

THESE THREE REMAIN

Inductive Study on FAITH, HOPE & LOVE

(STUDY 3 – LOVE)

FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE - these three remain but the greatest of these is love (1 Corinthians 13:13). In this a **3-part** study series we will seek to define these gifts of God's grace to us as believers and what it looks like for each to be active and growing in our lives.

LOVE: DEFINED

READ Jeremiah 31:3b (Scripture passages at the back of the study):

How has the LORD loved us? What will then continue?

READ Ephesians 1:3-6:

- circle every reference to *in Christ / in him / in the Beloved*.
- put a *clock symbol (or symbol of your choice)* beside every time reference.

1:3 – Why is the Father to be praised?

1:4 – When did the Father choose us in Christ? Why?

1:5-6 – What has been the Father's loving plan for us from before the foundation of the world? How? Why?

READ Matthew 3:17:

WELL PLEASED – STRONGS G2106 - *eudokeo* – to be well pleased with, take pleasure in

3:17 – What is the Father's verdict of all who are in Christ, His Beloved Son?

Do you believe that as God's beloved child the Father delights in you?

READ John 3:16-18:

3:16 – How did God love the world? Why?

3:17 – Why did God send His Son into the world?

3:18 – What is only true of those who believe in Jesus?

READ Romans 5:5-10:

- circle every reference to *love*.
- underline every reference to *death* (including synonyms).

5:5 – How can we be sure that our hope of salvation (full and final) will not put us to shame?

5:6 – How do we know God loves us?

5:7-8 – What is so *unique* and *amazing* about God's love for us?

5:9 – If while we were enemies of God we were justified by Christ's blood – what do we now have greater assurance of?

5:10 – Why?

READ Isaiah 54:10:

54:10 – What shall not depart from us? What shall not be removed?

*Loved with everlasting love,
Led by grace that love to know;
Spirit, breathing from above,
Thou hast taught me it is so.
O this full and perfect peace!
O this transport all divine!
In a love which cannot cease
I am His, and He is mine.*

George Wade Robinson, "I Am His, and He Is Mine," 1876

LOVE: APPLIED

READ 1 John 4:7-12

- circle every reference to *love / loves / loved*.
- underline every reference to *know(s)*.

4:7 – Who are those born of God and know Him?

4:8 – Who are those who don't know God? Why?

4:9 – How was the love of God made manifest among us? Why?

4:10 – How did God first love us?

4:11 – What are we who have come to know God's love to do?

4:12 – What is true of us who do so?

READ 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a:

LOVE OF GOD

In the New Testament the word **agape** (**STRONGS G26**) is used to refer to the love of God that sacrificially pursues the greatest good of another without expectation of anything in return and unmerited by the one upon whom it is bestowed and the love with which we too are to love.
(Romans 5:6-8; 1 John 4:7-12)

13:4-8a – What is *agape love* like? List what you learn about it below:

ENVY & SELFISH AMBITION

Love does not envy...Love does not insist on its own way.

READ James 3:13-18:

- circle every reference to *wise / wisdom*.
- underline every reference to the phrase *jealousy and selfish ambition*.

3:13 – Who is wise and understanding?

3:14-15 – What are the *characteristics* of someone living by the *wisdom from below*?

3:16 – What is the *fruit* of such a life?

3:17 – What are the *characteristics* of someone living by the *wisdom from above*?

3:18 – What is the *fruit* of such a life?

THINKING IT THROUGH

- What should we do if we find jealousy or selfish ambition in our heart - see 1 John 1:9; 1 Peter 2:1?
- What does humility look like in practice? What mind \ attitude are we to have among ourselves? - see Philippians 2:1-11.
- How does cultivating thankfulness to God for how He has blessed us in Christ sever the roots of envy in our heart?

REJOICES WITH THE TRUTH

Love does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.

READ Titus 3:1-8:

- put a *clock symbol* (or *symbol of your choice*) beside every time reference.
- circle every reference to *God the Father* (including pronouns).

3:1-2 – How are we to live as those redeemed by Christ (2:14)?

3:3 – What were we like before God saved us?

3:4 – When did God save us?

3:5-7 – Why did God save us? How?

READ Ezekiel 36:26-27:

36:26-27 – What does the Spirit who now dwells in us cause us to do?

Turn back to Titus 3:

What is the *trustworthy saying* / *these things* (v4-7) a summary of?

3:8 - Why is Titus to insist on *it* being declared and talked about?

What then is the 'fuel' the Spirit uses to spark in us a devotion to good works?

