

# Love, the Basis of Reform

#0197

Study Given by W. D. Frazee

Before Jesus comes, everybody here will have the opportunity to stand for Jesus all alone. True, there'll be people in other parts of the world that will be standing all alone, but they won't be where you are, and you won't be where they are. Somewhere between now and the coming of Jesus, every one of you that stands for Jesus will stand all alone. You know what does that takes? It just takes one thing—it takes love. That's all.

You know, I was thinking about it. Suppose here's a boy, a son, a young man, he's working for and with his father on a farm. He milks the cows, he plows, he's on the tractor. In various ways he's helping his father.

A neighbor from over the fence observes this boy from time to time. He notices that he's industrious, he's a good hard worker. One day when he was out there on the tractor, he gets near the line fence; the neighbor beckons him over to the fence and says: "Look here, John, I need a hand, and I can pay you more than your father is paying you. Come with me."

Will the boy come? That depends. What does it depend on? How much he loves his father.

But suppose the neighbor says, "John, I'll not only give you a better salary, but I'll give you a better place to live. I'll give you a house all by yourself, all the conveniences more than you have—better wages, more conveniences."

It's a wonderful thing under those circumstances that the young man can look that neighbor in the eye and say, "Sir, I thank you for your offer, but I'm not interested."

"And why not?"

"Well, my father loves me better than you do."

The neighbor says, "Does he? Well, why doesn't he pay you more then? Why doesn't he give you the conveniences that I would give you?"

John says, "That's not the point. I know that my father loves me better than you do, so I'm going to stay with him. But neighbor friend, that's only half of it. I love my father better than I love you. I love him and I want to please him. I love him and I can't disappoint him."

It's a wonderful thing to have a relationship with our heavenly Father, what do you say? To hear the call of God and be devoted to it.

Gideon's 32,000 were encamped, ready to attack the enemy. But God said, Gideon, few as they look to you, they're too many. They hadn't been tested. When Gideon, in obedience to God's command, blew the trumpet, 22,000 went home. When he said, "All the people that are afraid, you can go home." Over two-thirds said, "This is a risky cause, if not a lost cause; we're glad for the chance to clear out. We're going home."

But still, the 10,000 looked too many to God, for He knew their hearts. And as Gideon brought them down to the water and they went through the brook, God said to put to one side the men that don't get down and take a long time to drink. Put to one side those men that just pick up a little in their hand as they go through. Three hundred—those were the men that were more interested in getting the job done than in getting a drink of water.

Somebody says, "But we have to drink." Indeed, they got a drink, but they did it in a way that showed that they were more interested in getting a job done for God than in satisfying their own creature comforts. In such little ways, character is displayed, character is revealed. How will it be revealed in your life? What do you need? Love. That's all. That's all—just love.

Let's turn over to 1 John 5:3.

"For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous" 1 John 5:3.

What does grievous mean here? Heavy, hard to bear. Does the law of God look hard to you? Do you wish it weren't that way? Do you wish the conditions were not so difficult, so exacting? Ah friends, what we need is just one thing—love.

"For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous" 1 John 5:3.

That means, friends, love is revealed in obedience. Love is manifested in seeking to please God. Is it not true in this world that we seek to please those whom we love? Certainly, and the more we love somebody, the more we want to please them. So it is written:

"If ye love me, keep My commandments" John 14:15.

This is the love of God that we keep His commandments. You see, love is the root, obedience is the fruit. There's no fruit without the root. But without the fruit, what good is the root? The purpose of the root is to produce the fruit; love is the root, obedience is the fruit.

"If ye love me, keep my commandments" John 14:15.

This is the love of God that we keep His commandments. Last Friday night, we were studying the call to repentance, revival, and reformation. It is sounding through the church in this momentous hour. We studied this wonderful appeal in the *Ministry* magazine of November 19, 1970, in which attention was called to the fact that we must *repent* before there can be a true revival and reformation, and that we will never repent until we see something to repent about. Attention was called to four areas: dress reform, health reform, educational reform, and medical work. And I'll just speak out of my own heart: I think I'm *greatly* privileged, my dear friends, to be connected with the work in which all these four reforms are prominent. But I want to tell you something, friends: without *love*, none of them mean a thing. Without love, none of them mean a thing.

Someone was telling me about a little boy who came downstairs on Christmas morning and saw the wonderful things on the Christmas tree. He saw the toys, he saw the beautiful ornaments, and someone had put some oranges on the tree. Dancing up and down in glee, he said, "Oh mama, let's get daddy to plant the back yard full of trees like this."

It'd make quite an orchard, wouldn't it? Don't you wish you had some? But of course, we folks who know, understand that the only thing that got on that tree was *tied* on. Right? And too many Christians are Christmas tree Christians. That which is good in their lives has been tied on—it did not grow from the inside. Do you see?

