

***Loved to the End*** (JL-77) John 13:1

Sunday, December 4, 2005

John 13:1

*Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.*

We are about to embark onto **new ground** in our **journey** through the Gospel of John.

The **section of Scripture** which we begin today has been **regarded by many** to be the **most precious** portion of this Gospel and even in all of Scripture.

If John's Gospel were laid out as a **tabernacle**, chapters 13 through 17 would be the "**most holy place**" in the sense that these chapters **reveal a greater understanding** of the **relationship** between the Father and Son, the **person** and **work** of the **Holy Spirit**, and the *mystical union* between **Christ and His disciples.**

In the prologue of John's Gospel we will recall that **Christ's mission** and **ministry** was **first** to *His own natural people*, the *physical* children of Abraham, the Jewish people ...

but the **sad testimony** from John chapter 1, was that *though He came to His own, His own received Him not ...*

This has been **fully demonstrated** in chapters 5-12 of this Gospel.

In the end of chapter 12, **Jesus** makesing **one final plea** to these people to **come to Him**, but the *end result* was that **He hid Himself from them.**

The **sad testimony** of the **prologue** ... that *His own did not receive Him*,  
was not **fatal** nor **final** *however*,  
because *remember*, that *though THEY did not receive Him*,  
there **would be** a people who **would**.

John 1 reads,

***To as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even them that believe on His name.***

It is this **group** of people ... who **now** *become identified*  
as the **children of Abraham** ... the **children of God** ...  
and "**His own**."

Remember in the *parable of the Good Shepherd*,  
Jesus is seen as the **Shepherd of the sheep**,  
calling "**His own sheep**" *by name* out of the fold of this world.

Well, now in chapters 13-17, we see **Christ alone**, with *His own sheep*,  
**separated from the world**,  
telling them of *their particular*  **blessings** and **privileges**.

As a **bridegroom** writes love letters *exclusively* to his **bride**,  
**God** *in these chapters* of Scripture,  
writes to **we** who are His children, *those who believe*,  
**a love letter**.

The **truths** and **promises** *in these chapters* are **exclusively**  
*for* the **bride of Christ**.

*Chapter 13 begins* what is called the "Paschal Discourse"

By the middle of this chapter, **Judas**, the *last remnant of the world*,  
in their midst, will be gone ...

as he will **leave** to do his **bitter work of betrayal**.

leaving the **bulk of this discourse** ... this **teaching**  
on this final Passover night *for* his **true followers**.

If we *liken* our **journey through John** as a  
walk through the **tabernacle of Israel** ...

While chapter 5-12 are like the “*outer courts*,”  
chapter 13 brings before us the “*altar of burnt offering*” and the  
“*bronze laver*” whereby one is **saved** and **washed**,  
before *entering the tabernacle*.

In chapter 14, 15 and 16, we walk by the *Golden Menorah*, the  
*Table of Shewbread*, and the *Altar of Incense* ...

All, on our way **through the veil** that separated God and man  
into the *holy of holies*,  
of which we receive a glimpse in chapter 17 ...  
the *high priestly prayer* of Jesus Christ.

Some of the most **poignant, powerful** teaching *in all of the Bible*,  
takes place here on the  
**last evening** that Jesus spent with His **disciples**.

*Before the meal was over*, Jesus would **institute** the *Lord's Supper*,  
and from that point on, **believers** would **no longer** recall *primarily*  
the **Passover lambs in Egypt**,

but they would **celebrate** and **remember** *the Lamb of God*,  
**Jesus Christ, who takes away the sin of the world**.

During that meal, Jesus **explained** the **legacy** that He would leave behind,  
as He departed to **go to the Father**.

His words are **intimate, personal, full of love** *for those He called His own*.

This **legacy**, was *not only* for the disciples seated at the table,  
but **for us** *who follow*, to **claim** as our own.

**We have crossed a great divide**.

Jesus has ***hid himself*** from those who would not believe and are **perishing**

And is **now** *revealing Himself* in all of His glory to **His children**.

It is not surprising, *therefore*, that the **first words** of this section in chapter 13 **draws a distinct contrast** *between the people of the covenant and those of the world.*

John 13:1

*Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father,*

That tells us the **timeframe** ... it is **Passover** – *one of the two* most **holiest days** of the Hebrew year ...

