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2 SPEAKERS

Pastor West

Congregation

START OF TRANSCRIPT**[00:00:00] Pastor West**

That your goodness and mercy endureth forever. Forever. Someone say forever. Forever. I'll say that one. So say. For the Lord is good. The Lord is good. And his mercy endureth forever. Forever. Did you know the Lord has removed our sin? As far as the east is from the west. Amen. Amen. Can you chalk that off for us? And let's measure it. It can't be done. Amen. You may be seated. Well, good morning and welcome. We're changing it up a little bit. Things this morning, we'll do, uh, the offering at the end. Change is here to stay. Amen. You used to say change is here to stay. Growth and maturity is optional. Well we are going to dive right into the word. Y'all doing good today. Y'all look good. All right let's go to Ephesians chapter three. And we're we're teaching. We've been in Ephesians prayer. We're going to start there this morning in Ephesians chapter three. If you want to turn there and follow along with us, you can, uh, I guess we'll be on the screen. Also, we want to say hello and good morning. Welcome to those joining us by way of broadcast. Now we're at another time. We believe God has a word for you today and we'll speak into your life. And so we're not going to do a lot of, uh, going back and seeing what we've already said, all that. So you're able to access that and so many ways.

[00:01:25] Pastor West

So we're just going to kind of go forward this morning. But we're going to start in Ephesians chapter three. And if you want a title for this morning we're going to tie that. What's love got to do with it. What's love got to do with it. Well, let me get to I probably should get to Ephesians three myself. Okay. So, um, Ephesians chapter three, verses 14 through 20. It says, for this reason Paul said, I bow my knees before the father, from whom every every family, which means fatherhood in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in your inner being. That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. That you, being rooted and grounded in love, might be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, the length, the height, and the depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now unto him who is able to do far more exceedingly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work in us. I want to read you a verse 17 and 18, or 17 through 20, I suppose. Uh, in the Passion Translation. And or maybe it's just 17, 18, 20 but passion says, verse 17 says, then by constantly using your faith, the life of Christ will be released deep inside you.

[00:02:55] Pastor West

And the resting place of his love will become the very source of the root of your life. That's good. Verse 18 that you will be empowered to discover what every Holy One experiences, the great magnitude and the astonishing love of Christ in all its dimensions. How deeply intimate and far reaching is his love, how enduring and inclusive it is. Endless love beyond measurement that transcends our understanding. This extravagant love pours into you until you are filled to overflowing with the fullness of God. Never doubt God's mighty power to work in you and accomplish all this. He will achieve infinitely more than our greatest requests, your most unbelievable dream, and exceed your wildest imagination. He will outdo them all for his miraculous power constantly energizes you. So Paul tells us that we need to have a foundation to build your life on. I don't even know that, uh, that, uh, probably I won't talk about anybody else, but I'll just talk about me. I know more about me than I do anybody else, and I don't want. I wouldn't talk about you if I didn't know about you. So there's a lot of things that we minister, we teach, and rightfully we can and we should. And we so the whole the whole word of God, the whole counsel of the Word of God. But the primary messages that we have is the love of God.

[00:04:24] Pastor West

Amen. There's not a different message now. It's preached differently. And certainly people live it differently. But Paul lays out that you have to have a foundation of his love. And so our title this morning is What's Love Got to Do with It? So we've been looking at the love of God, but we're going to kind of dive in this morning. Sometimes you can find out what something is by finding out what it's not. Right. Yeah. You can find out what faith is if you find out what it's not. It's like counterfeit money. They say. You know, the people in the banking industry, they don't train them. They don't train them to know what counterfeit money feels like. They just make sure they're trained in real money. So when they come across the counterfeit, they'll say, this is the one that's not real. Looks like it says, it's this much. Both said there are 100, but one is worthless. One. One will send you to jail or prison, and the other one will buy whatever the purchasing power that has. What did you know? Love has a counterfeit. And mostly, hopefully not Christians, but mostly people and Christians involved. And we've all done this, that we've actually lived and walked in the counterfeit of love because the world doesn't know him. And they can't know him, then they don't know his love because they don't know him. Now, I don't want to get ahead of myself, but.

[00:05:50] Pastor West

So we'll talk about this whole thing, about what love has to do with it. And, uh, you know, Tina Turner wrote a song that was titled her song years ago, and she asked the question, her song. She said, what has love got to do with it? But she really downplayed the significance of love, calling it if you remember a second hand emotion, you meant the song. What's love got to do with it? It's a second hand emotion, she said in a sweet, old fashioned notion. But for those who understand the essence of true love, we know that it means much more. And now she was right. In one sense, Tina Turner was right. In one sense, she said that the way love is used so flippantly, uh, is part of the lyrics of that song in society. It could be and is a second hand emotion. But love is not an emotion. Love is a decision. Love is a choice. Amen. Love is what you do when you don't feel it. Are y'all here? Are y'all already went home already? You know, when the honeymoon's over? Whenever that is. You know, two days, six months or three years, whatever it is. I mean, you'll have to make a decision one day to love when you don't have any feelings. You don't have any emotions of of love. Matter of fact, you'll have you may have emotions, but they're to the contrary many times.

[00:07:15] Pastor West

Right? And that's where love hits the road. That's where the love of God um, has to be. The foundation of the home, the family, the marriage and all of it. If it's going to, if it's going to work. But we haven't done this, you know, we went to other means and methods and there's I'm for anything that can help people, but there's some things that you just can't do. Um, until we get to the foundation, until we come to the way, the truth and the life in Jesus is that, isn't he? He isn't he the way? Isn't he the truth? And he's the life. Amen. Amen. And if you have people giving in to different things and whatever and demonic experience. See, you can't counsel a demon out. And demons will. They'll put a face on, and they'll sit there with the legs folded and take notes. But they're going nowhere. They'll grieve with you and, you know, be real kind and and thank you for helping them. Uh, they'll they'll play the part that they need to. And then they can, you know, prescribe you 3 or 4 pills to calm you down and get the anxiety down. And da da da da. And that's that's that's how a lot of demons, um, that people deal with. And I don't mean that they're possessed. I'm talking about in the soul. And of course, could be in the body. Right. But if they're born again, not in the spirit, of course.