READ Ephesians 4:32-5:11:

- circle every reference to *walk*.
- underline every reference to *light*.

4:32 – How are we to forgive one another?

FORGIVENESS

Space does not permit us to explore the topic of forgiveness further here. For more on this check out the following resources:

Forgiveness – a free 2-part study on forgiveness – use the link below to access from our website:

<https://preceptireland.org/lightning-study-archive/#forgiveness>

40 Minute: Forgiveness: Breaking the power of the past – available from our online store – use the link below for more information:

<https://preceptireland.org/40-minute-series/forgiveness-breaking-the-power-of-the-past>

5:1 – What are we then to be as God's beloved children?

5:2 – What does it mean to imitate God? Who is our example in this?

What does the example of Christ teach us about what loving others will require?

5:3-4 – What is *not* walking in love - things *improper* and *out of place* among saints?

5:4 - What must there be instead?

5:5 – What is true of everyone who makes a *practice of sinning* (see also 1 John 3:4-10)?

5:6 – What comes upon them as a result?

5:7-8a – Why are we not to partner with them?

5:8b-11 – How are we to walk as children of light?

5:9 - Where is the fruit of light found?

Where do we discover what is pleasing to the LORD?

As God's beloved children, those who are saints, we are called to shine for Jesus in the contexts where He has placed us by living a life of love. A life of obedience to God and for others good - the greatest good their salvation. And so, when given the opportunity, to share with them the Good News of how they too through faith in Christ can be saved from God's wrath and have the certain hope of glory.

KEEPING OURSELVES IN THE LOVE OF GOD

READ Jude 1,20-21,24-25:

- circle every reference to *kept / keep*.

1 – Who are we?

20-21 – What *three things* are we to do to *keep ourselves in the love of God*?

24 – Regardless of our failures to keep ourselves in the love of God - what will God do?

25 - What belongs to Him alone?

Building ourselves up - see **study 1** for more on what it means for faith to be active and growing in our lives. Use link below to access study 1 and 2:

<https://preceptireland.org/precept-blog/2023/11/10/these-three-remain-10th-nov>

Prayer for the church - read Ephesians 3:14-21 – ask the Spirit to help you know more deeply the love of Christ for you. Pray the same for all the saints.

Waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ – see **study 2** for more on setting our hope fully on the grace that will be ours at Christ's return.

THINKING IT THROUGH

- What might you suffer or lose (or have done so) as you walk as a child of light in the various contexts that God has placed you – home, workplace, sports club, etc?
- What do we need to keep ourselves in and rest in to keep shining for Jesus?
- What would you say when given the opportunity to share the Gospel? Pray for opportunities.

REFLECTION

And so, these three remain – faith, hope and love but the greatest of these is love. A faith that is not idle, but which expresses itself through love. A love perfected in us, accomplishing its goal, through our obedience to God and sacrificial action for the good of others, the greatest good their salvation. And a love fuelled by the hope of glory which frees us to suffer loss knowing that what is to come is far better. That day when faith gives way to sight, our hope is realised, and together with all the saints we are full of love and praise to the One who lived and died to save us.

To Him be all the glory and honour – both now and forever. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

JEREMIAH 31:3b

I [LORD] have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.

EPHESIANS 1:3-6

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

MATTHEW 3:17

¹⁷ and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

JOHN 3:16-18

¹⁶ "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

ROMANS 5:5-10

⁵ and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

⁶ For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— ⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

⁹ Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

ISAIAH 54:10

¹⁰ For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed," says the Lord, who has compassion on you.

1 JOHN 4:7-12

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹ In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have 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 also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-8a

⁴ Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant ⁵ or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶ it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸ Love never ends.

JAMES 3:13-18

¹³ Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. ¹⁴ But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. ¹⁵ This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. ¹⁶ For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. ¹⁷ But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. ¹⁸ And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

TITUS 3:1-8

3 Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, ² to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarrelling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy towards all people. ³ For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. ⁴ But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Saviour appeared, ⁵ he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, ⁷ so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. ⁸ The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.

EZEKIEL 36:26-27:

²⁶ And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

EPHESIANS 4:32 5:11

³² Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

5 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. ² And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

³ But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. ⁴ Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. ⁵ For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. ⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷ Therefore do not become partners with them; ⁸ for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), ¹⁰ and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹ Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.

JUDE 1,20-21,24-25

¹ Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James,

To those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ:

²⁰ But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹ keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.

²⁴ Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, ²⁵ to the only God, our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and for ever. Amen.