*The day* when **God parted the Red Sea**

*The day* when **God delivered His children from slavery**

*the day* when **all Israel remembers** their **deliverance**

by the *blood of the lamb*, painted on their doorposts – and their *subsequent* **delivery** from **slavery** in Egypt.

*The day* when God **set His people apart**, and **identified them**, by bringing them *through the waters* of the Sea

*Is the very same day*, here in John 13, that **Jesus identifies His own**, by the **washing** of their feet *with water*.

It was the *feast of Passover* ... a **feast** of **symbols** and **allegories** that *pointed* beyond *merely* **the one event**.

**Filled** with **types** and **shadow**,

pointing to a **greater deliverance** from a **greater bondage** ...

by the **blood** of a **greater Lamb** ...

the *bondage of sin*, by *the blood of Jesus Christ* ...

To the hustling people of Jerusalem this year, *though*

it was **nothing more** than **religious ritual** and **tradition**.

It is interesting that while we are told the **time of year**, there is **no detail** as to the specific time of day or place where this is occurring.

The synoptic gospels tell us **all** about the upper room, and **all** of the specific details in **preparation** for the **feast** ... but John does not.

Perhaps this is to make this passage **timeless** ...

Perhaps the **timeless nature** of these chapters are **intentional** on the part of the Holy Spirit, so that we do not read this a *merely* a “**narrative of events,**” but as a “**timeless truth**” for **all members** of *Christ’s body* of **all times**.

Humans have a **tendency** of **taking events in history** and making **memorials** of *them*, *rather* than **appreciating their intent** ...

*Like Christmas* ... (*manger scene* under a tree ... a moment **memorialize**, while missing the whole meaning ...)

This section of John’s Gospel **cannot** be *frozen in time* ... it is **timeless**.

Let’s look at our verse again ... the rest of it:

*having loved his own which were in the world,  
he loved them unto the end.*

Here we are **introduced** to the beautiful Greek word, *agape* ... repeated twice ...

The word, translated as “**love**” is a uniquely Biblical word.

There are several *classical* Greek words which can be **translated** as *love*,  
but **none** captures the *self-sacrificing, self-giving*  
*love of Jesus Christ*  
... so the **Scripture redefines** a *rarely used word*  
in fact it *almost invents* this word ... *agape* ...  
to mean the **greatest LOVE**  
*that surpasses all human understanding* of that word.

This word *agape*, so far found but 6 times in this Gospel in chaps 1-12,  
now will repeat 31 times during this "*Paschal Discourse.*"

Up to this point, the **emphasis** of Christ's teaching was  
"*light*" and "*life*" words found 82 times in the first twelve chapters ...  
yet in the next 5,  
we find "*life*" mentioned 6 times, and "*light*" not at all.

Clearly **LOVE** takes no a **new prominence** in this *final Paschal Discourse*.

I want you to ponder for a moment on the word LOVE ...

**What does it mean? How do we define it?**

As you do, I also want you to **realize** that the **greatest human mind**  
cannot begin to **fathom** its true meaning.

We throw around this word *love* so easily ...

We "*love*" our favorite meal

We "*love*" our dog

We "*love*" the Mets or the Yankees or the Jets (God help you)  
or Giants

We'll say things like, "*Oh I loved that sermon*"

Is this *love*?

We can say "*I love you*" to our **wife** or **husband** ... our **children** ...  
While that's on a *bit of higher plain* than *loving* the Mets ...

**But is it truly what *love* is?**

Sad to say, that **even** when we **think** of **God's LOVE** ...  
it *too* has been **so trivialized** by **today's church**.

Modern evangelists, beginning with D.L Moody in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century,  
were the first to use the phrase "***God Loves You***"  
in his *preaching of the Gospel* ...

Today, the **term** has in many places, **replaced the Gospel** ...

You can search *long and hard* for 1800 years of **church history**  
and will **not find the idea** that "***God Loves You***"  
was *ever* **used in evangelism**.

Yet today, that's the **main message** ...  
**"GOD ... LOVES ... YOU"**

Are we to **emphasize** to *individuals* who are ***haters of God***,  
upon whom **His wrath abides**, with a smile on our face ...  
*"God Loves You!"*

The idea has been **so trivialized** that we cannot help  
to think about a *smiley face* next to the phrase.