[00:08:34] Pastor West

And so you can't you can't cancel out a demon. You can put them on a course, you can say, read these three books, do these exercises, and the demon will gladly do that through that person. Why? Because demons like homes, they don't want to be homeless. Why would you want to be homeless? I mean, definitely not in the winter, but this has been kind of a hot summer too, hasn't it? Well, let's just be honest. It's hot. Amen. It's not here, thank God. Hallelujah. Thank God for Brother Hagan said. Thank God for God and air conditioning. Amen. And thank God we have both of them. So, uh, she said a second hand emotion. But in first John chapter four, verses nine and ten, it says, this is how God showed his love among us. How did he do it? He sent his one and only son in the world that we might live through him. Live through him. See, this is not just a verse. This is how God showed he displayed. This is the action that God took. God so loved that he cared enough to put action to it, right? Amen. Anybody can say love, but God put action to that. He said he sent his only son in the world that we might live through him. He said, this is love, not that we love God, but that he loved us and sent His Son as the atoning sacrifice for us.

[00:10:04] Pastor West

What are we saying? We're saying that God loved us. God loved those who did not love him. There's a picture. God loved those who did not love him. It's the most extreme sense of love. And that's who God is. God is love. God doesn't. He's not God. And God can love. God is love. He is love. He is love. What is God? Love. It's not what he does. It's who he is. And there's a vast difference. And so it is. And I can hear a song, a second hand emotion in many, in many ways. And we, we flippantly have used the word love to where we we really have lost its meaning. Gallery. I mean, just think about it. See if you've ever. I know no one here has ever done this, but you might know someone who's done this. People say sometimes, oh, I love pizza, I love steak, I love ice cream. I love Christmas season. I love the oceans. I love the mountains. I love football, baseball, basketball, golf. I love the History Channel. I love the I love this movie. I love that restaurant. What do you mean by you love it? Do you mean you strongly like it? You see, if that word was reserved for what it really is the love of God. See you. You could. You could really like pizza. You could really like ice cream.

[00:11:44] Pastor West

But pizza can't love you back. The mountains or the beach doesn't love you back. You say, well, what's wrong with using that word? I'm trying to draw your attention to the fact that when we dull it, dull the love of God down to pizza and football, then there's no separation. Because we just use the word love. If. If something can't love you back, you don't love it. You like it. You. You appreciate it. You may have a desire for it. You may enjoy it, but you certainly don't love it. Amen. Pastoring is so much fun. John 15:13 says, greater love hath no man than this, that a man would lay down his life for his friends. If I were to ask many of you today, are you a football fan? And and in the state of Alabama, with no pro football, it always goes to the college, right? So you get the state divided and and like this. And you said, well man I love Auburn football. I love well, um, have they sent you a check? Been being a fan? No. Oh, well, they're not loving you back. Do they know you're. Do they even know your name? And they said, well, we won. You're on the team. You've been in the practices. You was tackled. They had to ice you down after the game. I'm not getting on anyone. I'm just saying, you see how we've used the word love What really what love really should be and how we should really understand love.

[00:13:27] Pastor West

Well, if I just said today and this would be true, that I love each and every one of you, that that would be true. But if I had all the women stand up, include my wife in one group and I said, uh, I love you all the same, Include my wife in the same way. Did you see what would be wrong with that? Yeah. I love everyone here. I love every woman here. But there's a difference between being in love. Amen. In union, I'm. The two becomes one between two people, you know? Not. Not an open marriage. Two people become one with him. So I'm. I love everyone here. But I'm in love with one. One woman. You can see that. That's. That's real simple, man. So we we just used the word I just love this. And I just love that, and I just don't. You just love the weather. Yeah, I like it a lot. I don't know, I hope I made a little point there that might help. Just a little something there. Now, Jesus came out something really strong in John 13:34 and 35 before he was crucified. And he demonstrated what love looks like, because in those days, you know, there was no vehicles. Mostly they walked. Sometimes they had a camel, a donkey, and, you know, they were exposed to the weather and they had their togas and, um.

[00:14:57] Pastor West

What Pastor Buzzy used to call them, their Galatian gliders, their sandals, and they would be hot and they would be dusty, and you'd come into a house, and typically the people of the house, they would have a basin of water at the door, and they would have a stool or a bench that you could sit at and a servant, someone in the home, would wash the feet of those that came into the house as a common courtesy of friendship. Jesus went into the house and no one was doing that. So what did he do and what did he do the night before he was crucified? He washed the feet of his disciples. And Peter didn't want that. He said, no, sir, no, sir, you're not going to do this to me. He had no idea. You know, he probably really meant. He thought he meant what he said in his heart or his mouth. But in a few hours, his mouth was going to betray him when trouble would come his way and denied that he even knew him. Jesus said, if you don't, if I can't wash your feet, he said, you have no part with me. And Jesus the Lord became servant of all. He took the lowly position of someone who would wash the feet of another. And here is the God himself washing the feet of humanity. Well, that's what they would do in their custom.

[00:16:20] Pastor West

And they would. And we're not having a foot washing service this morning, so don't worry. I mean, you know, if your feet had a pedicure or not. So. But we do have a hose outside if you want to do it that way we can. But but you see, what I'm trying to say here is that the true love is humility. True love is servanthood. Jesus, who was God, stripped all that to the side. And in Philippians says, he became he humbled himself to the lowliest lowest place from deity to human. He's as much God as God is God. But he stripped himself of all that forever. So in heaven he's always called now, and in heaven he'll always be called the Son of Man. But why? Because he willingly laid his life down and became man. Man. Women become hungry. Jesus would be hungry, tired, sleepy Sleepy. Emotions. He cried. He was put to grief. He was in pain. Well, you. You can't make God sleepy. You can't get God in pain. You. You can't bother him up, you know? You know, you can't put a grab on him and put him in a bottle and say, I'll call God. No way to do that. But Jesus became man, didn't he? So he is the Son of Man. He is the firstborn among many brothers. He's the first one, the one who did it. And he defeated the devil as a man anointed of the Holy Ghost.

