

Audio Transcript of Sermon
September 27, 2021
Feast of Tabernacles: The Perfection of Charity

Hello. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Tom Laign with Sabbath Bible Study. During this Feast of Tabernacles, we have studied faith, hope, and love. Without these intertwined as one, almost like a strand of DNA, it is impossible to obtain salvation as each of these is needed individually and collectively to achieve this. We tend to think of love as a New Testament concept, and yet the concept of love is taught in the Old Testament, where love and righteousness are linked together, where the commandments are also linked to love.

We'll begin today in the Book of Leviticus and read a passage where we are taught that in all of the decisions and choices we make, what we do must be based on righteousness without regard to the wealth or social status of an individual. Whatever decisions we might arrive at will be based not on who the person is but the merits of the circumstances. In the same passage we are told not to be a gossip, or seek the destruction or harm of others. We are not to seek vengeance or revenge but to love others as ourselves. From the New Testament, we know this is a summary of the ten commandments that show how we are to act with other people. Leviticus nineteen verse fifteen.

Leviticus 19:15-18

15. Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.

16. Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I am the LORD.

17. Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.

18. Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.

Within our relationships we know that sometimes relationships with family can be the hardest to maintain. We tend to be closest to family and when relationships are close, hypocrisy is easier to see. Most adverse family relationships are born from hypocrisy, where one family member sees an error in the way another

family member says or does something and feelings get hurt. On the other hand, friends tend not to have this problem, because friends tend to either be just like us or complement us. Proverbs seventeen verse seventeen.

Proverbs 17:17

17. A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.

Where there is division and strife there is hatred. Love will work through division and strife to bring unity. In many ways, love covers all sins. Love will find a way to forgive sins. Proverbs ten verse twelve.

Proverbs 10:12

12. Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins.

There are some who will read Proverbs ten verse twelve and use that verse to coerce silence in cases of criminal acts or abuse. Having love does not require any person to submit to and be a victim of a criminal act or abuse. Having love does not require a person to withhold reporting a criminal act or abuse when the law compels the person to do so. There is no love in compelling a person to be silent when the person is a victim of crime or abuse. When a person lacks capacity to report themselves as the victim of crime or abuse, there is love in reporting on that person's behalf.

In many extended families, family get-togethers can be challenging because of conflict within the families. Animosity, rivalry, and disputes take the place of family love and concern. Proverbs shows that it is best to have less and have love than to have more and have conflict. Proverbs fifteen verse seventeen.

Proverbs 15:17

17. Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.

When we think of the type of love we can have for others, we need to go beyond human consideration of love and look at how God shows love to all of us. It is God who forgives our sins and heals our diseases. It is God who keeps us from our own destruction while at the same time showing us love and kindness. It is God who gives us that which is good and defends people who are oppressed. God is slow to

anger and rich in mercy. God is not only the one who removes our sins far from us, it is God who pities those who live with awesome respect of God. Psalm one hundred three verse one.

Psalm 103:1-22

- 1. Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.**
- 2. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:**
- 3. Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;**
- 4. Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;**
- 5. Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.**
- 6. The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.**
- 7. He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.**
- 8. The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.**
- 9. He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever.**
- 10. He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.**
- 11. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.**
- 12. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.**
- 13. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him.**
- 14. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.**
- 15. As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.**
- 16. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.**
- 17. But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;**
- 18. To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.**
- 19. The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.**
- 20. Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.**
- 21. Bless ye the LORD, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure.**

22. Bless the LORD, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul.

Love, in the absence of obedience to God is insufficient for salvation. There are some who believe that all we have to do is love and all else is done away. We can look at the letter to the church in Thyatira to see how in error that concept is. Thyatira was known by Jesus to have works, love, service, faith, and patience. Thyatira was also known by Jesus to be increasing in works where as time went along, more and more was done. A concern brought to Thyatira was its practice of blending religious practices. The church allowed pagan practices to become part of the religious practice, and when given the opportunity to repent of this wrong practice, the church did not repent. We cannot allow non-Christian practices to creep into our faith unless we want to share in the concerns with Thyatira. Revelation two verse eighteen.

Revelation 2:18-29

18. And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass;

19. I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first.

20. Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

21. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.

22. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.

23. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

24. But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.

25. But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.

26. And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:

27. And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.

28. And I will give him the morning star.

29. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Love needs to be the basis of everything we do spiritually. When we desire spiritual gifts it is based on love. Even the gift of prophecy, or inspired preaching, needs to be based on love. Without love as the basis, the spiritual gifts that we do have will be of no effect. First Corinthians fourteen verse one.

1 Corinthians 14:1-5

1. Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy.

2. For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries.

3. But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.

4. He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.

5. I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.

When we stand fast in the faith, when we watch and pray, when we are strong, everything that we do must be done with love. First Corinthians sixteen verse thirteen.

1 Corinthians 16:13-14

13. Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.

14. Let all your things be done with charity.

As the elect of God, we are to be merciful and kind as we live a life of humility and patience so that we may tolerate and forgive others. Love is the bond of perfectness. Where there is strife and disunity, love is lacking. We are to allow the peace of God to rule our hearts with a perspective of gratitude. When we lack gratitude for what God has done for us, it is like we only look to ourselves with

pride to acknowledge our accomplishments. Even when we work very hard for what we have, our ability to work hard and to obtain what we have is a gift of God that comes through gratitude, which is a reciprocation of the love that God has shown us. Colossians three verse twelve.

Colossians 3:12-17

12. Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

13. Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

14. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

15. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

16. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

17. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

When writing to Timothy, Paul advised of the need to avoid fables and genealogies, questionable and debatable matters within the Bible. These tend to cause questions rather than impart understanding within the church which comes through faith. Our goal in all that we do should be love. If we love with a pure heart, have a good conscience, and aren't faking our beliefs we are doing well. Some people have deviated from the faith by pursuing a tangent of the truth that focuses on that concept instead of the truth. First Timothy one verse three.

1 Timothy 1:3-7

3. As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine,

4. Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do.

5. Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:

6. From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling;

7. Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

Knowledge and love are two components of our relationship with God. Knowledge can make us feel bigger than we are. If all we have is knowledge what sets us aside is our brain that is filled with facts and figures from the Bible, not a source of faith of and by itself. Contrast knowledge to love, and love helps us to build each other up. Through love we become stronger. Through love we understand what we know. When we love God, God loves us. We never use love as a stumbling block for others. First Corinthians eight verse one.

1 Corinthians 8:1-9

- 1. Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.**
- 2. And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.**
- 3. But if any man love God, the same is known of him.**
- 4. As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.**
- 5. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, as there be gods many, and lords many,**
- 6. But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.**
- 7. Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.**
- 8. But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.**
- 9. But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.**

In his letter, Peter shows that Jesus died and was resurrected for us in an act of ultimate love, adding that if we want to repay this love, it is by not living our life after the lusts of the flesh but by living our life through the power of the Holy Spirit, by having fervent love one for another. First Peter four verse one.

1 Peter 4:1-11

- 1. Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;**
- 2. That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.**
- 3. For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries:**
- 4. Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you:**
- 5. Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.**
- 6. For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.**
- 7. But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.**
- 8. And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.**
- 9. Use hospitality one to another without grudging.**
- 10. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.**
- 11. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.**

Paul pointed out to the Thessalonians that it was Timothy who pointed out the love that they had along with their faith, and how word of their faith brought comfort to Paul and his travelling companions during times of trouble. First Thessalonians three verse six.

1 Thessalonians 3:6-10

- 6. But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you:**

- 7. Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith:**
- 8. For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.**
- 9. For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God;**
- 10. Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?**

Knowledge that the Thessalonians had love for each other was well-known within the early church, to the point where when the Thessalonians faced trials and tests of faith, the early church knew their love would lead the way through, that they would be found worthy by God of the Kingdom of God knowing that God would repay all who brought them harm. Second Thessalonians one verse three.

