

**“BELOVED”**  
**Rev. Gerie Martin**

I would like you to listen to this message from this point of view that “while we were still sinners, Christ loved us and died upon the cross because it was what we needed, even when we hated him.”

**How many of you know you are the “Beloved of God?”**

**1 John 1: 1-10**

<sup>1</sup>What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life

<sup>2</sup>and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us

<sup>3</sup>what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

<sup>4</sup>These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.

<sup>5</sup>This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.

<sup>6</sup>If we say that we have fellowship with Him and *yet* walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;

<sup>7</sup>but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

<sup>8</sup>If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.

<sup>9</sup>If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

<sup>10</sup>If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.

**1 John 2:7-12**

Beloved, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word which you have heard.

<sup>8</sup>On the other hand, I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true Light is already shining.

<sup>9</sup>The one who says he is in the Light and *yet* hates his brother is in the darkness until now.

<sup>10</sup>The one who loves his brother abides in the Light and there is no cause for stumbling in him.

<sup>11</sup> But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

<sup>12</sup> I am writing to you, little children, because your sins have been forgiven you for His name's sake.

### **3 John 1: 2**

<sup>2</sup> Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers.

John is writing this first at a time when apostolic doctrine is being challenged by a proliferation of false teachings. First John has both a negative and a positive thrust; it refutes erroneous doctrine and encourages those who read it to walk in the knowledge of the truth.

John lists the criteria and characteristics of fellowship with God and shows that those who abide in Christ can have confidence and assurance before Him. But it also introduces another concept by which we are required to live and walk and that is agape love towards one another.

As we walk in true fellowship with God our sins have been forgiven and we can enjoy fellowship with God but also with one another. It is when there is hidden sin in our lives that we have strife and anger and every other "evil thing," which then manifests between brothers and sisters in Christ and keeps us from the abiding love of God in our daily lives.

The overall theme of these three books from which we read, is the conclusion that sin is a threat to fellowship, and it should be regarded as foreign to the believer's position in Christ. The true believer stands with God against the satanic world system and the Holy Spirit of God within us produces true knowledge and communion with Christ. Therefore, the one who knows Him should avoid at all costs, avoid, which indicates choice, avoid the lure of any substitute.

How is John expressing this in these epistles? Let's look at the word and see.

On several occasions throughout these epistles he refers to the believers as his "beloved." When you know and understand what that one simple word means it changes entirely your concept of the love of God.

It means one who is held dear by another. But it is used scripturally only of Christians as they are united with God or with one another in the bonds of holy love. I.e. "beloved brethren."

In reference as to how God uses this word of love, it means God's willful direction towards mankind..... It involves God doing what He knows is best for mankind and not necessarily what man desires for himself or for those he loves.

This kind of love is not directed nor dictated by any emotional feeling; it is a direction of the will. The word tells us about God, the totality of god and who He is. God is love. This kind of love means we find our own joy by being of benefit to and enabling the welfare of something or someone other than self.

It is consistently looking outward in order to be of help and strength to someone else, without regard to receiving anything in return. Phileo love, emotional love, love on a friendship level always looks for a return benefit to self. This kind of love always looks inward... agape does not.

In other words, we may dislike someone, rather not be around them, but for their sake, because they have a need, I choose to do for them, no matter what I think or feel about them.

It means to love, to regard with favor, goodwill and benevolence. The effects of this benevolence are expressed by desiring to do good to or to wish well to one's neighbors or one's **enemies**.

This then begs the question, "who is my enemy?"

There is only one word in the New Testament that means enemy. It comes from the Greek word *ekh-thros*, which means somebody who hates you and is hostile towards you; an adversary, a foe, an enemy.; I.e. Satan and anyone who is not a beloved brother in Christ who hates you, even though you do not hate them.

If you remember scripture, Christ tells us to love our enemies, to do good to them. Even when hanging upon the cross he instructed us by saying, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." They were His enemies yet He did not hate them; He loved them, even as they crucified him. He loved them enough to die for them and even as He was dying by their hands He asked His Father to forgive them. He understood even though they did not, that this His enemy, Satan, was controlling the situation and they were being used as pawns.

This was a spiritual battle which originated in the spiritual realm and had spilled over into the physical realm, involving humans who had no real knowledge of what was transpiring. Jesus was showing agape love for those who were killing Him. He was doing what was best for them, even though they neither realized it nor desired it.

Sometimes we find ourselves in a like situation. God is allowing things in our lives for a reason and we don't like it nor recognize it as being from His hand for our best interest. (Romans 8:28)

We must always remember this; Satan is our enemy, not people. They don't know they are being used as a tool against us.

