

Yet for love's sake (Quality: Very good)

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Date: 12 June 2002

Preacher: Wood, Clement (1920-2010)

[0 : 0 0] To commence our anniversary services by singing the hymn 372, 372, the tune is Austria 625.

Glorious things of thee are spoken, Zion, city of our God. He whose word can not be broken, form thee for his own abode.

On the rock of ages founded, what can shake thy sure repose? With salvation's wall surrounded, thou may smile at all thy foes.

372 So So CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS

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positioned by invitersist oggi fantastic in his His people praises

All of myself The greatest king When the priestess Our praises Before earth And all day
 Luke, part of chapter 15 And the epistle to Philemon Luke, chapter 15 Reading from verse
 11 to verse 24 Verse 11 And he, Jesus, said

A certain man had two sons And the younger of them Said to his father Father, give me
the portion of goods That falleth to me And he divided unto them His living And not many
days after The younger son Gathered all together And took his journey Into a far country
And there wasted his substance With riotous living And when he had spent all There
arose a mighty famine In that land And he began To be in want And he went

And joined himself To a citizen Of that country And he sent him Into his fields To feed swine And he would fain Have filled his belly With the husk That the swine did eat And no man gave unto him And when he came To himself He said How many hired servants Of my father's Have bread enough And to spare And I perish with hunger I will arise And go to my father And will say unto him Father I have sinned Against heaven And before thee

[8 : 03] And am no more worthy To be called thy son Make me as one Of thy hired servants And he arose And came to his father But when he was yet A great way off His father saw him And had compassion And ran And fell on his neck And kissed him And the son Said unto him Father I have sinned Against heaven And in thy sight And am no more worthy To be called Thy son To be called thy son But the father Said to his servants Bring forth The best robe And put it on him

And put a ring On his hand And shoes On his feet And bring hither The fatted calf And kill
it And let us eat And be merry For this My son was dead And is alive again He was lost
And is found And they Began To be merry We turn now To the epistle To Philemon The
epistle To Philemon Paul A prisoner Of Jesus Christ And Timothy Our brother And to
Philemon Our dearly beloved

And fellow laborer And to our beloved Aphia And Archippus Our fellow soldier And to the church In thy house Grace to you And peace From God our Father And the Lord Jesus Christ I thank my God Making mention of thee Always In my prayers Hearing Of thy love And faith Which thou hast Toward The Lord Jesus And toward All saints That the communication Of thy faith May become effectual By the acknowledging Of every good thing Which is in you In Christ Jesus

For we have great joy And consolation In thy love Because The bowels Of the saints Are refreshed By thee Brother Wherefore Though I may be Much bold In Christ To enjoin thee That which Is convenient Yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee Being such an one As Paul the aged And now also A prisoner Of Jesus Christ I beseech thee For my son Onesimus Whom I have Begotten In my bonds Which in time past

Was to thee Unprofitable But now profitable But now profitable To thee And to me Whom I have Sent again Though therefore Receive him That is Mine own Bowels Whom I would have Retained with me That in Thy stead He might have Ministered unto me In the bonds Of the gospel But Without thy mind Would I do nothing That thy benefit Should not be As it were Of necessity But willingly For perhaps He therefore Departed For a season That thou shouldst Receive him Forever Not now

[13 : 11] As a servant But above a servant A brother Beloved Especially to me But how much More unto thee Both in the flesh And in the Lord If thou count me Therefore a partner Receive him As myself If he hath Wronged thee Or oweth thee Ought Put that On mine Account I Paul Have written it With mine Own hand I will repay it Albeit I do not Say to thee How thou Owest Unto me Even Thine Thine Own Self Besides Yea brother Let me Have joy Of thee

In the Lord Refresh My bowels In the Lord Having Confidence In thy Obedience I wrote Unto thee Knowing That thou Will also Do More Than I say But withal Prepare Me Also A lodging For I Trust That through Your prayers I shall be Given Unto you There Salute thee Epaphras My fellow Prisoner In Christ Jesus Marcus Aristarchus Demas Lucas My fellow Labourers The grace Of our Lord Jesus Christ Be with Your Spirit Amen The Lord

Bless his Word And help Us Now In Prayer Almighty Lord God Of heaven And of Earth In whom We live And move And have Our being Before whom We are Revealed In all our Sinfulness And all Our unworthiness Constantly Reminded Reminded Of thy Word That declares Be sure Your sin Will find You out Almighty Holy Holy Lord God If thou Should Is mark

Iniquity Who Shall Stand But There is Forgiveness With thee That thou Mayest Be feared We Seek Grace To come To draw Near To the Throne Of grace Confessing Our Sin Acknowledging Our Transgressions And pleading For Pardon For the Cleansing Blood Of the Lord Jesus Christ For that Acceptance In And Through Our Dear Redeemer Who Loved Us And Gave Himself For Us Oh Lord Thou hast