[00:17:54] Pastor West

Why? So that you could be the next man who defeated him as man filled with the Holy Ghost. Amen. See, if he did that as God, then there's no way for us to get there, right? But. But he already made the way for you to get there. And in him you're already there. Mhm. Amen. And whether you realize that or not, the devil already knows he has no way. He has no authority over you. He knows he doesn't. Now he knows a lot of people doesn't know that. So that's his advantage right, of deception. But he knows actually that he takes orders from you. What am I preaching? The gospel. Amen. Amen. Satan takes orders from you. I give you power over all the power of the enemy. Who's in charge? So when you get to the testimony services that we used to go to as kids on Sunday night, you got to stand up. Really? All it was was everyone telling how much the devil run around all week, and they just ask the church to pray for them before they went home? I mean, am I am I wrong? But that's how it was every Sunday. Every Sunday. I mean, they started off real nice and kind. I know they meant well. I just want to say, oh, gosh, I don't even know why I can remember this stuff. I want to thank the Lord for what he's done for me and my family.

[00:19:05] Pastor West

However, you know why I'm standing up here. I just want you all to pray me. Boil the devils run me this week, sister. And they'd say Amen, amen, amen, Amen. It's been a hard week. I don't know if I'm going to be able to keep my job and the kids of this. And Luther, he's sick. And granddaddy, they don't think he's going to make it. And I and everyone finished it this way. I just want you all to pray that I'll be faithful and hold out to the end. Ain't nothing told you to hold out. I told you to conquer, man. We had a lot of hold up, hold outs. So of course, you know. How was I going to know the difference? I was only in the Pentecostal church, tongue talking Pentecostal church who never actually read the Bible. So when I got to Bible school, I was like, oh my gosh, oh my gosh. You mean my words have power? Oh boy. What have I been saying? Learned about, you know, authority from Brother Hagan, learned about faith, and Brother Hagan was honored to have him as my teacher for three times a week. Even touched me once. But I did finally wash that shoulder a couple months ago anyway. No, that's a bad joke. But anyway, Jesus said, greater love hath no man than this, than he lay down his life for his friends.

[00:20:25] Pastor West

Now see? Did you hear what I said? Greater love looks like this. You lay your life down. Can you see the difference between I love pizza and greater love lays their life down. You couldn't use that word love. No, there's no way. Now. So, John 13:34, he said, A new commandment that I give unto you, that you love one another. No. He said it was a commandment, not a suggestion, that you love one another as I, or even as I have loved you, or in the same manner. So that one person that you're at odds with right now, or two or 50 or 300 or whatever it is, right? He commands you to love them the way that I loved you when you was dead wrong. Well, I'm not going to do anything. They're going to have to initiate this. He didn't say that. He said, A new commandment I give unto you, that you love them even as or as I have loved you, or in the same manner, love one another. Verse 35 he said, by this love shall all men know that you are my disciples. So love is the distinguishing mark of every believer that the world can see and know that we are truly the disciples of Jesus. Not that you can speak in tongues, not that you can prophesy. Not that you can do miracles. Not that you can rattle off chapters. Not that you're a bishop.

[00:22:04] Pastor West

That you love one another the way Christ loved the church. Notice it doesn't notice the conditions of what people have done or haven't done to you. It is absolute pure agape love, the God kind of love. And we said this already a couple of times. I don't know how I can do that. Well, let me help you. You can't. You of yourself can't. But that's why Romans five five said, the love, when you got born again, the love of God was shed abroad in your heart. Now it's love is the fruit of the spirit. It's the first of all those mentioned in the book of Galatians, but really all the other fruit comes out of really love. Love is the fruit. These are other fruits of love. So you have the love of God in you. You have. We all had the love of God in our spirit. God furnished it. You can't. You don't give commands to love someone the way I loved you without giving the ability to do it true. So we have it there. So what do we have to do? We have to put it in practice. Mission. Brother Hagan, I'm thinking of a story right now. He talked about someone in his church, and he. He pastored about, uh, I think he was like 12, 12.5 years before he went full time traveling and then around the world. But he said there was a there was a, a woman that she had really bad relationships or relationship with her mother in law.

[00:23:41] Pastor West

And she just told Brother Hagan. She said, she said, she said, I know what's wrong. I just know what's wrong. She says, but I can't help it. I just can't help it. And he says, what can't you help, sister? She said, I hate my mother in law, I hate her. Well, I could remember that story because I had a church member. I believe he's in heaven now. Hope he's in heaven. He told me the same thing in my office. He said. He said, I know it's wrong. Same thing. I'm the same thing. And I'm sitting there, you know. Well, my gosh, I probably, I don't know, maybe I was, maybe I was 40 at the time. 38, 40 pastor he was in his 70s, you know, that's you know, so when somebody looks at a 30 year old, they're like, I don't even know why I'm in your office. What would you know? He didn't treat it that way, but he was just telling me, he said, uh, about where he wanted to be buried one day. And I said, well, isn't your wife over in another state? He says, yeah, he says she's next to your mother because she, you know, we were supposed to be buried together with her. He says, but I'm not going to be buried with her. He said, I'm not even going to be in this.

[00:24:45] Pastor West

I'm not going to be in some graveyard. He said, forget that. I'm not going to be in the same state. He said, so she'll die. Then when she dies, I'm going to have my wife's body exhumed and brought back to Alabama, and then we'll be buried together because he said, we're not, we're not, we're not going to be anywhere in the ground with that, which he said. He said, I don't just I said, so you you just like her that much. He said, no, no, pastor, I know it's wrong. He says, I hate her. I hope she's in hell. Well, he probably has some stories, right? That he would probably use to justify that. So we had about an hour council session and he thanked me. When I left he said, I know you're right. He said, but, but but I'm not going to do it. I'm not going to forgive her. I will not forgive her. I refused to forgive her. He said, I hate her with every fiber of my being. Well, come off that story. Back to Brother Higgins. This woman told him. She said, I hate my mother in law. He said couldn't be. She said, well, I do, brother. He said, no you don't. She said, well, I know how to hate him. He said, so he talked to her about the new birth, becoming a new creature in Christ Jesus. Old things passed away. All things become new.