However, in regards to one's enemies, it does not mean to do whatever will please them in order to win them to Christ. It doesn't mean we go and sit in the bars or go gambling or act like they do, in order to be one of them.

What it does mean is to choose to show them favor and goodwill and do everything possible to bring them to knowledge of the lord. Bringing them to saving knowledge of Christ is the best thing we could ever do for them, even if they don't know it. We are to be the agape love of God poured out upon this earth so that they may see the contrast between the two kingdoms and desire the love of God in their lives.

In stark contrast to this agape kind of love is the understanding of what happens when we choose not to love the way God commands us. It means to neglect, disregard, condemn, etc. We have the ability and the full capability of choosing to disregard the needs of others and to condemn others, thereby cutting them off from the love of God, which is outright rebellion against God's word to us.

God is speaking today to those who say they are his "beloved." Remember, beloved is the outward, visibly seen expression of the agape love of God. This is the kind of love that we, as believers in Christ, are to always express to others, including those who hate us.

Now, having understanding of what John means by this greeting, "beloved", let's look at what the lord is saying through John to his people, including you and me.

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Turn to 3 John 1

The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth.

John's opening remarks are addressed to the elder, the beloved Gaius, to whom John expresses love, in truth. What does he mean by that expression, love in truth?

To understand this we must first ask the question "what is truth?" The biblical definition of truth is "the uncompromised word of God." Only the word of God is defined as truth. Therefore, when John is expressing love in truth, he is saying, "I love you Gaius, according to God's definition of love."

John is saying, "I choose to have your best interests at heart, and your welfare is of the utmost importance to me; I choose to pray for you, according to the will of God for your life, so you will be changed from glory to glory through the truth of God's word. I pray that you will continue to walk with him and remain with him eternally, as I have been given privilege.

John is saying, "I receive great joy because of you Gaius. We are co-joined in the bonds of faith and love, and you are a fellow worshipper of the true and living God. You are cherished, prized, treasured and held dear to my heart because you are a child of the living God and you worship Him in spirit and truth. You are 'beloved.'"

Notice here that John wasn't praising Gaius because of anything Gaius had done, which the further text supports. He had love (agape) for Gaius simply because he was a faithful and true follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was commending him; as he would his own child, (vs. 4) for simply doing what he had been taught. He was being a doer of the word.

He was praising him for the spiritual growth he saw in him and was taking great delight in it, just as God would in any of his children who were being obedient unto the word. Those who are "beloved of God," who know that He loves them with an everlasting, unconditional love have come to the place where they firmly believe they will never be taken out of His hand, are able to walk in this kind of love. They can exhibit this kind of love because they are secure in Christ's love for them.

They wish only the best for others; even their enemies, because they know they have everything they could ever want. They know they are loved beyond compare and will never be dispossessed by God. Those who are truly maturing in the understanding of their being the "beloved of God" will rejoice in the soul prosperity of others and they are glad to hear of the grace and goodness of God being extended to their brothers and sisters in Christ.

Even more so, they will rejoice in the gospel being preached to their enemies, even those who are bombing them and killing them and persecuting them, because they know God loves those people who are so deceived by Satan. **They truly care about and love those souls because they are so important to God.**

Gaius was being praised for having overlooked petty differences among the serious Christians, and freely helped all who bore the image and did the work of Christ. He was upright in what he did, proving himself a faithful servant of the Lord.

How does a faithful servant of God prove their faithfulness? By their righteous acts, which according to Rev.18 are the white robes of righteousness.

In praying such a prayer for Gaius, that he “be in health and prosper, even as his soul prospers,” John was asking God to “give him a pleasant trip in life.” He is wishing that everything will “go along well” for Gaius. He is expressing his hope that Gaius will be in as good physical health as he is spiritually.

His reason for expressing this may have been the fact that many strong souls in Christ are housed in weak bodies and therefore cannot accomplish the fullness of what the call of God is upon their lives. They have huge souls, spiritually, but are confined by their flesh. John is praying that Gaius may continue to do the work he has been called to do by remaining in good physical health.

When you come across someone that has a large soul in God, but are weak physically, pray for their body to be strengthened to enable them to do what He has called them to do. When you find a believer whose body is strong, but their soul and spirit are weak in the things of the spirit, pray that they will be strengthened by the Lord and that growth will come to their spirit. Help them in any way you can to grow up in Christ.

This is not the prayer and wish of a selfish, self-centered man. His entire focus is the kingdom of God and its increase. He is not interested in the increase of his personal “ministry” and his own well being. John has the same attitude as his mentor, Christ Jesus. The focus of Jesus was in the welfare of those whom God had given Him to teach. His prayers were for the welfare and growth of those entrusted to him by God.