Brought Us Together On Another Anniversary Day In the History Of this Cause Of Truth In The Years The Generations That Are Past It Has Pleased Thee From Time To Time To Grant Showers Of Blessing Times Of Refreshing Within This Sanctuary Thy House Made As The House Of God And The Gate Of Heaven We Pray Gracious God That As Once More We Come That Thou Will Condescend To Rend The Heavens And Come Down That The Mountains Might Flow Down At Thy Presence Oh Gracious

[18 : 13] God We Come So Helpless So Poor So Sinful So Unworthy In All Our Poverty Oh One Says Give Me Christ Or Else I Die Oh Gracious God We Pray From The Riches Of Thy Grace That Thou Would Pour Down Such Blessings Into Our Soul A Time Of Refreshing From The Presence Of The Lord May We Be Help To Remember All The Way That Thou Has Led Us Marking Out Those Answers To Prayer Those Deliverances In Time Of Trouble Thy Mercy Toward Us Despite Our Sinfulness

Great Is Thy Faithfulness Great Is Way And We Would Render A Praise To The Way That Thou Has Led Us And As Faith Is Given As Thy Purpose Is Revealed Lord Lord Humbly We Acknowledge He Led Them For By The Right Way That They Might Go To A City Of Habitation Thy Way Not My Way But Nevertheless The Right Way And Lord We Constantly Pray That We May Be Kept In That Path That Thou Does Appoint For Us That We Do Not Turn To The Right Hand Or To The Left That We Do Not Try To

Find A Wrong Way Out Of Our Troubles Rather To Wait Patiently Submissively To Prove That Thy Grace Our Sufficiency Thy Help Afforded And That Stored Up In The Trial The Testing Of Our Faith The Way Of Temptation Thou Hast A Blessing For Our Soul In Such A Way That When We Are Brought Into The Experience Of That Blessing We Bow Before The To Thank The Even For The Path That Has Been So Painful So Tried So Difficult Because That There Thou Didst Meet With Us There Thou Didst Bless Us There Thou

Didst Confirm Our Soul There Thou Didst Appear When There Was None To Help There Thou Didst Drop A Word From Heaven Into Our Hearts There We Proved The Peace Of God Which Passeth All Understanding There That Thou Will Keep Him In Perfect Peace Whose Mind Is Stayed On Thee There As The Hymn Writer Says I Am With Thee Israel Passing Through The Fire And There We Could Testify Yea Though I Walk Through The Valley Of The Shadow Of Death I Will Fear No Evil For Thou Art With Me Thy Rod And Thy Star They Comfort Me

O Gracious God Humbly And Yet Crumblingly We Say That Though Dark Spots Had Been Made As It Were A Glimpse Of Heaven The Presence Of Christ The Form Of The Fall Was Like The Son Of God Bonds Loosed Not The Smell Of Burning Not A Hair Of The Head Singed Oh Gracious God We Tremble As We Enter The Cloud And There We Pray Lord Take This Cross Away Remove This Bitter Cuff Find Me Some Other Way And Yet Thou Has Bid Us My Child Walk On Go Forward I Will Be With

[23 : 14] Thee I Will Help Thee I Will Never Leave Thee Nor Forsake Thee And So We Proved Thy Gracious Hand And Like Dear Daniel Lord We Could Say My God Hath Shut The Lion's Mouth My God Has Done It And Lord It Would Be A Profitable Anniversary To Trace Out Personally In Our Experience Personal Experience Of Personal Dealings With Heaven That Grace In Our Soul Of How My God And To Sweetly Sing My Jesus Has Done All Things Well Though At Times Yes Lord The Night Has Been Dark The Waves Have Been High The Wind Has

Been Contray And We've Been Toiling In Rowing And Yet We Did Not Sink We Tried To Keep On And Thou Didst Come Though It Was The Fourth Watch Of The Night When Our Strength Was Gone When There Was None To Help The Lord Thou Has Appeared And We Could See All In Thy Hand That Thou Reignest Over All Commandest Even The Winds And The Waves That They Obey Thee And Thou Didst Come And Say It is I Be Not Afraid Thou Also Stood As On Another Occasion And Said Peace Be Still And There Was A Calm O Lord What Power What A Demonstration Of Thy Love Thy Constant Care Of

