

# Love Your Neighbor

Roger Tointon—November 3, 2018

Greetings, everybody, on God's Sabbath Day, wherever you may be scattered over the 'fruited plain'! I know that those of you who were able to go to the Feast, most of you, thankfully had a great Feast.

Six days ago I was able to take a little time from work and went with my grandson, my wife Sherry and my youngest daughter to go miniature golfing. Miniature golfing and I do not get along too well. I'm sure that Roger Kendall will appreciate this because he always wants to beat me when we play together. But I only have this to say about the experience: If my score has absolutely anything to do with me getting into the Kingdom of God, I have not a prayer!

If I seem a little cautious about how I present this today, that's because I talked to Fred last night and I found out that he has a new gadget up here in the ceiling that if I start preaching any heresy, he pushes a button, and ZAP! Lighting strikes! {JOKE!}

Galatians 5:13—Paul had been talking about the circumcision issue: "For you have been called unto freedom... [under the New Covenant you don't have to go through that physically] ...brethren; only **do not use this freedom for an occasion to the flesh**... [that is so true for us] ...rather, serve one another with love. **For the whole Law**... [of God] **...is fulfilled in this commandment: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'**" (vs 13-14).

An awful lot is wrapped up in that! We can't begin to touch upon all of it today. How does loving your neighbor, your brethren... Not only your brethren, you see the great implication of Christ's commandment on it. ***It's to be at peace with everybody, everybody out there in the world!*** I don't care how much they persecute you, or are against you, you're not to rile back against them! Christ gave that example, ***as He set the example all the way down through everything God's commands you and me!***

How does that fulfill the whole Law of God? In the books of Moses there is the Law of God. It is spelled out in all the ways that Moses had to bring the Law to the people to Israel. The rest of the world did not know it, and they still don't. They do not know about the Law and what it really is. ***But the Law of God has everything to do with you and me loving each other and loving God! The Law of God simple reflects the love of God!***

The Church has always had a problem in understanding that very thing: *the love of God*. I

think it's why so many in the Church still do not understand it.

Deuteronomy 10:12—Moses says: "And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you... [he's being straightforward] ...but **to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways**... [walk according to the Law] **...and to love Him, and to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul**."

Of course, you're familiar with that statement and more added to it (Matthew, Mark and Luke). You can go to Deut. 6; it was right here and given to Israel. It started there, because *the Law of God started there as far as relating to the people of God!* People that God was going to work with.

Deut. 30 brings out another aspect that is not brought out here; Deuteronomy 30:1: "And it shall be when all these things..." *This is after Moses gave them the blessings and the curses* (Deut. 28). If you read through it, it gets very graphic, especially in the curses if they were to refuse to obey. So, as a warning to us! "And it shall be when all these things..."—all the things that he is saying and outlined there.

"...have come on you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you..." (v 1). God—through Moses—had set it before them that they had to make a choice. Is it any different for us today? *No! God has set things before us in a much more magnified way, through the Spirit of God, for us to make a choice!* So, we have the same obligation.

"...and when you shall call *them* to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God has driven you" (v 1). Coming down here to Deut. 30, this is a prophecy for the future. In fact it's a prophecy all the way to the time yet ahead of us. We don't know how long. It seems shorter and shorter, and, of course, it is in one sense! *It's a prophecy of what's going to happen!*

Verse 2: "And shall return to the LORD your God and shall obey His voice according to all that I command you today, you and your children, with all your heart and with all your soul."

Moses is saying that there is a time when God is going to rescue His people, but first they're going to have to go into captivity. They're going to have to go down to absolutely nothing! They're going to have to get in a very bad state of affairs, before they can come back to God.

Verse 3: "Then the LORD your God will turn *away* your captivity. And He will have

compassion on you... [that will happen] ...and will return and gather you from all the nations where the LORD your God has scattered you. If you are driven out into the outermost *parts* of the heavens..." (vs 3-4)—and so on.

Verse 5: "And the LORD your God will bring you into the land, which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it. And He will do you good and multiply you above your fathers." *In other words, their blessings will be greater!* They very definitely will because of:

Verse 6: "And **the LORD your God will circumcise your heart...**" *That did not happen in Moses' day, and the forefathers of Israel at that time. It will be different in the future.*

"...and the heart of your seed, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live" (v 6). *In this case, this is a prophecy of living forever! Eternity with God!* So, Moses goes clear on beyond the present! That is a absolutely encouraging thing!

We can find where God is really trying to get through to **us** in a completely different way in some aspects.

John 15:9: "**As the Father has loved Me...** [it starts with the Father] **...I also have loved you...**" *The Father starts the process; it goes through Christ and Christ follows the dictates and will of the Father.*

"...live in My love.... [What is that?]: **...If you keep My commandments, you shall live in My love...**" (vs 9-10). That gets right back to what our forefathers in Israel were told:

- you do these things
- you obey Me
- you fear Me

**and you will have a good life!** That's what they were promised, *a good physical life!* But they were not given the promise that we have. That's why our calling today is so phenomenal! We do not really grasp what God has offered us, but we should more and more as we draw closer to God.

