them. I'd reread them. I didn't underline them and circle the words like I do in my Bible.

But I'll just be honest with you. Anything she said was good stuff. And I've been married 42 years. Sometimes I wish she didn't say quite so much. Amen? That's a joke. All you men are scared too. Every one of you. But look, it's love his word.

That was a joke. Sandy's already getting the deacons together to vote me out. Psalm 119, 72. Look what it says. The law of thy mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver.

You get up in the morning and you start making your business plan. How are you going to make big bucks today? You go to bed and you think about how you're going to work your business plan. But David said, man, God, your book is more important than me than all the money.

Look at that. Verse 97. Psalm 119, 97. Oh, how I love your law. It's my meditation all day long.

[ 22 : 06 ] So while he was at work, maybe he was milking a cow. Maybe he was fighting a battle. Maybe he was running a business negotiation. He'd be thinking, I wonder what God's word says about that. I've been memorizing God's word.

I've been learning God's word. And it's my meditation. It's my meditation. Verse 103. Look at Psalm 119, 103. How sweet are thy words to my taste.

Sweeter than honey. I like to talk about the Bible. I like to fill my heart up with the Bible. Whoa. Psalm 119, 167. My soul hath kept thy testimonies.

I love them a bunch. Exceedingly. Look at it. You want to love God? You want to love God? Think about God. Think about him. Think about how good he is and all the great stuff he's done.

You want to love God? Spend time with God. You want to love God? Love his word. You want to love God? Love your brothers and sisters in Christ. Huh?

[ 23 : 03 ] See, it's easy to love a God you can't see and not love your brother sitting on the pew or the chair. We don't have pews, but on the chair somewhere next to you. That's why you sit in section A instead of C, huh?

But listen to what it says in 1 John 5, 1. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is born of God. And everyone that loves him, Jesus, or God that begat Jesus also is begotten of him.

You see, we love him. He loved us. We love him. And I love my brothers. I love the ones, others that he has born. I love God by hating sin.

I love God by hating sin. You see, the Bible says in Psalm 97, 10, you that love the Lord hate evil. By the way, you hate it. If you love clean, you don't like dirt.

Amen? If you love clean, you don't like dirt. And when you love God, you don't like things he doesn't like. You're like, okay, if you don't like that, I don't like that. You reject the world because you love God.

[ 24 : 07 ] The Bible says in 1 John 2, verse 15, love not the world. Now, the word world there is not talking about the creation. It's not talking about the beautiful sunset or the sunrise.

It's not talking about the rainbow. It's not talking about the beautiful rivers and mountains and lakes. It's talking about a whole system that doesn't love him. You live in a world today that makes fun of our God. You live in a world that thinks our God is somebody we created.

You live in a world that rejects and hates our God. It's on every TV show you watch. It's in all the news. It's on the Internet. It's everywhere you turn. And he said, hey, if you love me, you'll hate that.

1 John 2, verse 15, love not the world, neither of the things that are in the world. If a man loved the world, the love of the Father is not in him. All that's in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life, that's not of the Father.

It's of the world. Now, listen to me. It's an us or them situation, guys. You're either Jesus's or you're not his. You're either in or you're out. You belong to him or you don't belong to him. He said, hey, love him.

[ 25 : 07 ] Hey, some of you are like, well, why does Jesus have to be so exclusive? Why does he have to like, I've got to love him and not the world? Well, same reason my wife says you've got to love me and not the other girls. Everybody understands that.

Don't be so dumb. Quit trying to be so dumb. Only place you're dumb is when it comes to Jesus. You know, good enough, if you walked up to your wife and said, I love you, baby, but I'm going to bring three or four more girls on to the house with me. That won't work.

Say amen. And what you know what God said? He said, you love me, don't love them to hate me. Don't love them to hate me. Love me. Then you'll want him to come back. 2 Timothy chapter 4 and verse 8 says, Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day.

And not to me only, but also those that love his appearing. Jesus, come back. Jesus, come back. I love you. I've been preaching about you, teaching about you, praying about you, discipling people about you, talking about you.

You're the theme of my life. And when you come back, it's going to be a great thing. Come on back. Looking for the rapture, looking for the second coming. And obey him because you love him. You know, if you really love him, you do what he says.

[ 26 : 15 ] John chapter 14 and verse 21 says, He that hath my commandments and keeps them, that's the guy that loves me. You know, talk's cheap. Talk's cheap. If you love him, keep his commandments.

Today I want to learn to express my love. I feel love, but love felt and unexpressed is not really love. I feel love, but love felt and unexpressed is not really love.

I want to remember that love is giving. Love's not coming to God to see what I can get, but rather a recognition of all that he has done and then giving of myself to him. You come to, when you, hey, if you love God, you didn't come to church this morning saying, God, can you make me rich?