Us That Sufficiency Of Grace That Strength In Every Time Of May So Lord With Mercy And With Judgment My Web Of Time He Wove And In The Dews Of Sorrow And Lusted With His Love Are Blessed The Hand That Guided Are Blessed The Heart That Planned When Thrown In Highest Glory In Emmanuel Land And Lord That's The Prospect Oh May We Read Our Title Clear The Mansions In The Skies May Patience Be Given To Us To Lay Aside Every Weight And The Sin Which Does So Easily Beset Us And To Run With Patience The Race Set Before Us No Mistake With It Lord It's Set And It's Thy Hand Thy Wisdom Thy Love That Plans It All Set Before Us Looking Unto

Jesus Lord Keep Our Eyes Fixed On Jesus Christ So Hear Us We Thank Thee Bless Thee For Health Afforded In Time Past And His Love In Time Past Forbids Me To Think He Will Leave Me At Last In Trouble To See Each Sweet Ebenezer I Have In Review Confirms His Good Pleasure To Bring Me Right Through Help Us To Trust And Not Be Afraid But When And Lord There Are Times We Are Afraid Very Much So But Even Then I Will Trust I Cling We Cannot Give Up Lord We Hold On And We Pray That Thou Will Help Us Thus To Lean On Our Beloved Casting All Our Care Upon Him Casting All Your Care Upon Him For He

Carreth For You Our Cares Full Of Worry Tension Perplexity Not Knowing What To Do Thy Care Of Fatherly Love And As One Whom His Mother Comforted His Children So The Lord Will Comfort You And Ye Shall Be Comforted In Jerusalem I Even I Am He That Comfort You The God Of All Comfort The God Of All Grace Oh To Prove It Constantly Lord To Rest In Those Everlasting Arms Assured That The Eternal God Is Our Refuge And Underneath Are Those Everlasting Arms So Lord We Gather To Bless And Praise Thee For All That Thou Has Done For Us But Lord Thou Knowest The Need Of Each The Path They Walk And Lord It May Be Some At This Time Are In The Fire Some In Temptation

[28 : 17] Some May Be In Depression Some May Be In Perplexity Some May Need A Word Of Guidance Some May Need A Spiritual Blessing And Confirming In Their Soul Oh Could It Please The Out Of The Abundance Of The Fullness Of The Gospel Blessings That The The The The Need May Be Blessed Their Needs Supplied And Help Afforded Oh Grant It Lord The Glory Of Thy Great And Holy Name And Do Grant That In All Thy Dealings Christ May Be Made More Precious Self May Shrink To Nothing Christ Be All In All For To Me To Live Is Christ And To Die Is Gain So Lord We Gathered With The Dear Friends And Their Beloved Pastor Their Beloved And Dear Friend In

The Ministry We Pray Thy Blessing Upon This Cause Of Truth The Beloved Pastor Lord We Thank The For Maintaining His Lot For Preservation In Going Out And Coming In Danger Seen And Unseen We Thank Thee For His Ministry And Pray That Thou Will Continue To Bless That Ministry Confirm It With Signs Following And Water His Own Soul Fill Him With The Love Of Christ Endue Him With Power From On High Send Him For Continually With A Thus Seth The Lord Thus Lord Thy Waiting Servant Bless And Crown Thy Gospel With Success Bless Deacons And Church

Members And All In The Congregation May Love And Harmony Prevail May There Be A Flowing Together To To The Goodness Of The Lord We Pray That Thou Would Preserve From The Roarings Of The Lion And The Wiles Of The Devil Preserve And Keep From A Root Of Bidderness That Springs Up Lord Do Grant That Age May Be Tender In The Fear Of God As Striving Together For The Faith Of The Gospel And So Lord We Pray Bless Thy Dear People We Remember Those Lord That Are In Affliction And Grant Healing And Strengthening Mercies We Pray For The Bethesda Home And Seek Thy Blessing

On The Residence And Help To Be Given To The Staff And Lord We Would Bring Before The The Need Of This Home Of Need Of Those Moved By Love To Jesus To Devote Their Time And Labours In The Care Of Those That Are In That Home Raise Up The Provision Of Staff And Help Those In Their Antid Duties And Longer Hours Give Strength And Day By Day We Humbly Pray We Do Ask Thy Blessing On The Young That Thou Would Bless Them In The Tender Years Of Childhood And You Implant Thy Fear Lead In The Ways Of God And Do Grant That There May Be That Manifestation Of Thy Spirit Work Even In The Heart

And Life Of Those That Are So Very Young Jesus Friend Of Little Children Be A Friend To Me Take My Hand And Ever Keep Me Close To Thee Bless Dear Friends That That Are Visiting We Do Pray The Blessing Of The Lord To Be Upon Every Cause Of Truth Here Represented Favor With Spiritual Prosperity A Building Up And Establishing In The Truth And In Gathering Of Precious Souls Whom Thou Hast Ordained Unto Life Eternal Remember Those In Old Age We Thank Thee For Thy Mercy Toward Us And The Deacon Here Whom We've Loved In The Truth From The First Day And Now Many Many Years