[00:26:00] Pastor West

Behold what manner of love that we have that we have become sons of God, children of God. He said, now what I want you to do, he said, uh, I want you to tell me that one more time. And when you tell me that, he says, tell me what happens right down in here. She said, he said, just do it. He said, say that again and then tell me what happens right down here. She said, well, I can say that real easy. I hate my mother in law. He he said, Uh-Uh. And she paused for about he said about 30s. He said, say it again. She says, okay, well whatever. So she says, I hate my brother in law. He said, what happened to her? She says, I don't know. She says, like something's scratching down in there. She sees the word scratching. She says something when I say I hate my mother. She says, there's something going on down here. She says, I can't explain it. He said, that's your born again spirit. He doesn't agree with that because. Your father's love and your you're a love child of a love God, and the father loves his children even in their worst mistakes. And she said, and he said, say it again. And she said, I hate she. I can't say it. Brother Hagan, she said, you know, I do. I love my mother in law. She said, just me and her.

[00:27:20] Pastor West

We don't get along all the time. She said, but I can fix that. Took five minutes. She'd been carrying hate around for 20 years. Well, you can't say. And then people say, well, I don't have, you know, I just don't have patience. You ever heard of Christians? Say I don't have patience? Uh, I've heard that gazillion. Well, I had to tell you, I that's one thing I don't. They said, pastor, you just pray. I just don't have no patience. I said, well, that's funny, you know, because I thought you saved. Well, of course I'm saved. Why would you say that? I said, well, patience is one of the free the spirits in your spirit. How could you say you don't have what you have? Oh, you mean you're not saved? Oh, yeah, I know I got saved. Well, patience in your spirit. Oh, you mean I got patience? Oh, it's right on the inside. Take it out of the box. Yeah. See, that puts responsibility on them. And people don't like responsibility. They just want to say, what's the love got to do with it? It's the second hand emotion, flippantly. Right? I hate my mother in law and I love ice cream. And I'm a deacon or demon, whatever it is. But there is a love that's not really real. So now we're going to talk just for a few minutes. What love is not. There is a love that's not real.

[00:28:29] Pastor West

It's a false love. It's a counterfeit of love. A love that's trying to pass itself off as love. But it's not really love. In second Corinthians six, if you want to go there, second Corinthians six. I'm taking my time a little bit more today because we want to be rooted and grounded. Second Corinthians chapter six, verses three through six. We'll see what Paul said to the church at Corinth. He says, give no offense in anything. Verse three, give no offense in anything. Well, I'm going to I'm going to speak to the church in Jemison. Okay. Hey, church, give no offense in anything. That concludes our service for the day. That the ministry be not blamed. Now, that makes me think about John 13:34. By this they shall know. But if you if you give offense another place, says, don't give it and don't take it. But if you're giving it, it's a poor reputation on Christ in his church. So Paul says, give no offense to anything the ministry be not blame. But in all things, approving ourselves as ministers of God in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities and distresses, in stripes and imprisonments, in tumults and labors, in washings and Fastings lot going on here, but by appearances, verse six. By knowledge of long suffering and kindness, by the Holy Ghost of love unfeigned. Well, what is unfeigned mean? Well, that means sincere. I looked it up. It means genuine. It means not false or pretended, but is genuine.

[00:30:30] Pastor West

So what would fiend mean? Well, it's the opposite, right? So a fiend, a fiend. Love would be simulated. Pretend. Insincere or insincere. Artificial. Fake. Contrived love. Not real love. Not genuine love. Not the love of God. So Paul is having to tell the church, don't give offense in anything, but in all things you see, he says, he said, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, By the Holy Ghost, by the Holy Ghost within you you can love sincerely. By the love of God in you. You can love genuinely, even if you don't agree with him about everything. Did you know that all. Sometimes people don't all agree with each other. I heard that could even happen in marriage. I don't know, but I heard it could be that people don't agree sometimes and they get into arguments. But he said by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned. In other words, don't let your love be a pretense. Love. Don't let it be false, but let it be genuine. The NIV says in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love. The ESV said in genuine love and truthful speech. The ERV says, your love must be real. You don't mind me reading the Bible, do you, man? Listen to the voice translation. He said, love others well and don't hide behind a mask. Love authentically. Don't, he says. Don't hide behind a mask, but have real, true and genuine love.

[00:32:20] Pastor West

Now you know I'm going to have some scriptures. I'm always going to have scriptures. So let's go to first Peter chapter one, verse 22 and 23, and I'm going to read, uh, I'm going to start off in the ESV. Then I'm gonna read some of the amplified, some message. But if you do, we have ESV back there. We do. Good job. Did I do that? Did you do that? You did it. Okay. Did I teach you how to do it? I did okay. Verse 22. Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart. So really, these scriptures don't. They don't need much explaining. Commentary. Having purified your souls. How? By your obedience. There's that word people don't want to hear now. To the truth. For a sincere brotherly love. Love one another earnestly from a pure heart. Well, we can see that's not happening in the world. If you just had a if you had any means of media yesterday. Do you know that you're in the end times? Would you want to be any kind of person or nation that attacks Israel? That's nine months ongoing. Well, the Scripture says when you can see the the setup for us returning from heaven after seven years, when Jesus comes raptures us off the on the off the earth, and we go to meet him in the air, then we're going to go to the reward seat, the Bema Seat, and you'll be rewarded.