God, can you prosper me? God, can you solve my family problems? I need you, God, I'm here because I want you to do stuff for me. Glory to God if he wants to do stuff for you. But you love him. You love him when things are going good and you love him when things are going bad.

You just love him. You love him. Have you been spending time with him in the word and prayer? Have you been keeping him in your thoughts all the day long? Hey, master, what's the greatest commandment?

[ 27 : 22 ] Love God with everything in you, buddy. What the Old Testament said, and that's what's true. We looked at that. And then he said, but also love your neighbor like you love yourself. You see, true Christianity and true loving God isn't just this way, it's this way.

It isn't just loving God, but it'll be loving people. Verse 39, he said, and the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Did you know that when God saved you, he dumped a big truckload of love in your heart?

The Bible says in Romans chapter 5 and verse 5, and hope makes not a shame because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.

God dumped a whole lot of love, not just for him, but a love for other people. So here's some things about how to love your neighbor real quick. Here's some things about how to love your neighbor real quick. Number one, don't be a mean-spirited, fake Christian that tries to make others live up to things you're not living up to yourself.

Boy, isn't it amazing how judgmental Christians have become? Isn't it amazing how we walk in and we're like looking at everybody else and pointing down, looking down our nose and pointing our finger at them?

[ 28 : 29 ] That's what the Pharisees did. The Bible says in Matthew 23, 4, they bind heavy burdens and grieve us to be born and they lay them on men's shoulders, but they won't move them with their little bitty finger.

A lot of Christians tend to be like mean-spirited, fake. They don't live it themselves. They learned how to fake it. They don't love God. They don't love their neighbor. But then when somebody else wants to come to God, they don't do that.

Let's love some people. Man. Well, that's a quiet one, but anyway. If you love people, you really care about their needs. In James 2 and verse 14, James said, What does it profit, my brethren, though a man say he has faith and have not works?

Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you is saying to them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled, notwithstanding you give them not those things that are needful to the body.

What good is that? What does it profit? Listen to me. If I'm going to love my brothers and sisters in Christ, You know, honestly, you ought to come in this church all the time.

[ 29 : 34 ] You ought to be around other Christians. You ought to be just looking. I wonder if there's a need I can meet here. I wonder if I can help somebody here. I wonder if I can show some love to somebody. I wonder if that person is needing a little money for some food. I wonder what could be done here.

Because I am loving. By the way, if Jesus is here, you know, he's ridiculous. He's the sweetest, kindest, wonderful person to ever live. He couldn't get around a funeral. He always broke them up.

He couldn't handle lost. He couldn't handle sick people. He was always taking care of them. He could be as tired as he could be trying to find a place to rest. And if anybody came, he just healed them and everybody else around there. That's my Savior.

That love has been dumped into my heart. I should be caring about people. How about this one? Pay what you owe. Pay what you owe. Romans chapter 13 and verse 8.

The Bible says, Owe no man anything but to love one another. He that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. Now listen to me. As Christians, let's pay our bills.

[ 30 : 34 ] You don't pay your bills. You claim you love people, but you don't love people. You love yourself. That's why you keep your money. As a dear, sweet, faithful sister of the Lord told me in this room, some people spend their money on what they want and beg for what they need.

And we ought never be like that. Don't take advantage of others. In Romans 13, 9, he said, Don't commit adultery. Don't kill.

Don't steal. Don't bear false witness. And don't covet or wish you could have everybody else's stuff. But love your neighbor like you love yourself. In other words, don't take another man's wife or spouse, man's wife or a woman's husband.

That's not the way we do things. The world does it that way, but we don't do it that way. Don't look lustfully at other people's spouses. Don't hate others or take their lives. Don't steal from others.

Don't lie about others. Stop the gossiping. Quit wanting what others have and be happy with what God gave you. Treat everybody like you'd like to be treated. Because we're supposed to, he did something in us.

[ 31 : 40 ] Don't do anything that would hurt your neighbor. Look at Romans chapter 13 and verse 10 if you would. The Bible says in Romans 13, 10, Love works no ill to his neighbor.

Be nice to your neighbor. Do the right thing for your neighbor. My neighbor don't do right for me. We didn't ask that question. Do right. Love is a general attitude that we have with everybody.

The Bible says in 1 John 4, 7, Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God. And everyone that loveth is born of God and knows God.

And he that loves not knows not God, for God is love. And my time's up, but let me just say to you that love is the key word. It was love God, love your neighbor. Love God, love your neighbor.

Hey, this whole world's full of hate and meanness. What part of my walk with God is failing as it relates to others? Maybe you heard the old acrostic like I heard it when I was a kid.

[ 32 : 46 ] Joy, Jesus first, others second, and yourself last. I know that's childish to you. You don't apply it, but still pretty good. What testimony am I showing to others?

Do they see me loving God and people? Or do they see me as selfish and self-absorbed? Do I live to allow God to bless others through me? Or am I looking out for good old number one?