[33 : 18] Brought To A Great Age And A Acknowledging The Goodness Of His God And We Pray Thy Continued Blessing And Crown The Eventide Of Life's Journey With The Blessings Of Heaven To Behold By Faith That Door Open In Heaven To Behold The Lamb In The Best Of The Throne As It Had Been Slain Bless Bless Him And Those Near And Dear Also Hear Us Help Us Bless Us Receive Us Forgive Us Oh Do Grant That Help Of The Holy Spirit And May The Words Of My Mouth Meditation Of Our Heart Be Acceptable In Thy Sight Oh Lord Our Strength Our Redeemer We Ask In The Name Of Jesus Christ Our Lord Amen Shall we

Continue By Singing Hymn 633 633 Tune Rimmington 395 The Love Of Christ Is Rich And Free Fixed On His Own Eternally Nor Earth Nor Hell Can It Remove Long As He Lives His Own He'll Love His Loving Heart Engaged To Be Their Everlasting Surety Twas Love That Took Their Cause In Hand And Love Maintains It To The End 633 3 2 CHOIR SINGS

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CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS FOR THE LORD'S HELP I VENTURE TO DRAW YOUR PRAYERFUL ATTENTION TO THE EPIST■■■■ TO PHYLEMON verse 9, and the first four words.

The epistle to Philemon, verse 9, and the first four words.

Yet for love's sake. Yet for love's sake.

This little epistle has been likened to a diamond.

[41 : 26] It is small, it is weighty, it is very precious, it is very valuable, and love shines forth from it, whichever way you look at it.

When we speak of love, this must direct us first to the God of love, who in love gave the Son of His love, His only begotten Son, equal the Father and the Holy Ghost, given to the Son, was all whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

And the dear Redeemer came from glory in such amazing, wondrous love and condescension, stooping so low from the glories of heaven to this sinful earth, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, He that upholds all things by the word of His power.

Yet He is this little babe laid in a manger, no room for them in the inn.

And ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes, your sakes, He became poor, that ye through His riches, through His poverty, might be made rich.

- [43 : 43] Was ever such love as this, but love that yes, as He took in union to His deity, sinless humanity, to go to display the very flowings of that love, that greater love, hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Revealed at Calvary, behold, a scene of matchless grace to Jesus in the sinner's place, and that this love should be in the appointment of heaven, shed abroad in the heart of all who are called by divine grace, loved with that everlasting love, that love of the Holy, shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost that is given to us.

And as we think and meditate with increased wonder at God's gifts to unworthy sinners, let us never lose sight also of this, that the dear Redeemer said that the Father giveth us the Comforter, the Holy Ghost.

and if I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you, for he will abide with you forever. Love, love such as is, and from that love there's no separation, and that love is from everlasting to everlasting, even though we were lost and ruined in the fall, and not any love, as you said, speck of love in our heart.

Lord Jesus Christ, but he loved us even when ruined, he saw me ruined in the fall and loved me notwithstanding all.

- [45 : 51] Now the effects of this love as known in sinners' hearts, his dear people, I refer to here, this love will be or should be reflected in our lives.

The text is taken from an epistle. An epistle is a letter, and we in our life are like an open letter.

I won't go into the detail there, but we do read in the Word of God an open letters, and sometimes of course it was to do harm and damage, but it was an open letter was that which anybody could read.

And my friend, what does the world read in us? Is there in our life that which speaks of the love of Christ to us?

That we may be a witness in our life, that we may show forth the praises of him that has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

- [47 : 11] Therefore, as we read this epistle, and I hope the Lord may help me to speak a little of it this afternoon, we trace out these precious words, yet for love's sake.

And let us be quite clear to start with, that love is in line, in harmony, with truth, and with faith.

It is not a love that speaks of anything that is contrary to the word of God.

It is a love that makes us faithful, a love that gives us grace to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

It is a love that together we strive together for the faith of the gospel. Now, just simply, the letter means there's a writer.

- [48 : 19] Now, we know that this is by the Holy Spirit of God, but there's an instrument, and the writer here was none other than the apostle Paul.

And we might ask, where was he when he wrote this letter? He was a prisoner of Jesus Christ in Rome.

For the truth's sake, for the love of the gospel, a prisoner of Jesus Christ. The letter itself is written to Philemon, who was, as Paul says, a dearly beloved and fellow laborer, a minister of the gospel, who had, as it is recorded in this letter, a church in his house.

The letter is written to this beloved servant of Jesus Christ, and it is evident that Paul himself had been the instrument in the hand of God of his conversion, because he speaks of it, albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me, even thine own self beside, as the instrument of his conversion by the power of the Holy Ghost.