[00:34:18] Pastor West

But you're going to, you know, we're going to have fellowship with him and have the mayor's Supper of the lamb seven years. But then we're going to come back because Israel will be at the place at that point that they're about to be annihilated, for sure, by all the people in the regions round about. They're about to come to an end. But Jesus comes back and we come back with him on the white horse. And of course, it's not really a battle. Jesus, don't we don't Jesus don't actually get off his horse. He just opens his mouth and and it's over. And you'll be sitting there, I guess, like, in mid-air, looking down. That's cool. Giddy up, giddy up. Come on. But the scripture said, if you can see the the signs on this side of the rapture, how much closer are you to leaving? If you can see the setup on this side before we leave to go be with him. Yeah, so not all, but some of the major players who will be the ones who will be there to take Israel out during the seven year tribulation. They're already in force. You see, people don't even think about anymore because it's been so long about Russia and Ukraine. Major players. Then you have Iraq. You have Turkey, you'll have Syria. You'll have all these countries around the belt.

[00:35:53] Pastor West

You have Hezbollah. You got all these major players who's come. Why? Because they are they are the Antichrist spirit. And there's people in those countries that are true believers where the gospel has been preached many times underground, and to many it cost them their life to preach it there. So we want to win as many people as we can, right? Not only at home, but into the world before he comes. Point only being is that if you can see the if you can see the setup today, when you turn on, just look around you in society and it's been over 30 years since there has been an attempt that we know of on a president or a former president. I mean, it has to be. It has to be. I mean, I'm sure many of you agree with me, not all of you that, you know, if if President Trump had not turned his head in that last second, he would be deceased. Well, that young 20 year old boy registered a Republican. I don't think he's anything while he's dead is what he is. But so are other. Another, you know, individual who just came to the rally and was dropped like that, and two others who were seriously hurt, uh, by this love, they shall. No, not by this hate. By this division. So when you just turn on mainstream media, I don't care where you go. I mean, if you go to the Republican shows, I mean, I mean, they're just talking to each other.

[00:37:35] Pastor West

The Democrats are just talking to each other. They all have their talking points. They're not they're not reporting news. They're there. They're there to shape opinion from people who don't have one. But you shouldn't get your opinion and your views in life and how to vote from Fox News or CNN or anybody. You should get your views and your opinions from here. You're not anti a person or or a party affiliation. You're pro God. You're pro love. But what I'm trying to say is love has a stance. Love will tell you what's wrong. If it's. If it's real love, it will tell you what's wrong. Not. Not with a high powered rifle. But with the sword of the spirit. So when people say, well, what's your opinion about things you heard me say before, I don't I don't have an opinion. Oh, you've got to have an opinion. No, I don't really have one. I tell you what I believe because what I can tell you what the Bible believes. So this is telling some. Um, I have a close. I have a family member who years ago told me, he says he says he's talking about some of the stuff. And I always try to stay out of politics and quote religion. And I said, like I said, I don't have a belief in that. What do you mean you have a belief? He says, you're a Christian.

[00:39:17] Pastor West

You're a pastor. You got to have a belief. I said, I can tell you what I believe, but I'll tell you why I believe it. What I just told you, I believe because it's what the word says. I don't have an opinion outside of that. He said, well, you're just too simple minded. I said, thank you. I appreciate that very high compliment. What he was doing, he was mocking and making fun of me. And I said, well, thank you very much, man. That's some of the kindest word you spoke to me in a long time. I'm simple minded. I pray I never get as complicated as you are. He said, well, what if you're wrong? I said, well then I'm blindly following God. So me and God just end up in the same ditch. He said, there ain't no talking to you. I said, thank you. You know, if you want to argue with them, there's nothing to fight about. Mm. It's hard to argue by yourself. Although some people can do it. Some people don't even need a partner or, you know, to be anti whatever. So the world you can see has the Antichrist spirit more prevalent than any time that we ever know in society right now? Yeah. Well, there's absolute hate and division. Well, the Scripture tells you that in the very last days, perilous times shall be here.

[00:40:47] Pastor West

And it goes on to tell you all these things. Men would be lovers of themselves, unthankful, unholy, all these things, high minded haters, but lovers of themselves. Lovers of what? Of self. I love pizza. I love that movie. I love, I love the beach. Oh, God, I love the beach so much. No. You like the beach. You appreciate the beach. You appreciate God's creation. But you love God and you enjoy the beach. But the beach won't not love you back. Nick Saban never sent me a check and he made plenty of money. He could send us all \$5, but he never sent us nothing. Nothing, nothing. Pat Barr didn't pass out checks to anybody. How are we doing? Good. Uh, was we in first Peter? Um, verse 23, since you have been born again. Oh, look at they're not a perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and abiding Word of God. You must show sincere love to each other as brothers and sisters. Love each other deeply with all your heart. But notice the verse we just read before that. But see, but now you've been born again, not of a perishable seed. See? The next verse tells you what to do and how to do it. The verse before that reminds you that you've been supplied with ability to do it. This is not out of your old self. This is your new self. Mm. Now, let me read. Uh, just stay there where you are.

[00:42:31] Pastor West

The amplified says, since by your obedience to the truth, you have purified yourself for a sincere love of the believers. See that you love one another from the heart, always unselfishly seeking the best for one another, seeking the best for one another. Not your best, their best. The message says now that you cleaned up your lives by following the truth, love one another as if your life depended on it, for your new life is not like your old life. Oh, isn't that good? Y'all glad I studied sometime. Okay. Thank you. I just wondered. Romans chapter 12, verses nine and ten. You don't mind me having a few verses, do you? I could just tell you what Eric thinks. But I am when I'm reading the verses Romans chapter 12, verses nine and ten. This is the passion translation, so we'll come across a little bit more passionate. It says, let the inner movement of your heart always be the love of one another, and never play the role of an actor wearing a mask. Despise evil and embrace everything that is good and virtuous. Be devoted to tenderly loving your fellow beings as members of one family. Try to outdo yourself in respect and honor for one another, not shoot them in the ear. The NLT verses 9-10 says, don't just pretend. See, there's a there's there is a pretended love, a false love. Don't just pretend to love others.