"...just as I have kept My Father's commandments... [*Christ doesn't expect us to do anything that He did not do Himself*] ...and live in His love. These things I have spoken to you, in order that My joy may dwell in you, and that your joy may be full" (vs 10-11). *God wants our joy to be full!*

He knows that it will be if we submit to Him in the right way. But we have to become conscious of just what that means.

Verse 12: "**This is My commandment: that you love one another, as I have loved you.**" *There*

*we go! The Father is love!* The Father starts the whole process of implementing the plan that He and the Word agreed upon. Christ agreed to give up His glory with the Father and come here below. **That was the greatest act of love that ever has been!**

We really have a problem of really inculcating that in a way that we can really, really know down deep in our heart and soul what that really means!

- it means the whole future
- it means eternity

**that's been offered to us!**

John has some very pertinent things to say to add to that. Let's try to understand better just how it works.

1-John 4:7: "Beloved, we should love one another **because love is from God...**" *That's right! The whole thing!* This is not something that we have come up with; this is not something that we conjure up

It had to start with the Father and He had to call us and open our mind before we could love Him, and before we could love each other in a Godly way. It was just not possible before then. You may think so, but you put it all together and Scripture shows that it is absolutely not possible. It had to be *God's way*, so He started the process and He gave us to Christ to work with.

What did Christ do? *He had already, long before, agreed to give up His glory so that the whole thing could work and come here below and become our Sacrifice.* So, He says that we should love one another because love is from God!

"...and everyone who loves has been begotten by God, and knows God" (v 7).

Look! You cannot be begotten by God until He calls you. You can't say, 'I'm going to know God.' You hear people walk around all the time in certain circles talking about the Lord and how that they talk to the Lord and He talks to them. Well, that may be, but I don't think it's the one we know. **God has to draw us!** "...and everyone who loves has been begotten and knows God"

What does it say in another place? *Christ said, 'No one can know the Father unless I reveal the Father to you.'* We did not know God the Father. Israel never knew God the Father. They only knew the One Who worked with them at the time. We know today—because it's been revealed to us by the Holy Spirit—that that was the pre-incarnate Christ.

- How much of the world knows that?  
*If you tell them:*
- How many of them are going to believe it?

- How many of them won't get angry at you when you tell them?

*They will say that we're worshipping a different 'God'! Well, that's true, we do! I had a preacher man say that to me when I was trying to find a place for us to meet. When he went online and saw what this Fred Coulter was all about and what we stood for and believed, he couldn't wait to call me up. He had lost my number, and when I got a hold of him he said he was trying to get a hold of me. He wanted to let me know that I worshipped a different 'God'! He did, he let me know! I tried to be meek and I didn't respond in kind, but I said, 'That's too bad!'*

Verse 8: **"The one who does not love does not know God because God is love."** Therefore, everything else is...

They didn't have to create us! They didn't have to create all the things that we see here below that He created for us so that we could have and be sustained, and to live on a beautiful Earth. It is an extremely unique planet in the universe, and it's going to be the center of the universe. Think about that! That's because of God's will!

- He has set it up that way
- He has designed it that way

We have the blessing of God's love in being here and being able to be a part of all of this now, and all that He promises for the future. That is an amazing, amazing thing!

Verse 9: "In this way the love of God was manifested toward us: that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, so that we might live through Him." *That's exactly as the process must work!*

Christ is taking care of us, but we have our part to do. That's why the going gets kind of tough at times. As we stray off of the path, He has to bring us back. How does He do that? *Through a thing called 'trial by fire.'* You play with fire and you get burned is what we used to tell our children. It's true for us, too! So, He has to deal with us in that way, as a father would with his son.

Verse 10: "In this act is the love—not that we loved God; rather, that **He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.**" *The love comes from God! We must love Him back!* But we cannot do that without some other things.

Verse 11: "Beloved, if God so loved us, **we also are duty-bound to love one another.**" Why is that?

1-Cor. 2 shows another very, very important thing. I've touched all around it already; 1-Corinthians 2:9: "But according as it is written, 'The

eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.'" Again, Paul is speaking of those whom the Father calls. We cannot love God—we can't even know God—until that happens.

Verse 10: "But God has revealed them to us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things—even the deep things of God."

That's the other ingredient that changes the whole thing between us and Moses' day; it's the Spirit of God that He knew He had to send in order to have the New Covenant, and in order to have firstfruits *at the end of this age when all hell is truly going to break loose!* It will because of sin, and mankind's absolute refusal to accept things God's way!