For love's sake. The letter is written, I know there are names in the letter, but mainly concerning Onesimus.

[50 : 02] we ask, who is Onesimus? He was a servant, or a slave, if you like, of Philemon.

Doubtless, lovingly cared for, doubtless called to worship in the church in his house, but this Onesimus ran away, would have nothing, nothing to do with it, but worse than that, stole from his master.

Now we should come to that, as we may be hoped, in a moment or two, but taking it step by step, that is the brief outline of this epistle. Now we come first to the greeting, and how casual our greetings are, without thought.

we say the Lord be with you, just by custom, but maybe a true prayer from our heart. Here the apostle says grace to you.

What a word that is. Every spiritual and providential blessing bestowed upon poor sinners on this earth, from the fullness of his grace, those great, as I've heard it described, great riches at Christ's expense, all spiritual blessings flowing to poor sinners from Calvary.

[51 : 34] They, he said, grace to you, grace all sufficient, grace in every time of need, grace to bear that thorn in the flesh, the grace of humility, the grace of love, the grace of faith.

Oh, what a tremendous word it is. And yet, this is not just a formal desire, it is for love's sake.

And the dear apostle, loving this divinity of the gospel, pleads and prays that grace be with him, and peace, that the peace of God, that passeth all understanding, might fill his heart, that peace through the precious blood of Jesus Christ, that peace, that thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is laid upon thee.

And he says, I thank God for making mention of thee always in my prayers. For love's sake, if we're honest, and may we ever be honest, but we have to acknowledge, sadly, there are times when we're in trouble, and we're filled with self-pity.

None are so tried as I am. Paul, facing death, I won't say it was imminent at that time, but not far away, a prisoner.

[53 : 09] You would think he would have no time to consider any others. for love's sake, takes me to this word, that if you read through the epistles, you marvel at the names recorded of his letters written, expressing his prayerful desire and love to those in bonds.

May grace be given to us ever to remember those, even though we ourselves are in trial, we should always have cause to think of others also, for love's sake.

Then, the dear apostle acknowledges, hearing of thy love and faith which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus and toward all saints.

mark it, that love to Jesus, that love that goes forth to the dear people of God.

Oh, friend, faith and love, working hand in hand, love and faith, that faith that worketh by love, that faith that makes Christ pressure to our souls, Christ made pressure to our souls because we love him, because he first loved us, and that is toward God, and it is also toward the family of God, for love's sake, so much that as we may notice, that there will be a willing sacrifice, as we think of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, as he laid down his life for us poor sinners, that we should lay down our lives for the brethren, that that means that we should see the spend and be spent one for another, and show that love.

[55 : 38] I remember my first two girls in family, when they were quite little, and if there was somebody they really loved, they would say, I love you, and mean it.

My friend, there's some artificial love, but there's love that will be revealed for love's sake, in going the extra mile, in sacrifice, and will speak to us of the love of Jesus Christ.

Oh, may brotherly love continue, yet for love's sake. And what do the churches hear about us, you, about me?

Oh, I'm not speaking of gossip. may our church be purged of such gossip. Gossip that gets exaggerated, gossip that gets delighted in if something goes wrong and gets out of, almost out of truth sometimes.

I mean, when there's that constant prayerful, loving, care, watchfulness, one for the other, and by that, I mean this, just as you fathers and mothers watch over your children to see that it is well with them.

[57 : 07] You don't just take a glance at it, they're constantly on your mind and they're in your heart. Why? For love's sake. Now, if we have those that love the Lord Jesus Christ, then we love one another and we watch prayerfully over one another, as the apostle here says, that the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing that is in you in Christ Jesus.

All this flows from the love of Christ in our hearts, flowing to Jesus in love and flowing to one another and a love that will even help us and we need much grace to do it, to pray for our enemies and those that despitely use us.

Oh, be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you.

And just one more word here, he speaks of that great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.

other. Now, in a church, or say in a family first, we, if brotherly love, sisterly love is there, we refresh one another, we encourage one another, we help one another, we walk together in love and in unity, and how much more in the church of God.

[58 : 45] Seek peace and pursue it. Pray for this love and pray for grace to love even the crooked stick that may be in the bundle, to seek patience and pray that there may be the spirit of Christ seen as not a party spirit, but a spirit of love and care and consolation.

I know we cannot minister providentially to everybody, but we can pray one for the other, we can display love one to the other, we can seek grace to care for one for the other, and yet it is why, for love's sake, you take a church, you take baptized members, we all profess we're loved by Jesus Christ, he loved us, and that we love him.

