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Morning Service

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Teaching Elder

How Divine Love is Evidenced

Think about the phrase "...*His love is perfected in us...*" . In this phrase John tells us that our gracious Lord is doing a constant work for us. He is perfecting us. Note it does not say "*His love was perfected in us*" or "*His love is perfect in us*", but rather, "*His love is perfected in us*". The Lord's perfecting is an ongoing work that constantly pushes us towards the impossible goal of Godly perfection. John then follows with a series of familiar "...*by this...*" statements which tell us we should expect to see evidence of God's divine love at work in our lives. Do you know what the evidence of God's love is in your life?

There is some obvious evidence, a Christian will confess that Jesus is the Son of God who was sent by the Father to be the Savior of the world, but, it does not stop there. Growing in the love of God also means growing in the understanding of God and His Law. Seeking to know and obey God is deeply connected to God working in us.

All professing Christians concede that Jesus came to die for our sins, and unfortunately, many rest on that alone. John tells us there is much more than just this when he talks about how God's perfect love casts out fear of judgment. If the Christian walk only required belief in Jesus, why would John mention fear of judgment?

John tells us the Christian life is a belief in Christ, a call to obey, and an always growing intimacy with God and His Law. This intimate relationship does not come from the outside in. Our works cannot and will not save us. Rather this relationship comes from the inside out, changing our hearts, thoughts, speech, and actions towards others. This growing relationship will cause us to hunger for more knowledge and better control over our sins because God is doing it in us. The result of this work is the casting out of the fear of judgment.

As you listen to the sermon consider these questions;

If I had only 4 hours to live, would I be sharing the blessings of a Godly life, or would I be making amends and repenting?

What examples can I cite to answer "*By this?...*"

Is my obedience driven from the inside, or the outside?

Scripture References

1 John 4:11-21 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. (12) No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us. (13) By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. (14) We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son *to be* the Savior of the world. (15) Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. (16) We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. (17) By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world. (18) There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love. (19) We love, because He first loved us. (20) If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. (21) And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.

1 John 2:5 but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him:

Revelation 12:17 So the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her children, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.

Revelation 14:12 Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus.

Matthew 7:3-5 "Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? (4) "Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and behold, the log is in your own eye? (5) "You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

2 Timothy 3:14-17 You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*, (15) and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. (16) All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; (17) so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

Jude 1:24-25 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, (25) to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, *be* glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

2 Corinthians 4:13-16 But having the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I BELIEVED, THEREFORE I SPOKE," we also believe, therefore we also speak, (14) knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and will present us with you. (15) For all things *are* for your sakes, so that the grace which is spreading to more and more people may cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of God. (16) Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.

Colossians 1:22-29 yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach-- (23) if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister. (24) Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions. (25) Of *this church* I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the *preaching* of the word of God, (26) *that is*, the mystery which has been hidden from the *past* ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, (27) to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is

Christ in you, the hope of glory. (28) We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. (29) For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.

Colossians 3:4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

Hebrews 13:20-21 Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, *even* Jesus our Lord, (21) equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Acts 17:30-31 "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all *people* everywhere should repent, (31) because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."

John 5:22-25 "For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, (23) so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. (24) "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. (25) "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.

Jude 1:6 And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day,

2 Peter 2:4 For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment;

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Matthew 12:37 "For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

We are glad you have chosen to listen to this sermon and pray that it gives you strength, the want for obedience, and a desire to have God's abundant Grace mortify sin in your life. If you have any questions or comments please email chuck_ezell@yahoo.com.