Me. Last verse. Verse 40. All the Old Testament law and all the scriptures are hung on these two laws. Verse 40. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Now let me show you something right before we quit. Every time we read the Bible, we ought to find man's failure, God's grace, and get to Calvary. And that's what that does for us.

Because when I look back and I see that, I know I have failed. And if you sum up all the Old Testament, you could sum it up in these two sentences. And they condemn us. We haven't loved God. If you're here and you're not born again, you haven't loved God and you know it.

[ 33 : 51 ] If you're here and you're not born again, you haven't loved your neighbor and you know it. We have failed God. Every one of us have failed God. And we're here today as people that have failed a holy God. We have violated every commandment.

We've set up other idols in our hearts. We have falsely used the name of God. We've mistreated our neighbors. All of this telling us to love him shows us our failure. But it brings us to his love for us.

Those of us in this room that are born again know this. We never made it on our own. He loved us. While we were yet without strength, while we were ungodly, and while we were still sinners, he loved us.

He went to Calvary because he loved us. He rescued me when I couldn't be saving myself. And our real love for God is born out of realizing how he loved me first.

His love in our hearts makes us love each other and those around us. So before I close this morning, I'd like to know something. Have you experienced his love? You see, it starts with his loving you.

[ 34 : 53 ] And then he sheds his love in your heart and sheds it abroad. And so you'll love him and you'll love others. But the truth is all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. And there's nobody righteous, nobody perfect, nobody good in the entire world.

Nowhere. And so we come to a place in our life and we realize, Man, I do fail at this loving God stuff. And I fail at loving my neighbor and I've never been born again. And I don't know that I'd go to heaven if I died.

And if you're here this morning and you're not sure of your salvation, realize this. You're not the only one. Everybody in this room got saved the same way. We all got to a place that we realized that we'd failed God.

We all got to a place that we realized that we were a sinner. We all got to a place that we realized that we were without strength. We all came to a place to realize we deserved hell. And Jesus, in his grace and in his mercy, died on a cross and paid our sin debt so we could be saved.

We realize that. And so today, if you're not saved, you can be. It's finished. That's what he said on the cross. He's paid your sin debt and he stands ready with a gift for you. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ.

[ 36 : 02 ] Lord, would you be saved? In a second, I'm going to ask you to raise your hand and I'm going to offer you a chance to have somebody answer your questions. No pressure. Not to be baptized, not to join our church, just to answer your questions so you can know for sure if you died, you'd go to heaven.

You can read the Bible, ask questions, and whenever you're ready, you'll trust Christ. Then I'd like to say something to you Christians. I don't know if it helped you, but I realize, man, I don't express love for him like I want to.

I love him. How many of you love him? Say amen. But how many of us hadn't been in the book and thinking about him and praying to him and following hard after him, and today maybe his Holy Spirit said, you can do that for me.

He's calling you to love him more and express your love. I know you love him, but love and express isn't quite love, is it? Father in heaven, I love you.

I thank you for the chance to preach your word. I thank you for the chance to be with these wonderful people today. I pray for those that don't know you as their personal Savior that today they might trust you and be saved.

[ 37 : 03 ] I pray you'd save somebody. And then I pray, dear God, for those in the room that are born again and they know they'd go to heaven, but they've been reminded by your sweet Holy Spirit to love you.

I know you've reminded me, and I'm so sorry. I get so busy, and I run in so many different directions, and I fail you in so many ways, and thank you for loving me in spite of me. But help me, Lord, to learn to express my love for you more.

With every head bowed and every eye closed, if you're here this morning, you've never trusted Christ as your Savior. You're not sure that He's your Savior.

You're not sure you're born again. You're not sure you're saved. I want to help you. No pressure. There's no high pressure here. If you'd like to talk to somebody, there's some counselors with their Bible. They're ready to talk to you.

They're ready to answer your questions. They're ready to help you. If you just hold your hand up, I'll send a guy to you if you're a guy. A lady will come if you're a lady, and they'll answer your questions. No pressure. Just love.

[ 38 : 04 ] Who's here to say, I'm not sure I'm saved. I'm not sure I'm born again, but today, I want to get things right with God. Would you just hold your hand up right where you are? Did there be anybody like that? Just hold your hand up. Let me help you. Anybody?

And I'd like to ask the Christians, did the Holy Spirit deal with your heart? Did He remind you that you haven't been loving, and today you want to tell Him, I'm going to love you? Or maybe the way you've been dealing with some neighbors, or whatever, or some other people?

Did the Holy Spirit deal with your heart? Would you hold your hand up and let me pray for you? Thank you, sir. Thank you, sir. Thank you, thank you, thank you. If you want to find a place to pray, you're welcome. You can pray in your seat, or you can pray at the front. Whenever you finish praying, you can stand and sing with Steve as he leads us in his song.

Father, work in our hearts. Magnify yourself. Bless yourself. And I'll give you praise. In Jesus' name, amen. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia.

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