Now it's a very sad and solemn reflection, and I don't have anything here or anywhere else, but I say it's a very sad and solemn reflection, if in a church there's division, if a wrong spirit creeps in, my friend, may grace be given to any breach to be healed for love's sake, and for love's sake, when those, and we are all prone to speak unadvisedly, and speak a word very hastily, then may grace be given for love's sake to say, look, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, forgive me, and love's sake to forgive, I say that last night, it's to be real forgiveness, not like sometimes when I go in the garden, I see a weed, and I just pull it, and I think I've got it out, and I see, oh, I've only got part of it, and perhaps, yes, lazy, leave it, what happens?

It gets deeper, and stronger than ever, friend, it must be love, like the Lord Jesus Christ, may we be helped to pray one for the other, for love's sake.

Now, what is all this about? What is this letter really about? Paul has something he wants to ask Philemon to do, and he says here, I might be much bold in Christ, to enjoin thee that which is convenient, yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee being as a prisoner, as one poor the age, now a prisoner of Jesus.

[61 : 28] In other words, he says, as my authority, I could command you in love, in the Lord, to do what I'm telling you. I'm not exercising that authority, I'm exercising for love's sake.

Love, spiritual love, in action. My friend, is there anything so powerful? That which will transform lives, that which is the nearest reflection, and that's all I can say, we have of the love of Jesus Christ, as revealed at Calvary, for love's sake.

Something very wonderful has happened. What is it? You know that Paul, in the beginning of his prisoner, as a prisoner, he dwelt in a hired house, chained, as it is said, to soldiers.

But he was permitted to receive any that visited him, to speak to them, to preach to them. We read of Onesiphorus, not to be confused with Onesimus, another man who was not ashamed of the chain of Paul.

In other words, though it might have brought on the visitor scorn, reproach, cheering, hated by the Romans, yet they were not ashamed to acknowledge they loved Paul, and they wanted to visit him, and they wanted to hear him.

[63 : 13] Now, among those that came was this Onesimus. The word of God does not give us the details. The distance from Colossae, where Philemon, church in the house, to Rome, was a great distance, a long, long way.

We've read of the father and his two sons, and the younger of them said, Father, give me the portion of goods that that belongs to me.

I'm running away. And run away he did. Now, you may say, I've not done that. I've always, from a child, come to chapel.

I've always, and listen to the truth, my friend, by nature, we've all gone astray like lost sheep. We may not have run away literally from home.

We may not even run away from the house of God. But, oh, beloved friend, just consider your lost and ruined state before almighty God.

[64 : 24] Without God, without hope, without Christ, a forced religion, a dead profession, resting on a denominational name and destitute of spiritual life in the soul.

Far away from God, just as much as those like the prodigal. And this man goes right away to Rome and doubtless thought that there he would be free.

But there it is quite evident he was brought under the ministry of the apostle. And like the prodigal, began doubtless to be in one. Oh, friend, how is it with you?

I know there are many here that can truly say, yes, I can remember how I began to be in one. How I began to know that I was a sinner, God was holy, and that I was far off from God.

I needed saving. I couldn't save myself. I needed one mighty, a mighty saviour to save such a one as I. But there I was brought, and I couldn't find, as I thought, all the joy in the world and that which would bring me happiness.

[65 : 38] I found it was, I had no real friends, and I was perishing, and I came, and I thought of this dear Father in heaven.

I thought of this beloved Son. I thought of that blood of Christ on the cross. I thought, can there, can there be hope for such, yes, and you never thought you'd say it of yourself, wretch, filthy wretch like me, a leper like me.

And look, I've gone my way. I've rebelled against God. I have not loved God. I've gone my way. But now, where can I go?

To whom can I turn? Ah, yes, he could not be satisfied with the husks of the swine to eat. You can't be satisfied with a legal religion.

You want real things. You begin to be in one, and you come to yourself. It's a wonderful mercy to come to yourself. I remember being told that the late Mr. Hayler had a young man that he felt quite clear was a work of grace, and he was, this young man was taken ill, and I think it affected his mind.

[66 : 56] And Mr. Hayler visited in the hospital, and the sister said, oh, Mr. Hayler, I'm afraid that poor man's gone out of his mind. And he said to her, spiritually, he has come to his right mind.

Friend, and that was the leading back on the way to the Father's home. Can there be hope? Can there be mercy? Can there be grace?

Can there be a possibility that this holy God against whom we've sinned can receive such a wretch, such a sinner that wandered so far, far away?

Oh, friend, here we see the glorious gospel. Here we see, for love's sake, here we see the Father. Ah, as it has been right. You see, we don't read that lad, that son ran, I've read he took some very slow steps, but the Father ran and had compassion, heart, love, for love's sake, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him, kissed him, and bring forth the best robe, take away those rags, kill the fatted calf, and put shoes on his feet, that signify in the family of God.