What about us? *We know better, because God has revealed it to us and we can understand it in our heart!* We can begin to actually love God. This is not something that we conjure up. ***That love comes from God, and through His Spirit enables us to love Him back!***

Verse 11: "For who among men understands the things of man except by the spirit of man... [that gives us intellect] ...which is in him? In the same way also, the things of God no one understands except by the Spirit of God. Now, we have not received the spirit of the world, **but the Spirit that is of God, so that we might know the things graciously given to us by God**" (vs 11-12). *Everything we have, both physical and spiritual, comes from God!*

Verse 14: "But the natural man... [everybody around us out there that God has not called] ...does not receive the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him..." *It seems that way!* You sit down and try to explain and you'll find out in a hurry that it's foolishness to them. *We're not in that same boat!*

1-John 2:3: "And by this standard we know that we know Him [God]: if we keep His commandments. The one who says, 'I know Him' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him. On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word, truly **in this one the love of God is being perfected**..." (vs 3-5). *That's what God wants!* He wants to see that in you and me. Why?

For some reason He decided to call us! He reached out and He turned our lives upside down! We're still here; that means we responded to however great a degree, but a lot of years have gone by and we're still here and we're still wanting to learn more, understand more. God says that's good,

because we are responding to His love and we're going to grow in His love.

Matthew 19:16: "Now at that time, one came to Him *and* said, 'Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?'.... [yes, people would like to know that] ...And He said to him, 'Why do you call Me good? No one *is* good except one—God. But if you desire to enter into life, keep the commandments.' Then he said to Him, 'Which?'...." (vs 16-18). What did Christ say? *He didn't go to the first, second, third or fourth commandment!*

"...And Jesus said, 'You shall not commit murder...'" (v 18). What is murder? Who does it affect? *Your fellow man!*

"...you shall not commit adultery..." (v 18). If you commit adultery, what are you doing? *You're affecting another human being, and probably many more than that!*

"...you shall not steal..." (v 18). Have you ever had anything ripped off? *It hurts!* We don't want that to happen to us. So, if you do that to others, you're affecting your fellow man.

"...you shall not bear false witness" (v 18). How much trouble has that caused people? *It's all about sins against your neighbor! or your brother in the Church!*

That's why it so sad when you see some of this going on in the Church of God. How many divisions in the Church of God are there? *Well, there's way, way too many!* Why are there divisions? *Because people get wrong ideas and they can't keep them to themselves, then they cause problems!* They cause division and trouble! What does it do? *It really affects other brethren!* Some of those brethren are gone; they fade away and couldn't handle it. That was their problem, maybe. Yet, where did it start? *By somebody else!*

We have to think of that every time we have a relationship with brethren, because God says that if we cannot love each other, then how can we love Him? We can see each other, but we can't see God. How can we love God? (1-John 4:20). We have to keep that in mind.

I wonder how much dedication, how much commitment... If you go to Matt. 22:37-40 and you read the two great commandments: *You're to love God with all your soul, mind, heart and being,* and Luke and Mark add *all your strength!* ***Everything in you has to be committed to God!***

- Are we up to that standard?
  - Is that really what drives us day-by-day?
- Because if you're that committed to God:*
- What does that mean? *You have to divorce*

*yourself from the world!*

Yes, we have to live in the world! God knows that! Christ knew that, and He mentioned that in His prayer the night before He died! But ***we have to not be part of the world as the world is!*** That way we can be more committed to God.

But I think back to how I was raised and what my parents had to go through. They had absolutely nothing in this world. They lived in very hard times; the big crash had occurred a year before they got married. Then the Great Depression that went on and on. There was absolutely nothing, and they had nothing, and they produced nothing in their whole life that anybody would notice.

Yet, they had a faith through it all. They were dedicated! The only thing they had, the only thing they produced was us three boys, two years apart each. That was their commitment, but they did so with an absolute faith in God through it all. They knew they didn't have anything. They did not know the true God, they did not know how to truly keep His commandments, because that was blindness. God hadn't called them. But they did it and went through all of those trials without being a victim. They did not have a victim mentality.

What do you see today? *Compare that to today!* It should inspire us to do more in our commitment to doing it God's way. They died believing in God, as they had all through it. They were not perfect people; don't get me wrong. But they had that faith.

God has opened our minds! We cannot only have that belief and faith, but we can have it with knowledge! ***We can know God!***

- Are we going to spurn that?
- Are we in any way let down that commitment to God?

***That's the love of God! You can love God in that way when you are committed in that way!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) Galatians 5:13-14
- 2) Deuteronomy 10:12
- 3) Deuteronomy 30:1-6
- 4) John 15:9-12
- 5) 1 John 4:7-11
- 6) 1 Corinthians 2:9-12, 14
- 7) 1 John 2:3-5
- 8) Matthew 19:16-18

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Deuteronomy 6; 28
- 1 John 4:20
- Matthew 22:37-40

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