But this aside, the **HEAVY TRUTH to the believer** in Jesus Christ ...  
that **God Loves You!** is a **glorious truth** *worthy* of our  
**considerable meditation** and **thought**.

**God loves you.**

Separate it from the context from which we have heard it in the past  
... and let's **meditate** upon that a moment – **word by word**.

The subject:

**God,**

the *infinite, sovereign, immutable, awesome* **creator of heaven and earth**  
... the *high and lofty One*, whose *train fills the temple* ...  
the *eternal, unchanging, magnificent, just, faithful*, and *true*  
**Being** who is *all and in all* ...  
the *glorious, Father, Son* and *Holy Spirit* ...  
the *covenant-keeping Father of Lights*,  
the *wonderful counselor*, the *Prince of Peace*, the *Mighty God* ...

**GOD** ...

The verb:

**Loves** ...

*Agape* ... the *self-giving, sacrificial, deep, emotional* and  
**purposeful expression** ...  
as a *perfect Father* to **His children** ...  
as the *perfect husband* to **His bride**.

As displayed in its **highest form**,  
by the *giving of one's life for another* ...

*God loves sinners, so much*, that **He died for them!**  
He **gave His blood in exchange** for the *lives of many sinners!*  
He **purchased a pardon and redeemed sinners**  
by a **cruel** and **inhumane** *death on a cross* ...  
***Greater love has no man than this*** ...

***GOD LOVES ... GOD LOVES ... WHO?***

The object:

***YOU!***

**Who are you?**

Well, if you've been with us for any **significant part** of our study of the  
first 12 chapters ... you will know who **you** are.



I don't think that there could be **anyone** with us for *any length of time* that would **still believe** that they were a *pretty good person, worthy to be loved ...*

Most of the world can **accept** that **God loves them**, because they believe themselves to be *lovable people ...*

But its when the Scripture reveals to us **who** we **TRULY** are, that we realize the **GLORY** of **LOVE**.

**So who does God love? ... YOU and  
Who are you?**

**You** were *born in trespasses and sins, conceived in iniquity,* your thoughts were *never of God,* in fact they were on *your own evil intents,* even your **good works** are considered as *filthy rags,* you are an **enemy of God,** you have **broken His law**

*Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, gossipers, proud, boasters, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenantbreakers, ungrateful, unmerciful:*

1 Cor 6:11 says,

*And such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God.*

Turn to Ephesians 2 ... one **last blast** of **who you were ...**

So that you can **appreciate** the **LOVE** that has been extended to you **by GRACE ...**

Eph 2 ... vs. 1

*And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this*

*world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and WERE BY NATURE CHILDREN OF WRATH, just as the others.*

*4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.*

So GOD LOVES ... who?

*Children of wrath, children of darkness,  
following our own selfish desires and wants ...*

Namely, YOU!

Now, with a <u>full understanding</u> .... what a <u>magnificent love</u> ... <i>this becomes.</i>
---

I hope you see *why* it is **important** to **KNOW**  
whom *it is* that **God loves**.

Be sure that if the <b>church</b> is <b>confused</b> <i>on this matter</i> , how much more the <b>world</b> , <u>which is why</u> to <u>tell someone</u> who rejects <b>Christ</b> that <b>God loves him</b> is <i>in essence</i> to <u>cauterize his conscience</u> ... to give him a <u>false sense of security</u> in his <b>sinful state</b> .
--

The **unregenerate** cannot **distinguish** *between a general love*  
and a *specific love* ...  
which is why he can **accept** that **God loves him** ...

It sounds good to him,

When the world hears, “**God Loves You**” ...

They’re not hearing, that God loves him ...

by *giving him another day* –

another *moment* where he has a chance to repent ...

He hears, **God loves him**, and *therefore*

he will *surely go to heaven* when he dies.

**This is a lie!**

We must be very careful that we do **not**

*take the children’s bread and cast it to the dogs!*

We must reclaim the **LOVE OF GOD** ...

as specific for *the children of God*.

“**God Love You**” must not be the **topic** of *evangelistic sermons*,

but the topic of the *gathering of the saints on Sunday!*

There is not one example in *any of the four Gospels* where **Jesus**

tells an **unbeliever** that **He loved them** ...

