**1 Peter: Love One Another from the Heart, Pt 2**

1 Peter 1:22

**Context**

**1 Peter 1:22-25**—Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, **23**for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God. **24**For, “All flesh is like grass, And all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, And the flower falls off,**25**But the word of the Lord endures forever.” And this is the word which was preached to you.

The particular emphasis that Peter wants the reader to understand is a response to the salvation that is theirs in Christ motivated by the love of God toward them (and us). In response to such a glorious gift, we are to fervently love one another from the heart (**v22**).

The scripture is replete with passages on how we are to love one another:

**John 13:34**—A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

**John 15:12**—This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.

**Romans 12:10**—Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor

**Philippians 1:9**— And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment

**1 Thessalonians 3:12**—and may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all people, just as we also do for you

**4:9**—Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another

**2 Thessalonians 1:3**—We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brethren, as is only fitting, because your faith is greatly enlarged, and the love of each one of you toward one another grows ever greater

**2 Peter 1:7**—and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love.

**1 John 3:23**—This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us.

**Because of Your Salvation, Love Others Sincerely**

1. **Because you’ve purified your souls**

**1 Peter 1:22a**—Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls…

1. Genuine love is a defining characteristic of believers

**John 13:35**—By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

1. In contrast, unbelievers cannot love in this way

**3:10**—By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.

1. The capacity to love this way comes at salvation
   1. At salvation (obedience to the truth), they purified their souls
   2. This purification is a past action with continuing results[[1]](#footnote-2)
   3. Christ’s work purifies us from our past sins
   4. And gives us new capabilities for the present as well as the future

**2 Corinthians 5:17**—Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

* 1. He has put a new spirit within us

1. The purifying work is not by human effort, but is a fully divine work

**Romans 11:6**—But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace.

**2 Thessalonians 2:13**—But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.

1. Obedience to the truth is an inherent element of genuine saving faith
   1. Peter references this obedience earlier

**2**according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure.

**14**As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance

* 1. Obedience and faith go hand in hand
  2. That said, faith is a free gift of God but will result in obedience (**Ephesian 2:8**)
  3. And it will result in a love toward others

**1 John 4:7-8**—Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. **8**The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

1. **Because there are believers to love**

**1 Peter 1:22b**—… for a sincere love of the brethren

1. At salvation, the Holy Spirit unites believers into the fellowship
2. We become members of Christ’s church
   1. He then affords us the ability to have a sincere love
   2. Without such spirit-empowerment, we would have no ability to act on this command
3. Sincere—not hypocritical

**Romans 12:10**—Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor

* 1. This type of love supersedes earthly affections
  2. It also becomes a magnet to attract unbelievers

**John 13:34-35**—A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. **35**By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

1. Love of the Brethren (phileo)—love of brothers or sisters; fraternal affection:—brotherly love (kindness), love of the brethren.[[2]](#footnote-3)
2. **Because we are commanded to love**

**1 Peter 1:22c**—... fervently love one another from the heart …

1. Love (agapao)—exercised by the will rather than emotion, not determined by the beauty or desirability of the object, but by the noble intention of the one who loves.[[3]](#footnote-4)
2. Fervently (ektenos)—physiological term meaning to stretch to the furthest limit of a muscle’s capacity. From a verb which means to "stretch out the hand," thus it means to be stretched out—earnest, resolute, tense.[[4]](#footnote-5)
   1. It is referencing the need to “go all out”
   2. No holding back
3. From the heart—it is an ongoing attitude or mindset
4. When we walk by the Spirit, we see the fruit of the Spirit

**Ephesians 5:15-21**—Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, **16**making the most of your time, because the days are evil. **17**So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. **18**And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, **19**speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; **20**always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; **21**and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.

“This is a call for the kind of love which rejoices when good things happen to people, even though we may not naturally like these people. It means sacrificing valuable time or giving generously of scarce commodities. It calls for sharing the sorrows of people whose attitudes and actions ordinarily are distasteful to us. It means praying for those who may oppose us, turning the other cheek, going the extra mile, and actually sacrificing our own desires to help the other person. It goes far beyond mere affection for fellow believers.”[[5]](#footnote-6)

1. **Because of our new nature**

**1 Peter 1:23-25**—…for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God. **24**For, “All flesh is like grass, And all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, And the flower falls off,**25**But the word of the Lord endures forever.” And this is the word which was preached to you.

1. You have been born again
   1. We love because of our new nature

**1 John 5:1-2**—Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him. **2**By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments.

* 1. Perfect tense: past reality, with ongoing results in the present
     1. That comes at salvation
     2. One of many ongoing results is a love for one another
  2. We have died to our old self, and have been made new in Christ

**Romans 6:3-4**—Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? **4**Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

\*Spiritual immersion into Christ symbolized by water baptism

**2 Corinthians 5:17**—Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

**Ephesians 4:24**—…and to put on the new man, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

* + 1. This is a positional truth with practical implications
    2. We go from sinful, Godless, and self-consumed…
    3. …to holy, righteous and loving
    4. And able now to discern the truth

**1 Corinthians 2:14-15**—But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. **15**But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one.