Jesus was interested and concerned with the Jewish people, who were the apple of His eye. He was looking at His bride and he knew it. He wept and mourned over where she was and how she was unable to see Him for who He was and desire Him above all others. Paul was concerned with people, the souls of people and he tells us to “have the same mind that was in Christ.” The souls of people are to be our major concern as well. The battle in the spiritual arena is for the souls of men and women.

The apostle John, by expressing the word “beloved” to Gaius, is showing the understanding he had of how to live by the Spirit of God within him and not by his own flesh. As the Lord gave John the understanding of how He wants Himself to be expressed through him, John in turn expressed that love of God to Gaius by using the word “beloved.”

Vs 5 “Whatever you accomplish for the brethren and for strangers.” According to many reference books these two groups of people are not to be thought of as separate from one another. The brethren are the strangers to whom the hospitality is shown. This word ‘strangers’ is given in reference to those in the body of Christ whom we do not know physically, as yet. When we meet them or when they are in need of hospitality, we immediately step in to meet their need.

In Matthew 3:17 we hear God Himself expressing this word “beloved” in reference to Jesus. “And behold, a voice out of the heavens saying, ‘this is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’” This is an unusual use of this word (huios agapetos-son) “inherently beloved” means the only son; as being the object of a peculiar love. In the New Testament it is spoken and used only of Christ, the beloved Son of God, simply because He is the one and only Son of God.

And while the application is singular in this passage, referring only to Jesus rather than to the crowd at large, the meaning is exactly the same as the one word being used by John, in 3 John 2. “Beloved, the one who is held dear in my heart because we are like-minded in the things of God.”

Something very important happened at this time in Jesus life and it applies very strongly to us today. In this passage in Matthew 3:13-17, Christ does not deny that John needed to baptize Him; rather, He submits Himself to John in order to fulfill the scriptures. This is what the human understanding struggles with in scripture. The Christ, the anointed one of God, God Himself, seen in a perfect state of humiliation before mankind; before the very beings He created; before the very ones He came to save. False religions cannot accept that a God would humble Himself in this way. "My ways are not your ways, My thoughts are not your thoughts," says the Lord.

The creator of the human race and the entire universe came in subjugation to the human race in order to do what was best for them. He identified completely with us and He submitted to John the Baptist because it was necessary and the best thing He could ever do for us.

It wasn't to save His soul; it wasn't to enable Him to become wealthy; it wasn't to get what He wanted from mankind. **He walked in this act of submission because it was the very best thing He could do for us! It was what we needed, not what He needed or even wanted to do. It was necessary that He do this because it was the only way we could come to God!**

Matthew Henry's commentary says this: the Lord Jesus looked upon this act as needful in order for Him to fulfill all righteousness, to accept every divine institution and to show His readiness to comply with all of God's righteous precepts, no matter what it cost Him personally. This is exactly the pattern the Lord desires and expects from our lives as well.

In and through this act of humiliation and love the heavens are opened to the children of mankind. The way into the presence of God was made for us through the obedience of Christ.

At his baptism there was a manifestation, for the first time, of all three members of the trinity. **The Father confirming the Son to be the mediator between Himself and a sinful people; the Son willingly submitting Himself to the will of the Father for this work on our behalf; the Holy Spirit descending upon Him, enabling Him to be the communicator and intercessor for all those God will call to Himself.** This last portion of the trinity is what applies to us and to our work on God's behalf.

We have been given the same spirit for the same purpose, to communicate to those whom God calls to himself. Because Christ was willing to give up his heavenly position, his heavenly wealth and authority and allow God to use him in any way that was needful for mankind, He is referred to by God as "His beloved Son." In doing so, God was saying to Jesus, "because You have chosen the way that is not the easiest for You, because You have done this for My sake, so that I may have the family I have always desired from among men; because You laid aside all Your personal desires and are willing to face whatever may come to You so that mankind may have what they need, rather than what they want, You are My 'beloved Son.'" You are loved beyond comprehension with the fullness of My love.

Because Christ has made the way for all mankind, we dare not deny any, friend or enemy alike, the knowledge that Christ has put within us to share with them. If Christ was called to walk humbly before the very beings He created, who considered Him their enemy, in order to win them for God, how can we do any less?

Our minds have a hard time grasping this concept of this kind of love because most of us have never experienced it. It is totally foreign to our way of thinking of love, which is primarily conditional in nature. And because we cannot conceive of it, we do not know how to walk in it.

Our only true example comes from the word of God, showing us the life of Jesus and the choices He made that enabled Him to walk this way.