[00:44:08] Pastor West

Really love them. Hate what is wrong? Hold tightly to that which is good. Love each other with genuine affection. And and take delight and honour in each other. See, so real love teaches us to deny what's wrong and live righteously and godly, doesn't it? Real. That's the real. The love of God won't accept what is wrong. Now listen. The real love of God won't accept what is wrong, ungodly or unrighteous. It teaches against it. You say, well, I just give people grace. Well, good. Then. Then this is what Grace will do. You say, well, I'm just going to give em grace. I'm just gonna love everybody. Give em mercy. Going to love em. I'm not going to get into anything. Well, then you're not loving them. You're loving you. Well, I don't want, you know, I don't want no confrontation. Well, I thought you loved them. Oh, I do love them. But how many of your your your parents loved you with a rod or a broom or a hand or a belt around the house. We got a whole lot of love. We didn't know that's what it was at the time. But anyway. But in Titus chapter two, verses 11 and 12 and NIV. Now listen this. This is the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches or empowers us to say no to ungodliness and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age.

[00:45:46] Pastor West

So the grace of God doesn't stand by silently while you mess your entire life up. Are those that you love mess their mess their lives up? It doesn't make you a judge over them. You're not. You're not judging them. But there is something called fruit inspection. In Chilton County. You wouldn't take us very long to find a peach orchard. And I had some the other day. Y'all had a. Any? They are good and they were really good this morning. Type of oatmeal with strawberries and blueberries and walnuts. Come on somebody. Anyway, so sweet. They were good. But if we go to the peach orchard, do you think a few trees might yet. I ain't no peach. I ain't no peach tree. I'm an apple tree. Mm. Well, if it could talk and if it would say that, what would we say to it? No you're not. Oh yes, I am. I'm an apple tree. I ain't like these trees right here. Why are you an apple tree? Because I say I am. Would you know what you have hanging on your branches? Apples? No. It's peaches. Now, would you be judging them? No. But your eyes purely tell you you're not apple, you're peach. That's called fruit inspection. But when we get to the place where we say, well, they just. I know why they did this, why they're doing that. They're just doing that because. Well, now you don't know that you might be right.

[00:47:18] Pastor West

But you. We are not allowed to do that. You don't judge it at the heart level. Jesus. Jesus said, I didn't come to judge the world. I came to to to be the way, the truth, and the life. Amen. There will be a judgment because there is a right and there is a wrong. But the grace of God is not a license, you know to sin. Grace teaches you to live righteously, to lead you to live holy. The grace of God not only teaches you, but empowers you to do. It gives you the ability to do. Because grace is not a doctrine. Grace is a person. Grace is the person of Jesus Christ in the power of Holy Spirit. Who will who will bring you out of that situation, empower you to walk away from them, drugs, them, alcohol and whatever it is, Amen empowers you to do it and teaches you to say no, not just overlooks it. Now, I only got a few minutes, so let me meddle for just a few minutes, can I? I'll go by this fast so you can look it up later if you want to. The idea of what makes you happy. Live your life how you want, and we won't judge you. And we'll just accept you. That's not real, love. You know, the the idea of do what makes you happy? That. If you ever don't do it. But if you ever read a satanic Bible, that's his number one rule.

[00:48:55] Pastor West

Do what? Do as thou wilt. Do as what makes you happy. Where do we find this kind of thinking in the first place? In the Garden of Eden. You ain't happy because he's keeping you from being happy. Be all that you can be. Join the Marines. No, no. Be all that you can be. Follow me. The one who fell thinking just like this is teaching you how to fall. Just like you do now. So he said. So the idea of just doing this live the way that you want to, it's your one life. Live it and we won't judge you. We want to. We'll just accept you. It's not real love. It's not genuine love. It's counterfeit. Real love. The real love of God does not accept what's wrong. It does not accept what's ungodly, does not accept what's unrighteous. It teaches against it. Amen. There's a ditch on the other side of revelation. Any kind of revelation. Some people just won't stay in the middle of the road. They're going to drive everything in the ditch. You can drive the love of God in the dish, grace in the dish, faith and dish prosperity. Anything pushed to an extreme will be just that. You'll have people who go to an island and drink Kool-Aid. And 900 men die. Jim Jones. And they thought they were going to beat Mother spaceship and go into Paradise.

[00:50:14] Pastor West

Well, they left and went somewhere. They were drinking the Kool-Aid. The ditch of love is showing in. Or the ditch of love is showing in inappropriate or excessive interest in any kind of desires. That's wrong. I mean, the ditch of love is saving us, which is a which is an inappropriate, excessive interest in sexual desires. But the ditch of love also is a kind of no accountability. The ditch of love is no correction. No correction. Come here. You just accept it. Now you may be thinking you're like, now wait a minute. You're changing me. I'm not changing on you. I'm the same person I've always been. Second Timothy 2:15 says, tells us that we have to rightly divide the word of truth with other scriptures. Hebrews 12:5. One of the main demonstrations of love is correction. Oh, this is Paul. Oh, this is the one who got the revelation. Oh, this is the one who says the gospel of grace is his gospel called grace the gospel. And now the same one who wrote this, telling you this, that, that the main demonstration of love would be also to correct when God is correcting you, it's because he's loving you. Amen. Now, uh, Hebrews 13, if you will, verses five through eight in the NLT. Then I'm gonna read some of it in the message. We we doing okay? Y'all got ten minutes. Ten minutes. Okay. Okay. Real fast. Verse five.

[00:52:03] Pastor West

And have you forgotten the encouraging words that God spoke to you as his children? He said, my child, don't make light of the Lord's discipline and don't give up when he corrects you. For the Lord disciplines those that he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child. As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children. Whoever heard of a child who's never disciplined by his father? If God doesn't discipline you as he does all other children, it means that you are illegitimate. King James says you're a bastard if God doesn't discipline you. He said, you're illegitimate and you're not really his children at all. How do you like that? Listen to the message. Don't shrug off God's discipline, but don't be crushed by it either. It's the child he loves that he disciplines, the child he embraces. He also corrects. God is educating you. That's why you must never drop out. He's treating you as dear children. The trouble you're in isn't punishment. It's training. The normal experience of children. Only irresponsible parents leave children to fend for themselves. Would you prefer an irresponsible God? Some of the ways false love manifests is love without correction. Love without accountability. It's counterfeit love. Let you do whatever you want when you want to do it. And you don't say anything to them. The idea that I can't correct them because I just love them too much is a lie.