Oh, friend, running in the ways of the gospel of peace, and much more could be added. This is the path. Now, here was this young man. He was a literal particle.

[68 : 32] He was one that had turned his back on the church in the house. He was one that had robbed. He was one that had wasted his substance on riotous living. He was one that lost. But he hears the gospel.

He hears the glorious truth. Like Paul would say, this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

And Paul would say, of whom I am chief. And oh, my friend, here the Holy Spirit works. Here's a brand to be plucked from the fire. Here's a lost sheep that's out there and miles away on the mountains, in the dark valleys.

And yet, the shepherd knows he's there, and he goes after him. And he gathers it up in his arms, lays it on his shoulders, and brings it back. And here, this young man, he is called by divine grace.

Here, as the apostle says, I beseech thee for my son, Onesimus. Why does he call him my son? A son in the faith. A child that God had given him.

[69 : 34] I'm sure your pastor's got children here. I'm not referring to his personal family. Pray God they're in it too. But what I mean is this. That they can say, this is one whom I've begotten in my bonds.

I've preached. And sometimes in bondage. Sometimes under burden. Sometimes fearing, oh, who has relieved my report? But here's the one that comes forth.

And my friend, if I may be, say to the glory of God, I've had an encouragement at home among my own people. And one that I never looked for. Well, I prayed for, oh, did I pray for this young man that gave me a lot of concern.

He left us mainly. And then he went to Australia for a year and thought he'd get right away. But God has brought him back. And when he came back, he sat there in my chapel at Tamworth Road.

And I'd start to preach. And he sat with his head down like that. I thought he was not taking a scrap of notice of what I'm saying. Because he had not read the Bible, it wasn't conversant.

[70 : 39] Now, if I quoted a scripture, he got a concordance. He was hungry. He started to look up the word. He was studying as I was preaching.

Well, I can't go forward, but he's, by the grace of God, been enabled to come and testify of the mighty power of God's grace that has transformed his life from the nightclub, from drunkenness, to be brought under the power of God's grace.

I pray, says the apostle, I beseech thee for my son, whom I have begotten in my bonds. And sometimes the menace of the gospel are in bonds. And yet prove though bonds are either the furtherance of the gospel.

Sometimes the darkest times I've had in the pulpit, and when I've been felt in absolutely fettered and in bonds, and I have, and yet out of it has been a blessing.

I'll just give one example. It was a Thanksgiving service, and I always feel it should be a Thanksgiving theme in measure. But the Lord gave me one word, groanings, in Romans chapter 8.

[71 : 54] Now, that may sound, it is a depressing word, but it's a wonderful word if you examine it, because all those to whom there's no condemnation, no separation from the love of Christ, they are those that are no stranger to these groanings because of the work of the Spirit in their heart.

That's what it is. But it sounds a very, as I say, melancholy word. But I, if ever I struggle through a sermon, I did.

The Lord didn't leave me, but oh, friend. Now, there was a man. He was in deep depression. He saw St. James, I can't go. Won't be anything for me.

But he went. And there it was. I say that it wasn't me. It wouldn't be any good if it was. It was God.

Begotten in my bonds. Brethren, pray for us. Pray for us. Now, he said, But in time past, was to be unprofitable.

[73 : 00] He wasn't a good servant. He didn't love you. He came, perhaps, unwillingly to the church in your house. And now, look, he's robbed you. He's run away. Unprofitable.

And so we are, in this sense, spiritually, without divine grace, unprofitable. But he says, But now, oh, what a wonderful word this is, now.

Look what grace has done. Profitable to thee and to me. It reminds me, indeed, when I baptized this young man that I've told you, I spoke from the two words in Ephesians chapter 2, the first verse, and the first two words, And you, and verse 4, But God, you, dead in trespass and sin, you, children of wrath, you, you, in the world that love the world, but God, rich in mercy, by grace, you're saved, through faith, not by yourself, not by any works of yours, but by grace, you're saved.

Oh, friend, I say, these things are real. This is the work of grace in the heart. Now, I know, with this young man, it's got to be proved. It's got to be proved.

And all religions got to be proved. How are you standing up? Are you standing up to the test? Sometimes you may be tried. Good thing to be tried.

[74 : 29] Exercise. Watchful. Pray to be delivered from doubts and unbelief, but pray for clear evidence and the seal of the Holy Spirit's work in your heart that you can say, ah, there I was, wandering far, but now, called by divine grace, and here, my life is now transformed, but now profitable to thee and to me.

Now, what is all the concern about? We take another step. Something's got to be put right. I hardly like to mention this, but I don't mind mentioning to this first bit that I'm an old man.

I must acknowledge that. And there are old men and women here. Perhaps they are with me. I think it can't be all that time before my end comes.

