

Standing Fast in the Grace of God

"Love One Another"

The Compassion of the Holy

1 Peter 1:22-25

As we've seen in the past two messages on this text (vs. 13-25), the desire that God has for us to be holy moves in a clear progression. In verse 13-16, we saw *The Call to Holiness* – God's expectation that His children live prepared, disciplined, obedient, and distinct. In verses 17-21, we studied *The Conduct of the Holy* – how those who call on the Father live before Him with reverent fear, remembering the price of redemption, and placing their faith and hope in God.

In the verses before us in this message, Peter brings us to the third mark of holiness: The Compassion of the Holy.

Holiness is more than just personal righteousness; it must show itself in how we treat one another. A separated life that lacks sincere love is not holiness at all – it is hypocrisy. Peter, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, shows that true holiness produces a fervent, sincere, Spirit-enabled love for God's people, and that this kind of love is rooted in the enduring, life-giving Word of God.

The first message showed us not to think, the second showed us how to live, and this one shows us how to love.

I. THE REQUIREMENT OF LOVE – VS. 22

A. Love because you have been purified

"Seeing ye have purified your souls..."

1. "Seeing ye have purified" – this is a perfect active participle: this is already accomplished at salvation.
2. This purification refers to the believer's initial

response to the truth of the gospel, which resulted in their being set apart unto sincere, fervent love for the brethren.

3. The word Peter uses for “purified” (ἡγνικότες) is part of the same family of words as the word “holy” (ἅγιος). Holiness and purification are not separate ideas – purification is what God has done in us, and holiness is what God calls us to live out.
4. Purification leads *unto* love (the purpose or result), not away from it.
5. A holy heart must produce holy affection.

John 13:35

³⁵ By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

1 John 4:7-8

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. ⁸ He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

B. Love because you obey the truth

“...in obeying the truth...”

1. Obedience to the gospel produces a new capacity for love – one that might not naturally be there.
2. Love is not optional – it is commanded.

Galatians 5:13-14

¹³ For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. ¹⁴ For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

1 Thessalonians 4:9

⁹ But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

C. Love through the Spirit

“...through the Spirit...”

Genuine love cannot be manufactured – it comes from the Holy Spirit.

Romans 5:5

⁵ And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Galatians 5:22

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

D. Love without hypocrisy

“...unto unfeigned love of the brethren...”

True love is unhypocritical and transparent.

E. Love with intensity

“...love one another with a pure heart fervently.”

1. “With a pure heart” – love other believers with no other intent or purpose but to love them.
2. The word used here for “fervently” (ἐκτενῶς) is only used this one time in the Greek NT and means stretched to the limit.

Picture a rope pulled so tight that you can hear the fibers strain. That is the image of *fervent* love – love stretched to its fullest capacity.

3. Consider it love that costs something.

1 Peter 4:8

⁸ And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

Philippians 2:1-4

¹ If *there be* therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, ² Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind. ³ *Let nothing be done* through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. ⁴ Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

II. THE ROOT OF LOVE – THE NEW LIFE – VS. 23

A. Love flows from the new birth

“Being born again...”

1. “Born again” (ἀναγεννημένοι) – perfect passive participle – new birth accomplished by God with ongoing effects.
2. Peter points back to regeneration (the new birth) and shows that true, biblical love is “a family resemblance of God’s children.”

1 John 3:14-16

¹⁴ We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not *his* brother abideth in death. ¹⁵ Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. ¹⁶ Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. [this is the “fervently” part of 1 Pet. 1:23]

B. Love rests on an incorruptible source

“...not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible...”

1. “Incorruptible” (ἄφθαρτος) – means it is imperishable and not capable of decay or destruction.
2. It uses the word “seed” (σπορά – the spora), speaking of something that is planted, fertilized, watered, and eventually harvested, producing more than is planted.
3. The source is the incorruptible seed – the Word of God (seen in the Parable of the Sower).
 - a) A fundamental law of Genesis 1 is “seed produces after its kind.”
 - b) If the seed is corruptible (flesh), the fruit is temporary. If the seed is incorruptible (the Word), the fruit is eternal (seen in our love for others that produces eternal fruit).
 - c) With that in mind, a lack of love questions the nature of the seed planted in the heart.
4. Our love for others is durable (“incorruptible”) because its Source is durable.

C. Love is nourished by the Living Word

“...the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”

Hebrews 4:12

¹² For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

1. The Word of God imparts life.
2. The Word of God sustains life.

3. The Word of God produces love in the believer.

III. THE RELIABILITY OF LOVE – ETERNAL TRUTH – VS. 24-25

A. Human life is temporary (vs. 24)

1. Grass and flowers fade – human strength is fragile and human affection is inconsistent.
2. Every funeral we attend, every grave we stand over, is a reminder that human life is like grass, but the Word of God we hear preached at the funeral or the graveside will still be true ten thousand years from now.

B. God's Word is permanent (vs. 25a)

1. The first word, the conjunction "for" (διότι), introduces the quote from Isaiah which grounds the command to love in the durability of the Word of God.
2. "Endureth for ever" – the word for "endureth" (μένει) means to abide, remain, or continue. It shows that the Word of God cannot weaken or deteriorate.
3. What God says as recorded in His Word will never diminish, decay, or die.

Isaiah 40:6-8 [Peter quotes this text]

⁶ The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh *is* grass, and all the goodliness thereof *is* as the flower of the field: ⁷ The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people *is* grass. ⁸ The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

Matthew 24:35

³⁵ Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

C. The gospel goes forth (vs. 25b)

"And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."

1. There's an important distinction in the use of the term "word" in verse 25 compared to the same English word in verse 23.
 - a) In verse 23, the word is *logos* (λόγος) – as used here, it is speaking of the total content of God's Word, the truth of the Word itself.
 - b) In verse 25, it is *rhema* (ῥῆμα) – a word that means to speak, or the spoken utterance, and is connected with "preached."
 - c) Think of it this way: *Logos* (vs. 23) is the reservoir of Truth while *rhema* (vs. 25) is the specific bucket of water poured out for the thirsty soul.
 - d) When Peter says, "this is the word (rhema) which by the gospel is preached," he is saying: "The Eternal Truth (Logos) became a Specific Message (Rhema) that confronted you personally."

For some of you, that happened when a preacher opened his mouth. For others, it happened when you opened this Book and the text spoke to your heart. The point isn't *who* delivered the message; the point is that God took His eternal Truth and made it a specific, personal message (*Rhema*) for your life. The Gospel didn't stay in Heaven; it came to where you were.

2. We love one another because we have all obeyed the same Voice. Whether we heard it from a pulpit or read it in a room, the same "Incorruptible Seed" produced the same life in us.

Conclusion:

Holiness is not to be simply a rigid separation from everything around us, nor is it to be used as a moral superiority where we compare our holy living to someone else and judge them based on their spiritual maturity compared to ours. Holiness is love – sincere, sacrificial, enabled by the Spirit, and rooted in the new life we have received through God’s everlasting Word.

Comparatively speaking, the world loves when it’s convenient and the flesh loves when it is comfortable, but God calls His children to love fervently, purely, persistently, and supernaturally.

Our love for one another is the clearest evidence that we have been born again and that God’s Word is alive in us. If we claim to be holy people, then we must love God’s holy people.

Holiness thinks differently.

Holiness lives differently.

Holiness loves differently.