Now He did love them,

but He did not use this as an **evangelistic method**.

We can see how because we have so *generically used this term*,

it has **lost all meaning** ...

But if we **understand** the **AGAPE** of chapters 13-17

in the light of **human nature** *emphasized* in chapters 1-12 ...

**LOVE flourishes!**

If we **understand** the who the **YOU** is in *God Love You*  
This will come alive for us.

Turn to the **Song of songs** ... or **Song of Solomon** ...

I hope you had the opportunity to meditate this week  
upon the **Song of songs** ...  
as I did, I noticed just how God, the LOVER ...  
**pursues His bride** ... His beloved ... who we are in the allegory.

I want to point out a couple of things ...  
so look at the **Song of songs** ... chapter 1 ...

**God** is the **KING** in this **metaphor** ... look at verse 4 ...

***Draw me, and we will run after thee: the king hath brought  
me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we  
will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee.***

The **king here** is **seen** as the one **drawing the bride**.  
He is the **initiator** of **LOVE** ...

The New Testament tells us that  
we can love, only because He first loved us.

In chapter 2 ... the **bride sees the King coming to her** ...  
As she describes it ...

***Listen! ... My beloved! ... Behold, he is coming ...  
Climbing on the mountains; leaping on the hills!  
My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag.  
Behold, he is standing behind our wall,  
He is looking through the windows,  
He is peering through the lattice.***

**That is God!**

He is **coming after YOU** ...  
He is *climbing the mountain* for **YOU**  
He is *leaping on the hills* in **pursuit of YOU**  
He is *looking* through **YOUR window**  
*Peering through YOUR lattice*.

David, the Psalmist, in his **beautiful *allegorical* Psalm 23**,  
*paints the picture* of the **Good Shepherd**,  
whose *goodness and mercy* **PERSUES him**,  
*all the days of His life*.

David knew that He was *loved to the end* ...  
He **understood** that the *lovingkindness of God* is *everlasting*,  
to those who are **His sheep**.

Look again at Song of songs – chapter 1 ... verse 5:

*I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the  
tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.*

*Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath  
looked upon me: my mother's children were angry with me;  
they made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own  
vineyard have I not kept.*

The **bride** observes some by-standers look **disdainfully** upon her  
*because* of her **blackness** which **long hours in the hot sun**  
doing **harsh work** had put upon her.

What a picture of the Christian who **recognizes** his **sinful** estate and  
**deceitful heart** ...

we are **black** ... we are **beaten down** by the **terrible taskmaster** –  
**SIN**.

Those who look upon us, would **never imagine us** to be the **objects**  
of **love** ... *let alone the **love of the King!***

*Guilt* **blackens us;**  
*Sorrow* **blackens us;**  
*Suffering* **blackens us;**  
*Sin* **blackens us ...**

We've been scorched by **troubles, trials, tribulation** ...  
The **difficulties of life** ...

Take note that this *bride* found herself  
under the displeasure of her own household ...

She is **abused** *by her own family* ...  
her **sisters** made her the **keeper of the vineyards** ...  
to the extent where **she neglected her own vineyard.**

*How we, likewise* allow our **past oppressions** to keep us from  
**tending the garden God has given us!**

**All of this blackens our soul!**  
Luther said, we are but snow covered dung!

*This notwithstanding,* we are nevertheless **objects of God's love.**

**God Loves You** seems so *simple a thing* to understand ...

But is a **cheap idiom** if we **fail to understand**  
*any* of the **these three words** ...

Not the least of which is the word **YOU.**

You are **black**, but God has made you *comely* ...

He has made you *beautiful!*

He has **washed you** ... He has **cleansed you** ...

*Your family abused you*

You **suffered the damage** of a *bad marriage*

You **destroyed your life** with **drugs** or **alcohol**

Your **past** and your **sin** has *caused* what *seems to you*  
an **indelible mark** ... a **permanent stain** ...

But you have been **covered** ... *clothed* by the *glorious, pure, spotless, righteousness of Christ* ... and you are a *new creation* ...

Not characterized any longer by **blackness!**  
The *King of kings* **delights** in your *beauty!*

Let's go back to our text and look at John 13 again ...  
*having loved his own which were in the world,*

I'd ask **you** the question ... are you *His own*?