There're two great blessings that I trust we shall have tonight. One is the blessing of seeing that we ourselves can never attain the goals that are set before us in the call to repentance, revival, and reformation today. We can never attain those goals unless we have the *root* of love. Then, the fruit of reformation will be seen.

The second blessing I trust we shall have is that we shall clearly see that we have no commission from God to go around getting people to tie on things on their trees, and certainly we have no commission to do the tying ourselves, or to attempt it. You'll be disappointed either way, friend. If you try to tie things onto people, they might not appreciate it. But if you succeed, it would only make them good Pharisees, that's all. And Jesus said:

“...woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!...”  
Matthew 23:13.

There are enough actors in the world today without our adding in it, what do you say? So what do we want? We want this *love*—the love of God. Love for Jesus, so that when the world seeks to entice, to draw us, to bribe us, we say, “No thank you.” We may not even say, “Thank you,” we may just say, “No.” The answer is clear and firm and decided—no. Why not? I love my Father more than I love anyone else, and more than I love *anything* else. And He loves me. I *know* He loves me. Therefore, I know He will do what is best for me.

A few days ago, there fell into my hands, the story of an experience related by Evangeline Booth, who, for a number of years, was the leading officer in the Salvation Army. I'd like to read you this little story in Ms. Booth's own words, and I think when I have finished reading it, you will understand exactly why I'm reading it.

“One morning I stood outside the large iron gates of a local police court and temporary prison. There were people waiting there; some out of curiosity, and some because they had a relative inside. I waited expectantly for the opening of the gate. I heard the shuffling of heavy feet. They came close. Then I heard sounds of loud voices, and one especially that got louder and more shrill. It was the voice of a woman.

“The gates opened wide, and I witnessed the sight that which, if eternity could wash away from my mind, time never can. It was a woman. Two policemen walked in front, and two behind. One stalwart man held the right arm, and another the left. Her hair was uncombed and matted. Her right temple was blackened with bruises. Clots of dry blood stood upon her left temple. Her clothes were torn and bloodstained. She tried to wrench her arms from the grasp of the policemen. The very atmosphere of the morning was laden with her curses and her oaths. She tossed her head wildly as the six policemen dragged her down the passageway.

“What could I do? One more moment and the golden opportunity to be of help would be gone. Could I offer a prayer? No, there was not time. Could I sing? It would be absurd. Could I give her money? She could not take it. Could I quote a verse of Scripture? She would not heed it. Whether it was a divine suggestion or not, I did not stop to think. But the impulse of a burning desire which filled my heart as she passed made me step forward and kiss her on the cheek. Whether the police were taken off their guard by my extraordinary action and relaxed their grasp, I do not know. But with one wrench, she freed her arms and clasped her hands as the winds spread her matted hair, and she looked toward the gray skies and said, ‘My God.’ She looked around wildly for a moment and said, ‘My God, who kissed me? Nobody has kissed me since my mother died.’ Lifting her tattered apron, she buried her face in her hands, and like a little lamb, she was led to the vehicle which took her to prison.

“Later, I went to the prison in the hope of seeing her, and at the door stood the warden. When I approached the warden she said, ‘We think her mind is gone. She does nothing but pace up and down her cell asking me every time I go in if I know who kissed her.’

“‘Would you let me go in and see her?’ I asked. ‘I am her only and best friend.’

“The door was opened and I slipped in. Her face was clean. Her eyes were large and beautiful, and she said, ‘Do you know who kissed me?’ Then she told me her story.

“When I was a little girl seven years old my widowed mother died. She died very poor, although she was of gentle birth. She died in a back basement in the dark. When she was dying she called me to her. She took my little face in her hands and kissed it and said to me, ‘My poor little girl. My defenseless little girl. Oh, God, have pity on my little girl. And when I am gone, protect her and take care of her.’ From that day to this, nobody ever put a kiss upon my face until recently.’

“Then again she asked me, ‘Do you know who kissed me?’

“Yes, I did.’ Then I told her of Him whose life was so much more tender than mine could ever be, and how He went to the cross and bore our sins upon Himself, and was wounded for our transgressions, that He might put the kiss of pardon upon our brow. In Him she found light and joy and comfort and salvation and healing and love. Before she was released from prison, the warden testified not only to the change in her life but to its beauty. She was made, through Christ, the means of salvation to numbers of others who were down as low as she had been, and who were bound with as heavy fetters as those with which she herself had been bound.”

Do you know what some people in some places would get out of this? There is an idea, let’s train our nurses to kiss the lady patients, so it will do for them what that did. Let’s project an image of TLC. Let’s train folks to do this or say that or offer prayer at the bedside, or this or that.

