

Series: 1 John

Title: Perfect Love Casteth Out Fear

Text: 1 Jn 4: 17-19

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When God sheds abroad his love in our heart, God's love accomplishes making his people believe on Christ and makes us love one another. Love expresses itself upon the object of its love with deeds of love. Love acts. Love forgives. Love does not make a brother an offender because of a word misspoken. Love makes us bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ—which is the law of love. When we read of the things that charity does in 1 Corinthians 13, this is the love God puts in the heart of his people and the deeds of love which God produces in the believer.

1 Corinthians 13: 1: Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. 2: And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. 3: And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. 4: Charity suffereth long, *and* is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, 5: Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; 6: Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; 7: Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. 8: Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away.

The love of God does all this in the context of his body, the church. Christ fitly frames us together in his assembly under the preaching of the gospel using the pastor that Christ himself has given as his ascension gift to his church. We read about it Ephesians 4. Christ does this because this is God's means of saving his people.

When God has put his love in the hearts of his children, we cannot go out from where God has planted us under his gospel. The Holy Spirit of God declares that through the apostle John in the most dogmatic language when he speaks of those who once professed Christ yet forsake assembling together with God's saints. He said, "*They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us*" (1Jo 2:19). The sin of apostasy is the sin unto death. It is the sin that the apostle John declares that the child of God cannot commit because he has been born of the incorruptible seed, the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. Having been born-again of God the believer hungers and thirsts after Christ and this gospel is our food. We have brethren we love who depend on us so we cannot forsake them. God's love in us will not allow us to do so.

Brethren, if I did not have this word of God, assuring me this is what God accomplishes in his people without a doubt, then it would be great discouragement when we see professing believers walk in darkness, contrary to the light. But we have God's word that he certainly accomplishes this in his people.

Proposition: The same as God's love within his people accomplishes making us love one another, God's love for his people in Christ Jesus, when produced in his child, also casts out fear and makes his child have boldness to stand before God in the day of judgment.

Subject: Perfect Love Casteth out Fear

1 John 4: 17: Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. 18: There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. 19: We love him, because he first loved us.

LOVE MADE PERFECT

1 John 4: 17: Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment...

God's love is perfected in us when it gives us boldness for the day of judgment. The margin says, "*Herein is love with us*" made perfect. It means "*herein is God's love within us made perfect.*" We saw in verse 12 that "*No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, [it is because] God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.*"

Our text is declaring another thing that God's love perfects in his child. When God dwells in us—when he sheds abroad in our heart his great love for Christ and his great love for us (the love wherewith he loves Christ) then God gives us boldness to stand before God in the day of judgment.

Before we go further, understand, a day is coming when the world shall stand before God in judgment. The Holy Spirit declares through the apostle Paul that God "*hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead*" (Ac 17:23-31).

In that day of judgment sinners without faith in Christ will stand before God and every sinful thought, word and deed will be brought to judgment in righteousness. And Christ will be the Judge. Scripture says that they will cry for the mountains to fall on them.

Revelation 6: 15: And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; 16: And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: 17: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

Sinner, that day is rapidly approaching. It could be tonight. You would be wise to seek Christ now while he may be found! How many times have you heard me and other faithful preachers declare that to you? How many times have you let it go in one ear and out the other? How many times will God allow a sinner to tread underfoot the Son of God until God turns him over in reprobation? I do not know and I do not want to find out. Oh, that you would take this heart and go home and give yourself to searching the scriptures to see that these things I declare to you are true. Oh, that you would cast yourself on the mercy of God today and ask God to teach you that Christ is the only way of salvation.

Yet, for you who God has called to faith in Christ, in that day of judgment you will stand with God's saints with boldness and confidence and joy. God's saints will not fear in that day because God's love for us has given us boldness. How so?

BECAUSE AS HE IS, SO ARE WE IN THIS WORLD

1 John 4: 17: Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

Our confidence to stand before God in the day of judgement, without the least bit of fear, is because everything that Christ is right now at God's right hand as our Head and Substitute, so are we right now in this world.

Christ is the only begotten Son of God. Every child born of his Spirit, right now in this world, is a son of God by adoption through the righteousness of Christ Jesus.

1 John 3: 1: Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. 2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

Christ is righteous and holy and accepted by God our Father and so are we who believe on Christ.

Romans 6:6: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. 7: For he that is dead is freed from sin. 8: Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: 9: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. 10: For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. 11: Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

He that is dead is freed from sin—justified. Christ bore the sin of his people. Therefore, he died unto sin once. Therefore, we are dead unto sin. The law of God condemns Christ no more, therefore the law of God condemns us no more. Sin has no more dominion over him, therefore sin has no more dominion over us. Death has no more dominion over him, therefore death has no more dominion over us. Christ is alive to God, therefore we are alive unto God. Christ is accepted of God, therefore we are accepted of God in the Beloved!