[00:53:52] Pastor West

Because you yourself are deceived. Now the reality is you love yourself more than you love them. Go and get really quiet. And this Presbyterian church because you don't want the discomfort of correction. No one likes it. You have employees. Sometimes you're going to need to correct them. You operate too loose and they take advantage of you. And it's not that you're loving them. You're neglecting your responsibilities. You see, I have to answer what I'm telling you right now. I read it in here. I'll think about it all the time. He said who? The Holy Ghost made you an overseer to cost the city. It cost the blood of Jesus. He said, now you teach and you admonish, and you teach them correctly. He said, Because I'm going to hold you accountable for what you do. So I yes, we love, we love them. We want them here. I don't care what their life's been like, but we're going to love them and love the hell out of them and tell them who they are in Christ. And then they can walk a new path, not just like they don't. It's all good, man. Don't we just just love. Know. Love. Teach us, not ignore us. Lack of accountability is not being loving and merciful. It's being neglectful. The kingdom of God has structure in it. It has obedience. It has accountability. It has submission with love and mercy.

[00:55:25] Pastor West

Love and mercy without restraint, without self-control. It is not genuine love. I'm almost through. Really? Acceptance alone says don't change. You're fine. Just be happy. God's okay with it because he's unconditional love. But Jesus didn't preach that gospel. Jesus preached the kingdom of God in repentance. Matthew four 717 says, from this time Jesus began to preach. He said, repent. He didn't know he wasn't supposed to do that. He said, repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand. And Mark 612 they said, they went out and preached that men should repent. Should what? What does that mean? They should change. They should change their mind, right? Repent means change your mind. In the kingdom, there's government. There's rule. There's law. The King establishes right from wrong. Jesus is the king. He says, seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all things shall be added unto you. What is he saying? Repent. Change your thinking, your ways. Put off, put on. Repentance says don't change, you're fine or acceptance rather says don't change, you're fine. Be happy. Repentance says change and you'll know more. You'll see more. Amen. The woman caught in the act of adultery. She was brought before Jesus. Not that they really cared, but they really wanted to trap Jesus. Remember? Yes. And they said the law says she has to be stoned. I always said, I wonder where the guy was. I mean, you can't be a prostitute. I always say, without a prostitute tour. Why didn't they drag his sorry carcass in the ring? When if I was a woman, I'd be saying, that's right, that's good preaching glory to God.

[00:57:06] Pastor West

I don't know. Glory. Glory. There's no mention of him. Right. So she's caught. She's caught in the act of adultery. I mean, how did they know where to find him at? Oh, because they were there, thirsty. Anyway, so, uh, the and they told they reminded Jesus that the law said, you have to be stoned. He said, but what do you say? See, they're after him. Well, Trump says they're not after me. They're after you. They just know they got to go through me. That's right. If they can shoot me down, they'll. They'll come after you. Let's go back to the Masters, though. Jesus said, those with those of you. Without first stone, without sin, cast the first stone. What was he doing? He was giving her the love of God. He was having them look at themselves. Are you guilty? Have you kept all the law? Are you without sin? She. Yes. He was denying there wasn't a sin. He said, but do you have sin? That's very interesting. How when you read the scriptures, it says. And they had to. They threw the stones down, and it says they could have just said they and they threw the stones down and walked away. But it said they threw their stones down from the oldest to the youngest. I don't know what that means, but if you've been got a little age on you, you might have a little bit more reputation of things that he said. Those without sin cast the first stone. Then they had to reflect back on themselves and, well, all right then Jesus asked the woman, you know she's like this.

[00:58:46] Pastor West

And she looks up and he says, look around you. She's looking around. She says, where are your accusers? She said, there's none, Lord. He said, neither do I condemn you. But now you go and you sin no more. What was that? No. How is she going to do it? He gave her a gift to not go and sin no more. It's called no condemnation. Neither do I condemn you. I'm going to give you the gift that will enable you to go sin no more. Because I am love. Amen. But love will tell the truth. Amen. I wouldn't want a pastor who wouldn't tell me the truth. Or who was afraid to tell me the truth. Afraid that the big giver will leave if I. If I go down these passages, boy, I'm going to lose them. I'm going to go inside now. Faulty translations. If I'm going to go out, I might as well go out big. I go sell shoes or work at Taco Bell. But I'll be the happiest taco slapper that you ever seen. Welcome to Taco Bell. Woo hoo! What you want to. Love will tell the truth because Jesus is truth and he is the absolute love. You can't. You can't get any more love than God Himself and God's truth, right? So, you know, confrontation is not always fun. I mean, I don't know anyone who just loves confrontation, but. And I know personalities are different, Even though my personality is more A-type and I could do that.

[01:00:24] Pastor West

And, you know, I just I was always in some type of management before ministry. I always had some kind of business or worked in management. But I mean, I, you know, when I managed stores like Family Dollar and Fred, I mean, I remember one time Family Dollar, I fired more people in one day than them. I even have customers. We opened a store in Florala, Alabama and I was going to. The next door was going to be mine and back home. And I was the manager at Millbrook, you know, Prattville. Millbrook lived in Clanton as close as I could get to it because the Clanton store was already taken open. The store took 2 or 3 months, had to cut ribbon cutting. He said, okay, you got 60 people to put together, but he can only hire 20. Did all 20 of them within three weeks, had to fire almost three quarters of them because they couldn't pass the lie detector tests they've been stealing all the way up open and throwing stuff out the back room, putting the car and going home with it. And I had a skeleton crew. I said I was 21 years old, I was the manager, and someone said, how could you have picked, you know, three quarters of these ladies and they're all stealing? Someone said he picked all the pretty ones. I said, I don't know about that, but let's don't wallpaper the room ugly. Well, my judge of character 21, wasn't that great. They couldn't pass the lie detector test, so I just had to tell them.