My dear friends, I say it’s sacrilege to attempt to take the love of God and run it through a computer. What we need is love. That’s what this young woman had, and that’s what the other woman *got*, and she got the message all right.

I want to tell you something, friend. You can’t make this on the assembly line. You cannot train workers in techniques that produce this sort of a thing. Here was a woman who was bound for the insane asylum. But what did it take to cure her? Love. That’s all it took, but it took all of *that*.

And may I tell you, friend, all the talking about love will never make love. Love is a plant of heavenly origin. The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. It is found only in the heart where Jesus reigns.

Some of you would like to learn more about soul-winning, wouldn't you? Ah, my friend, it can't be taught, it must be caught. As people catch infectious diseases through contact with someone who has the disease, so you and I can receive love only in contact with the living, loving Christ. He wants to give it to us. He wants to share it with us. And all the classes in the world can never teach us. Don't misunderstand me; there are a lot of things we can learn in classes, and God help us to learn them, friends.

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels,  
and have not [love], I am become as sounding brass, or a  
tinkling cymbal” 1 Corinthians 13:1.

What we need is not more refined techniques; not more skillful logic; not a better knowledge of proof texts. We need more of all those, but I say what we need is not so much any one of those or all of them put together, as sweet, simple, true, sincere love.

Now turn to Revelation 3. It's not by accident that the book of Revelation closes the canon of Scriptures. The book of Revelation is the fitting climax of the great succession that begins with the beginning with Genesis 1. And in this book of Revelation we have not only a wonderful description of the Heaven that Jesus is preparing for us; we have in this book the message to go to all the world to get a people ready to meet Jesus—that's in Revelation 14:6–12. We also have in Revelation 3 the message that is to prepare the remnant church to give that threefold message with mighty power—the power that will reach every soul in this world.

Thus, in Revelation 3, beginning with the 14<sup>th</sup> verse, we have the message to the Laodiceans. You remember, those of you who are acquainted with that wonderful picture in *Early Writings*, pages 269–271, that that which brings the Loud Cry is the Latter Rain. That which prepares the church for the Latter Rain is the shaking. That which produces the shaking is the *reception* of this counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. This is the place where Heaven waits while we linger. For over a century, the True Witness has been waiting for His people in this world to seriously and fully accept His counsel in the message to the Laodiceans.

Now, you remember in this message beginning with the 14<sup>th</sup> verse, the True Witness tells us that He knows our works, that we are neither cold nor hot. That's the problem. He would rather see us cold in the world than lacking the warm, vibrant love which will produce something worthwhile in His church. If we were out in the world in cold and darkness, we might sense our need and come in where it's warm. But if the church is lukewarm, there is a certain temperature when human beings are so comfortable that they can just go to sleep. This is Laodicea.

What does He say is the remedy?

“I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou  
mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be  
clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear;  
and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.  
As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous

therefore, and repent" Revelation 3:18–19.

Here is the call to repentance. You notice in the symbolism here, there are three articles He offers for sale. What's the first? Gold. The second? White raiment. And the third? Eye salve—eye salve that we may see, white raiment that we may be clothed. This gold, as we've been told by inspiration, represents faith and love. Of the two, we're told that love is more important. Paul makes it clear in 1 Corinthians 13, which we've already quoted. Nothing in this world can take the place of love. Without love, all the rest is valueless.

Is it that way with you? How much would you give for a present that wasn't motivated by love? How much would you give for a service that wasn't given through love? How much joy would you get from anything that somebody might do for you or give to you unless they loved you? God is that way. He wants your love. If He has that, He's perfectly satisfied. He says that without this love, you are poor. Without this love, you are cold or lukewarm. But *with* this love, you'll have a rich, warm, vibrant, heavenly experience. Let's seek for it. What do you say?

I pray that in this hour of revival and reformation, we shall not descend to the low level of criticism and church tinkering. I pray that we shall be kept from all such.

May I read an interesting statement in the book *Evangelism*?

"There are many who try to correct the life of others by attacking what they consider are wrong habits. They go to those whom they think are in error, and point out their defects. They say, 'You don't dress as you should' *Evangelism*, page 272.

Did you ever do that? Were you ever *tempted* to do that? Did you, perhaps, labor under the compulsive thinking that you *had* to do it? Listen, going on:

"They try to pick off the ornaments, or whatever seems offensive, but they do not seek to fasten the mind to the truth. Those who seek to correct others should present the attractions of Jesus. They should talk of His love and compassion, present His example and sacrifice, reveal His Spirit, and they need not touch the subject of dress at all. There is no need to make the dress question the main point of your religion. There is something richer to speak of. Talk of Christ, and when the heart is converted, everything that is out of harmony with the Word of God will drop off. It is only labor in vain to pick leaves off a living tree. The leaves will reappear. The axe must be laid at the root of the tree, and then the leaves will fall off, never to return" *Ibid*.