There are only two words in the New Testament for “beloved.” One expresses the Father’s love for his Son and the other is the beloved, which expresses the agape love of God to us and through us. To walk this way is a requirement of those who say they are the “beloved of God.”

What then are we to make of all of this? What is the Lord saying to you and to me when He tells us to love our enemies, to pray for our enemies? He is saying to us today: “choose, as My Son did, to show them who I truly am. The enemy has distorted their vision of Me and has lied about Me. Tell them the truth; show them, by your very life walk, who I truly am. Let them see Me in and through My Son’s life being lived in you.

Your flesh will not like it anymore than my Son’s flesh liked it. The flesh does not want to live this way, it wants to serve itself, but do not allow it to do so. The apostle Paul stated it so succinctly when he said, “I beat my flesh, I make it obey me.”

Jesus was not ruled by his flesh and neither was Paul. They learned, by doing, how to submit the flesh to the power of My Spirit and in doing so, brought forth the fruits of the Spirit in their lives for all to see.

My spirit within Him enabled my Son. My Spirit within him enabled Paul. You also are more than able through the Spirit of Christ who strengthens you. “Beloved, I pray that you will be in health and prosper, even as your soul prospers.”

Child, your soul is what must be changed so that it can manifest My glory upon this earth. You make the choice daily for whichever road you are to travel.

If you choose the higher ground you will have struggles, but you will overcome and sit on My throne with Me. If you choose the higher ground you will face tribulations and sorrow in this world, but be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world. If you choose the higher ground men will not love you because they do not understand the love you are giving any more than they understood Me.

If you choose the higher ground of speaking the truth in love, you will be hated by all men who do not love the truth; by men who love darkness and wickedness. But if you choose the higher ground you will be forged into a mighty army of those who choose to live with Me in my holy temple along with others who dare to close the door to their old lives and launch out in the fullness of My love and My Spirit.

I read to you from the book of Jude, first from the introductory pages and then from the book itself, in which Jude, the physical brother of Jesus also uses this term “beloved” to those who are in the faith.

Fight! Contend! Do battle! When apostasy arises, when false teachers emerge, when the truth of god’s word is attacked, it is time to fight for the faith! Only believers who are ready and in shape spiritually can answer this summons. Only those who have a constant supply of the Holy Spirit will be ready to move at a moment’s notice when the Spirit nudges us to action. Remember the parable of the 10 virgins and always be ready in my Spirit to respond to my call.

Jude is warning the believers that false teachers have crept into the church, turning God’s grace into unbounded license to do as they please. In the face of such danger he warns us that

Christians should not be caught off guard. The key thought in Jude is that we are to contend for the faith and one of the main ways we do this is by speaking the truth in love, no matter what the consequences.

We are to be ready “in season and out” to share the word of God to the unbeliever with the hope of planting, watering or reaping; And also with the believer to encourage, strengthen, build up and release from bondage.

Jude is a letter written to believers and it was written for two major purposes.

First, to condemn the practices of the ungodly libertines who were in the churches corrupting the believers'. Secondly, to counsel the believers who were standing firm, to grow in their faith and contend for the truth. In Jude those who stand firm are encouraged to reach out to those who have been misled. Jude addresses his letter to believers who are “called, beloved and kept.” The call of God today is also to His “beloved.” He is speaking to His bride, those who are remaining faithful to the truth and are doing the word.

He is calling to His church to go out into the harvest fields because the time is short and the harvest is vast. He tells us to pray for the Lord of the harvest to send workers into the harvest. He is telling us the time is short and everyone is needed. He is asking, no “commanding” His beloved to respond to them the same way He would.

Our flesh wants to say, “They don’t deserve it.” Amen, they don’t, but neither do we and still God calls us His “beloved.”

What can we say in the face of such overwhelming love and truth except “Father forgive us, we didn’t understand what it means to love in this way.”

Help us Father; forgive us our sins and unwillingness to go into the harvest fields that are all around us “white unto harvest.” Change our hearts, oh God.”

You call me “beloved, Papa.” Oh Lord, may I walk worthily of that call upon my life. May I always walk by the power of your Spirit and the anointing you have given, as I choose to “love those whom I know, love those whom I don’t know and love those who are my enemies because they don’t know You.”

“Beloved, I pray that you will be in health and prosper, even as your soul prospers.”

That is my prayer for you today, in every aspect of your life. True, spiritual prosperity of the spirit, mind and soul with the end result of your walking in divine revelation, divine health, divine prosperity and divine power!

The Father says to you, “Beloved, joy of My heart’s desire, I love you!”

**Blessings and Love,  
Rev. Gerie Martin**