[01:01:50] Pastor West

I said, I'm sorry you didn't pass the lie detector test. You're immediately dismissed. Goodbye. Sorry it had to hire other ones. Had to do that many times. Have to do it. Ministry. Sometime. I've had to stand by people in ministry, for I had a man several times balled up his fist and he said, I'll just knock there. I said, go ahead. Of course I wouldn't do. I was young and I would not have. I wouldn't do it today for nothing. I just called the police flat to the police, wouldn't even call the police. I called the police Because they got POWs in the South. There's police in the south, it's Atlanta, Georgia. It's not Atlanta. So. I had a guy at one time. He got so mad. Marriage counseling, he got up and he says, what'd you say to me? I said, I said, this is what you said to your wife is. And do you see her ever cry? He says she cries all the time. He's saying, I ain't gonna stay with her. He said, look at her. He said she looked like a hog. Yeah. He said, we got married. He says, you know, she was neat and trim. He says, and you know, she might have, might, could have lost £20 at the, you know, she would have been whatever. And he says, oh, he said, well, you know, when, when we got married, she said she had a stomach like a washboard. I said, how many kids y'all got? He said three. I said, did you have any of them? He said, I told you we had three.

[01:03:13] Pastor West

I said, which one did you have? Which one did you personally give birth to? What do you mean? I said, which one did you give birth to? Well, she did, I said. And you don't want no change in her body whatsoever. And I said, so you're going to stay with him? She's always crying. He said, I want to stay with her or nothing. And so in my youth and my personality, which is A-type and, you know, he he didn't really have any hair at all left and he was only like 30. And I said, I said, well, hey, I'll call her Sarah. I said, when you marry George over here, which wasn't George, I said, did he have a head full of hair? She said, yeah, why? I said, oh, so you had hair. So how long have you been a bald eagle? And I saw them fist like this. Oh, he said, what'd you call me? I said, bald eagle. You called her a sour pig and your bald eagle. He said I oughta just knocked it. I said, I said, you come on. I said, you ought to try because she don't hit back, but I do. Now, if you're listening, I'm sorry. If you're new pastor, don't use me. Yeah. Be sitting out. I probably do the same thing again. Well, I've had any measure that many times, you know, standing with people and talking guns out of people's heads, going to commit suicide. Uh, you know, it's just, you know, stand in between people that, uh, he was an abuser and had to get had to get her and the kids to safety and out of town before he came home.

[01:04:55] Pastor West

They come after me, he said. So you knew my wife's leaving, I said. Huh? Why? Because you're a fool. You're a hard headed fool. And if I turn, if I tell and I'm instructed legally as a pastor, when you tell me these things, I'm supposed to report you. So you help my wife load up and my kids. And they've left me while you was at work. I said, yeah, because they're afraid of you and you're angry and you need help, and I'll help you if you let me. But they don't have to stay with you, and I'd help them again tomorrow. And he got mad. I said, well, why don't you try with me what you do to her all the time? I was about 35. I said, come on, why don't you try it with me? Of course I had a big stick behind me. I said, come on. I told my wife, don't tell him. I said, I don't make enough money to do this, I just don't. I used to own a business and I just don't make enough money to do it to do this. Then I remember what Pastor Webb told me when I got started. I said, so what am I going to need to be successful pastor? So the first thing you're going to need to know is you've got to be tougher than hell.

[01:06:14] Congregation

Yeah! Amen!

[01:06:15] Pastor West

And I thought, man, he sure was right about that.

[01:06:18] Congregation

Amen.

[01:06:20] Pastor West

Any measure of time. I had a young man who was who was in a gang and Chilton County, and he he, he put out death threats and called my home and left it on my voice message. And he said, I'm gonna put a plug in you in the next seven days. So I had to call the police and let him listen to it. And they said, well, well, I said, he said, oh yeah, we know who he is. He said, I wouldn't, I wouldn't take that lightly. He said, he's in a terrible gang. He says you need to. You need to watch yourself. Well, Charlie, you know he's in heaven now. I told Charlie, you know, Charlie was a good old Baptist boy. Baptist. Baptist really loved the pastor's boy. I'm telling you, Charlie, Charlie wouldn't eat his first corn, his tomatoes, his okra. You know, the first deer beaten until the pastor had it. I said, well, Charlie, he says, no, pastor, I can't have the blessing. Good old Baptist brother. I can't have the blessing on my crops and my deer and all this kind of stuff. And unless you partake of the first, this is called the first fruits. He says, please, pastor, take this. So when he heard I'd been threatened my life, I mean, he lived in Deatsville, you know, over around, you know, Prattville, Millbrook. He come early, he'd drive up in his. And he's waiting for me to get to church and he's out there with his. He got two pistols in the third, he said. He said, go ahead, pastor, go on in the church. He said, I got you, well.

[01:07:37] Pastor West

He said, do you have any kind of firearms? I said, no, I don't have one. He says, well, he says, he says, you like to feel either one of these. I want you to keep one for a couple or three months or whatever. You can just have it either one you want. I said, um, I said, what's that? He said, that's, that's the 38 and that's the snubnose. I said, I'll take Mr. Snubby. He said, But I'll be here every service till we settle this thing. And the police had to deal with that boy. They said I wouldn't take that as just this boy is crazy enough to do it. He wasn't mad at me. I was just standing in the matter. He was had a terrible life, and he just repeating it over and over again. And I was just in his way to what he was mad at. Did you actually met with him later on? And he apologized as he grew up and got a little bit older, and I ministered the gospel to him, and I actually hugged him and told him how much I loved him, how much God loved him. Amen. But as a pastor, my job was to make sure that people taught the Word of God and they were in a safe environment. So I hired police. Every time we came together to watch the parking lot where we was having church, because that's my responsibility. Just like in this church, it's my responsibility. So in that in this building, we have the ability to see outside while you're inside and there is parking in this church every service. So if you come in here, you the wrong way, you might feel led a different kind of lift. And I, the one who probably won't be going for your ear. I said too much, didn't I? This concludes my my first sermon on the love of God. What's love got to do with it? Amen. God bless you.

END OF TRANSCRIPT