We were talking earlier in our study tonight about a root called love, and the fruit growing on that tree is the fruit of obedience. If disobedience grows on the tree, the root of which is selfishness. And so, my dear friends, if we seek to labor with

human hearts by merely picking off leaves or fruit off the tree of selfishness, we'll never get through. As fast as we pick off a few leaves, the sap from within will cause more to grow. There's a better way: The axe must be laid at the root of the tree, and the root of this tree is selfishness. The problem is not the leaves. The problem is the root.

But how shall that be done? There is only one thing that will cut through selfishness, and that's love. There is only one axe that is sharp enough to sever the tree of selfishness. That's love. Oh, let's seek for that love to get rid of selfishness in our own lives and in the lives of others. What do you say?

*Ministry of Healing*, page 157:

"Of all people in the world, reformers should be the most unselfish, the most kind, the most courteous... As the dew and the still showers fall upon the withering plants, so let words fall gently when seeking to win men from error. God's plan is first to reach the heart. We are to speak the truth in love, trusting in Him to give it power for the reforming of the life" *Ministry of Healing*, page 157.

Would you like to know how you rate on Heaven's rate sheet? Did you know Heaven has a rate sheet to rate workers for God? It isn't how many texts we can repeat. It isn't how successful we can be in an argument. It isn't how much work we do. Listen:

"Christian workers who succeed in their efforts must know Christ; and in order to know Him, they must know His love. In heaven their fitness as workers is measured by their ability to love as Christ loved..."  
*The Acts of the Apostles*, page 551.

How do you rate? You can't rate yourself, but Heaven is rating you. It isn't how much you know. It isn't how much you do. It's how much you love. A child can love, can't it? Oh, yes. A blind person can love, can't he? An aged person can love, can't he? A cripple can love. Anybody can love, provided he'll get the love from Heaven.

Is there plenty there for us? Can we have more and more and more? What was it that took Jesus from Heaven and brought Him down to this world to live and die for us, what was it? Love, that's all. Does He still love us? Does He love us tonight? Do you suppose if we really want more of this love, we can have it?

The Loud Cry is going to be a burst of glory, and the glory is the glory of love. Don't think this means weakening any truth. It does not mean any compromise with evil. It does not mean any lowering of the standard. What was our first text tonight?

"This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous" 1 John 5:3.



Love roots will lead us to seek not pulling down of the standard. Love will lead us to want to go all the way. As the folks sang a little while ago, “I have decided to follow Jesus, no turning back, no turning back.” What do you say, friend?

Let me tell you how simple it is; the Devil would like to make it complex. If you and I will every day seek the Lord, and just give Him our heart’s choice, and ask Him for more of this love, and then *do* the thing we think will please Him.

Somebody says, “That’s the point. So many people tell me so many different things.” Sure they will. They’ve been doing that for 6,000 years. If you wait until they all agree as to just what you should do, you’d be hopelessly perplexed. This is why God has given us His Word. You can study it for yourself. This is why He has given us the privilege of prayer. You can get down on your knees.

You say, “I study and pray, and I’m not sure.”

Well, friend, let me make it very simple. Just do what you think will please Him. Can you get it any simpler than that? Just do what you think will please Him. Did you ever stand in a big department store trying to decide what to buy somebody for a present, a Christmas present or a birthday present or something like that? You think, “I wonder, oh, I wish I knew what would please them.” I want to tell you something, friend. No matter if you get something that was way out away from what they would pick out, if they know that you did it because you love them, they’ll be highly pleased. Wouldn’t you be?

What are we trying to do in all these matters? Earn our way to Heaven? Not a bit. We’re seeking to love the One who loved us and gave Himself for us. If you just do the thing in every line that you think would please Him, you’ll succeed, you *will* please Him. Do it in diet, do it in dress, do it in reading, do it in music, do it in education, do it in life’s work, do it in choice of friendship and association, do it in the spending of money, do it in exercise and rest, in work and play, do it in study and prayer—just one thing—to please Jesus because we love Him.

Oh friends, we can do that now, can we? Next week or next month we may know better what He would choose. But to please Him tonight, do the thing that we *think* would please Him.

Shall we bow our heads? Precious Lord, seal to our hearts the message of Thy love. Rightly interpret to our minds Thy holy Word. And give us the love for Thee and the love for others that will make us successful in the great work of gathering souls for Thy kingdom, for Jesus’ sake, amen.

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