**1 John 3:2**—Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.

* 1. The new birth is a work done by God alone (monergistic); the work of sanctification (growing in Christlikeness) is synergistic.

**Ephesians 2:1-2**—And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, **2**in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

1. Seed—represents the source of life
   1. Everything in the created universe that comes to life begins with a seed (plants and animals)
   2. And nothing eternal can come from the natural; material can’t produce eternal
   3. God does not take seed which is perishable to produce the imperishable
      1. The seed of man produces man
      2. The imperishable seed of God is necessary for spiritual birth

**John 3:5-6**—Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. **6**That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

* 1. Perishable—the natural will eventually die

**Isaiah 40:8a**—The grass withers, the flower fades…

**James 1:10-11**—and the rich man is to glory in his humiliation, because like flowering grass he will pass away. **11**For the sun rises with a scorching wind and withers the grass; and its flower falls off and the beauty of its appearance is destroyed; so too the rich man in the midst of his pursuits will fade away.

* 1. Mindful that it was God who created all things—including the perishable

**Genesis 1:11-12**—Then God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit after their kind with seed in them”; and it was so. **12**The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit with seed in them, after their kind; and God saw that it was good.

* 1. Imperishable—that which will not die but remain
     1. God initiates the spiritual birth with an imperishable seed
     2. God uses the imperishable seed of the Word

**James 1:18**—In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.

**Romans 10:17**—So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

* + 1. It is living (**v23**)

**Hebrews 4:12**—For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

* + 1. And enduring

**Matthew 24:35**—Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

“The point is to show the exalted nature of the life that is in us believers, the life that makes us brethren in the divine sense: we all have been begotten of incorruptible seed by means of God’s living and abiding Word. This life in us constitutes us “foreigners” to all unregenerate men, ‘elect,’ and far above them (**v1**), a family and a brotherhood whose true fatherland is heaven”[[6]](#footnote-7)

1. Life is transient

**Job 14:1-2**—“Man, who is born of woman, Is short-lived and full of turmoil. **2**“Like a flower he comes forth and withers. He also flees like a shadow and does not remain.

**Psalm 39:4**—“Lord, make me to know my end And what is the extent of my days; Let me know how transient I am.

**Matthew 6:27**—And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life?

* 1. All Flesh—all humans and animals
  2. Grass—wild grass that they would have been very familiar (common)
  3. Glory like the flower of grass—beautiful colorful flowers would emerge from the grass (lovely)

**Matthew 6:28-29**—And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, **29**yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these.

* 1. Both grass and flower withers or falls off
     1. Eventually every person will die
     2. Wealthy, poor; extraordinary, ordinary

**Job 3:19**—The small and the great are there,  
And the slave is free from his master.

**Job 1:21a**—Naked I came from my mother’s womb,  
And naked I shall return there.

“Ashes to ashes, dust to dust.  And the dust of Caesar is no more regal than the dust of a beggar.”[[7]](#footnote-8)

* 1. Those who are in Christ will (like the Word of God) endure forever

1. And this is the word which was preached to you (**v25b**)
   1. The word (Greek: rhema, not logos)
      1. Logos is the boarder sense of the Word
      2. Rhema is a more narrow use and connotes “the gospel” “the good news”
   2. **The Point:** That word was preached to you and you believed. From it, the imperishable seed produced new life that endures forever

**Thought to ponder:** why does the NT contain so many commands to love? Love your neighbor; love your brother; love those who persecute you; love the unlovely.

Answer: Because we have a choice. We can do what is commanded in obedience or we can refuse to do what the Lord has commanded and modeled for us.

Fully “knowing” how much God has demonstrated His love toward us.

Our unredeemed flesh (**Rom 7:14-25**) often causes us to act in far more selfish way than in selfless acts of tenderness, compassion and heartfelt love.

**May God’s grace and power grant us wisdom to do what He has already made us capable of doing.**

**Homework:** Memorize **1 Peter 1:1-25**

**Source**

Most of the message and notes come from:

* Richard W. De Haan, Good News for Bad Times, 1 Peter.
* R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of I and II Epistles of Peter, the three Epistles of John, and the Epistle of Jude
* John MacArthur, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 1 Peter

# John MacArthur, Supernatural Love, Part 2, November 27, 1988, 1 Peter 1:22-25 [www.gty.org](http://www.gty.org)

* [www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org)
* Strong’s Concordance

1. MacArthur, 89. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Strong’s G5360 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. MacArthur, 90. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Strong’s G1619; blueletterbible.org [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. De Haan, 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Lenski, 73. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. John MacArthur [↑](#footnote-ref-8)