2 Thessalonians 1:3-10

- 3. We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;**
- 4. So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:**
- 5. Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:**
- 6. Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;**
- 7. And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,**
- 8. In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:**
- 9. Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;**
- 10. When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, because our testimony among you was believed, in that day.**

In Peter's second letter, he shows that love is the apex of our faith. We start faith with a belief that leads us to virtue. As we start to believe, we change how we act. As we change how we act, we begin to acquire knowledge as we develop points of reference in our faith. Beyond knowledge is temperance, the ability to be self-

restrained, patience and godliness. Beyond godliness are brotherly kindness and love. Love is the apex of all of these spiritual qualities. If we truly have love, we have these other qualities as well. With this spiritual quality checklist we have from Peter, we can use this as a guide to see how we compare, and to make our calling and election sure so that we do not fall. Second Peter one verse two.

2 Peter 1:2-11

2. Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

3. According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

4. Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

5. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

6. And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;

7. And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

8. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

10. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

11. For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

In Hebrews, we are told to let brotherly love continue. The love that we have for each other in the church can grow and fade depending upon circumstances. Whatever situation we may see within the church either during the feast or in the upcoming years, we are to let brotherly love continue, remembering to be hospitable, and not forgetting those who are imprisoned. In all we are to be content with those things that we have knowing that God will never leave us or forsake us, giving us an attitude that correctly considers with God as our helper no person can withstand us. Hebrews thirteen verse one.

Hebrews 13:1-6

- 1. Let brotherly love continue.**
- 2. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.**
- 3. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.**
- 4. Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.**
- 5. Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.**
- 6. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.**

In John's first letter, we are told to love one another and also told that love is a sign we are born of God and know God. If we are without love, we cannot know God because God is love, who manifested His love for us by sending Jesus Christ to be a sacrifice for us. It is through this that love becomes perfect within us. There is no fear in love. Love is the opposite of fear. If we do not have love it is because we have fear. With God who is for us, we have nothing to fear. If we love God we must also love our brothers and sisters in Christ, or else we live a lie. First John four verse seven.

1 John 4:7-21

- 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.**
- 9. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.**
- 10. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.**
- 11. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.**
- 12. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.**
- 13. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.**

- 14. And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.**
- 15. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.**
- 16. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.**
- 17. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.**
- 18. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.**
- 19. We love him, because he first loved us.**
- 20. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?**
- 21. And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.**

Because Jesus died for us in the ultimate act of love, we need to have love for each other and walk in love instead of the lusts of the flesh. We are to avoid others who walk in the flesh, and are not to be deceived by their words because they don't have the truth. As we have love for one another we will submit to one another. Ephesians five verse one.

Ephesians 5:1-21

- 1. Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;**
- 2. And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.**
- 3. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;**
- 4. Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.**
- 5. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.**
- 6. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.**
- 7. Be not ye therefore partakers with them.**

- 8. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:**
- 9. For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;**
- 10. Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.**
- 11. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.**
- 12. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.**
- 13. But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.**
- 14. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.**
- 15. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,**
- 16. Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.**
- 17. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.**
- 18. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;**
- 19. Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;**
- 20. Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;**
- 21. Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.**

Paul summed up the importance of love in his first letter to the Corinthians by sharing that a person can sound angelic, and if they are without love, their words are hollow. A person can be a person of deep faith, and if their faith is without love, their faith is meaningless. A person can be generous and share what they have with others who are in need, and even this can be done without love. With love comes deep patience. Love is not jealous of the success of others, nor does love try to make itself better or bigger than reality.

Love does not act up or seek selfish gain. It is hard to make love angry because love does not focus on what is evil. Love rejoices in truth and avoids sin. Love can endure all things, hope for all things, believe all things, and patiently wait in all things. Love never fails.

Prophecy can fail, and languages can die out. Knowledge can be lost. Childhood pursuits are not important to adults, and what we understand has evolved over

time. Faith, hope, and love are important to who we are as a Christian, but the greatest is love. First Corinthians thirteen verse one.

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

- 1. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.**
- 2. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.**
- 3. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.**
- 4. Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,**
- 5. Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;**
- 6. Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;**
- 7. Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.**
- 8. Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.**
- 9. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.**
- 10. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.**
- 11. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.**
- 12. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.**
- 13. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.**

Whether for the remainder of this holy day season or the rest of our lives, within each of us we have faith, hope, and love. God is love, and if we are to become like God, we must also have love. Faith, hope, and love are all very important, and love is the greatest of these.

Thank you for joining us today. God-willing we'll get together tomorrow as we celebrate the Last Great Day. Until then, thank you for joining us today.