Sinner, if you would have this confidence—believer, if you would have this confidence—believe on Christ and abide in him until the end. The Holy Spirit declares through John, *“And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming”* (1 Jn 2:28).

PERFECT LOVE CASTETH OUT FEAR

1 John 4: 18: There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

In every sinner born of God, it is God's perfect love that casts out fear of being condemned in judgment.

This is a statement of fact, *“there is no fear in love.”* There is no fear of God's judgment in love which God puts in his child. How so? Read this carefully. It is because *“perfect love casteth out fear.”* This *“perfect love”* is God's love for Christ. It is also the same love of God which God has for us in whom Christ dwells. In his great high priestly prayer Christ said,

John 17: 22: And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and HAST LOVE THEM, AS THOU HAST LOVED ME.

As Christ is, so are we in this world. As Christ is loved by God the Father, so God loves his people with the same love with which he loves Christ. This is the love that God puts in our hearts. This is why Christ laid

down his life for God's elect. It is to make us know that God our Father has loved us—his elect—as he has loved Christ. That is what we see in God sending his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him. All who are children of God, hear this! God our Father has loved you, along with every elect child, as he has loved Christ, with perfect, electing, everlasting, indestructible, covenant love. It is the same love wherewith God loves Christ. But that is not all.

Also, Christ asked that God put his perfect love for Christ in us when Christ comes to dwell in us.

John 17: 26: I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare *it*: THAT THE LOVE WHEREWITH THOU HAST LOVED ME MAY BE IN THEM, AND I IN THEM.

Perfect love which casts out fear is the love wherewith God loves Christ which is put in us when a new man is created within us. We love Christ. It becomes our love. But it is God's love for Christ which God has put in us. The result is that all legal fear of God and all the torment of judgment that once ruled us and kept us in bondage is now cast out—*"perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment."*

A father who truly loves his children does not want his children to serve him because they are afraid of him and tormented with fear that he will cast them out unless they obey. A father who loves his children wants his children to serve him because they love him. Likewise, God does not make his child serve him by legal fear. He does not give us the Holy Spirit only to make us live in torment that if we break God's law then God will throw us in hell. God declares to us that we are justified by the blood of his Son so that we have peace with God and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Romans 5: 1: Being justified, by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3: And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4: And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

The Holy Spirit reveals the gospel of Christ to us that there is no condemnation for us in Christ and frees us from the tormenting rule of sin and death. It is not the spirit of bondage that God has given to us so that we live in fear. But God has given us the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry unto God as unto our loving Father.

Romans 8: 1: There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2: For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death...15: For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 16: The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

Of that sinner who professes to believe on Christ but is still motivated by threats of law and fear of condemnation, God says, *"he that feareth is not made perfect in love."* But when God has made his child partaker of the divine nature, God removes that fear. Now, we can live unto God and serve God acceptably constrained by his love for us. Now, we know we are holy and righteous before him in Christ Jesus and have no fear of condemnation. This was God's promise to Abraham, *"That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life"* (Lu 1: 74-75). That is why this was Paul's prayer for the Ephesians and for all God's saints,

Ephesians 3: 16: That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; 17: That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, 18: May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19: And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

Believer, John's point is that it is the love of God for Christ, that has been put in us. How amazing! It is our love for Christ, now. But it is God's love for Christ put in us. It is the same love with which God loves us that makes us love one another. It is God's love by which he sent his Son and made us righteous and holy and created life in us. This is the perfect love of God put into our new heart which motivates us and constrains us to love God and serve him in promoting the gospel of his Son with one another. And this is how we love our brethren: by assembling together, by sending forth his gospel to his lost elect, by forgiving one another that we might all have the gospel, by providing for one another and bearing one another's burdens so that we can get them out of the way and enable one another to focus on the gospel of Christ.

Brethren, do not let the unfaithfulness of some, make you question God's word. God's love in his child really accomplishes making us believe on Christ and love one another. Law never accomplishes this. Legal fear never accomplishes this. Threats of condemnation never accomplishes love. That person who needs those things to keep us his charade of religion knows nothing of this perfect love of God. Read the text again slowly and get these words down in our hearts and rejoice that it is as God says it is.

1 John 4: 16: And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. 17: Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. 18: There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. 19: We love him, because he first loved us.

Did you catch that last verse? That is the main point. To God be the glory! *"We love him, because he first loved us!"*

Amen!