No, I want things straight. I want things straight. I don't want any thorn in my pillow. There were many a miscellaneous as far as I can be and be used of God to live in peace with all and where I have gone on, that's my concern, not somebody else.

We love to find fault with somebody else. Away with it. I know we've got to be, what shall I say, watch for care over one another, but I say not to find fault just to and think we're so good.

[75 : 56] Friend, may grace begin to us to say, Lord, is it I? I have named, and it wouldn't be a secret on committee. The gospel sounded years ago, the late Mr. Broome, there was some difficult matter, I can't remember what it was, and he said, Mr. Chairman, he said, I think what we should do first of all is to say, where have we gone wrong?

I don't know whether they had, that doesn't matter, but the point is, I've never forgotten it. Start there. Put things right between you and somebody else before you worry about them putting it right to you.

Seek grace. My friend, I've no idea of preaching like this. I don't know why. I don't want you to think your pastor has been talking to me. Not a word.

In fact, if you had, I shouldn't have spoken it. But I'm, I'm only a believer the Lord has given it to me. A wonderful mercy to come. Like, dear Joseph, I know I'm rambling off a bit now, but you know, right at the end, it was not you that sent me, it was God.

You meant it to evil. But God meant it to go and when he would die, he'd forgiven his brethren all over again. There was no thorn in his pillow. Oh, may grace be given to us.

[77 : 17] Now, he's going to send him back to Philemon. What is Philemon going to do? This is the point. It says, Paul says, I would have kept him with me. He could have ministered to me.

He could have lovingly cared for me because he's now profitable to me. And you can imagine a man in bonds to have a young son in the faith. What joy it would bring to him.

But he says, no, Philemon, he's got to come back to you. Doubtless to confess his fault, but you are to receive him.

You are to forgive him. Think of it. He said, without thy mind would I do nothing. And do you know, I see, for love's sake, in this?

Husbands and wives, a practical point. Brethren, brothers and sisters, in families, the church of God, deacons working together, pastor, without thy mind would I do nothing.

[78 : 20] Now, I know there are times when you've got to make a decision alone. That would be by prayer. But where possible, work together, without thy mind, would I do nothing.

Don't go away in a selfish way, and make the bad work try, and all pull together, like the horses in Pharaoh's chariots. I have likened thee, my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots.

They were horses selected and trained to bring glory to the king, and pull what? Do you think one would go that way and one could go that way?

It would be a disaster. They pulled together for the glory of the king. That's what we need. Without thy mind would I do nothing. Praying for the divine guidance, the unity of the spirit, the oneness in all things.

Perhaps he did part of his season that thou shouldest receive him forever. Not now, as a servant, but a brother beloved.

[79 : 27] Oh, friend, for love's sake. I'm sure we're not told, of course, what came out of this, but I'm sure that Philemon would have received him, forgiven him, welcomed him back, and this may be in our close this afternoon.

I suppose practically all our churches have got young people and older ones. I know some may have gone to other places to worship.

We have to leave it. We're sad. But I'm speaking particularly or if they've gone to places that are ranked error, that would include what I'm thinking of or those that have gone right into the world.

If you've given up, shut the door. Now, if for love's sake, friend, you'll know what it is to travel. Now, I know we can't give that travel, but if God lays somebody in your heart and gives you travel, you keep at it.

Pray on. You may not even live to see the answer to your prayers. God moves in wonderful ways. He does.

[80 : 38] And even as I think of one dear to me that was, in fact, my sister, baptized just before I was, and yet she straight away was separated from, withdrawn from, but she'd been brought back and prodigal, yes, even though a member of the church became a prodigal, but she brought back, she suffered for it, but is well with her now, brought back into church membership.

Oh, my friend, we're ready to shut the door. May we be ready to open our mouth in prayer and plead with the Lord to have mercy and save that lost one and that perishing one.

And God moves in wonderful ways. My pastor named to us a case of a young man who got right away into wrong company and wouldn't go to chapel.

And one Sunday night he was out with his so-called friends and they just casually said, where are we going? Arrow from heaven, hell, God, power, grace, back at chapel.

Now, for love's sake, I must leave it there. Oh, if I've said and I'm conscious of weakness, anything wrong, may God forgive it.

[81 : 59] But may we, our lives, kind of the sacred influence of the love of Christ. O, may it be so.

O, put thy gracious hands on me and make me all I ought to be. Amen. Shall we conclude this service by singing hymn 258, the tune Zundel 6 6 4 Jesus, source of our salvation, may we now thy nature know, then more bowels of compassion we to thy dear saints shall show.

May the grace thou hast imparted and relieving our complaints make us kind and tenderhearted to the feeblest of thy saints.

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