Notice that the **promise** of *God's love* is NOT to *just anyone* ...  
but *His own!*

I believe there is a *dual meaning* here in these words of verse 1 ...  
There is a **transfer of ownership** ... *in a sense* ...  
as *who He means* by the term "**His own**" **changes**.

At the beginning of this Gospel in chapter 1,  
**"His own"** very clearly refers to the **Jewish nation** ...  
**"He came to His own, but His own received Him not."**

*Nevertheless, He loved "His own"* ... that is *His natural people* ...  
and *He loved them to the end*.

There is **no need** to take on the view  
that **Jesus** did not love *those who rejected Him*.

**God does love** *men and women* and there is an **indiscriminate love**  
extended to **all people**, that is **necessary** because  
God's nature is *love*.

Jesus told us in Matthew 5:44 —

*love your enemies in order that you may be sons of your Father* ...  
we know from this, that the **Father loves His enemies**,  
and this love is **not dependent** *upon their repentance*.

In Mark 10:17-23 — Jesus had a *love* for the **rich young ruler**,  
*yet this man did **not** enter the kingdom of God.*

God *loves* those who **don't love him**,  
and this *love* is **manifested** in the **common grace**  
and the *staying* of **wrath** and **judgment**.

God has **compassion**, he **pities** *the lost*,  
as demonstrated by His *love* for **Nineveh**,

The fact that Jesus Christ **incessantly warns** His people,  
demonstrated His *love* for them.

But let us **not confuse** this **non-specific love** with the  
**specific** and **infinite love** that **God reserves** for His children.

Though *God loves the world*, there is a **limit in degree**.

There is an **end** to that love ...  
There is a **time** when *mercy* is **exhausted**.  
There is **no more grace** in hell.  
The Scripture says,  
*it is appointed to man once to die, and then the judgment.*

If you have not **received** His *love* here, while we have breath,  
there is **no hope** beyond the grave.

As in the days of Noah,  
There is a **time**, when *God shuts the door* of the ark.

Here in the Gospel of John ... **that time had come**,  
and Jesus *loved* “**his own natural people**” to that end

**But now**, after all of the unavailing appeals to Israel of the first 12 chapters,  
Christ now **comforts** His heart by **adopting** and **setting His love**  
upon the **few** who **did receive Him**.

It is to these, “**His own, which were in the world**”  
that He has **lavishes** His *love* upon.



You see, the **definition** of “*His own*” has **changed** ...

Context demonstrates that this **population** called “*his own*”  
**now is comprised** of those who **DO receive Him**.

**I ask you, are you Christ’s OWN? who owns you?**

I Cor 6:19 tells us that if you are Christian, *you are not your own*,  
you belong to Christ.

**He owns you.**

**We belong to Jesus Christ** ... *not only* because **He created us** ...  
but because **He adopted us** ...  
we were *chosen, out of the world, in Him*  
*before the foundation of the world.*

Deuteronomy 7:6

*"For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD  
your God has chosen you to be a people for His own  
possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the  
earth.*

**Election** is the **ultimate expression** of *God’s love*.

We can lose sight of this ... with all of the **doctrinal arguments** ...

But throughout the Scripture we find *time and again*,  
God’s **unconditional election** of *His saints* **connected** with  
His **purposeful** and **active love** ...

1 Thessalonians 1:4

*"For we know, brothers, loved by God, that he has chosen you".*

Colossians 3:12

*"Put on then as God's chosen ones, holy and loved,  
compassion, kindness..."*

Ephesians 2:4-5

***"But God, who is rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)"***

Psalm 33:12

***Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, The people whom He has chosen for His own inheritance.***

Psalm 65:4

***How blessed is the one whom You choose and bring near to You To dwell in Your courts.***

And here in John 13:1

***Having loved His own, who were in the world ...***

***With only the disciples remaining,  
LOVE now becomes the **dominant theme** ...***

***having loved his own which were in the world,  
he loved them unto the END.***

Who can define *the end*?

Is it ... *the end of this life*? ...  
surely we are *loved throughout this life*.

David said,

***"Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
Thou art with me."***

We are **assured** of *His love* and **presence** with us ... as Jesus promised,  
***"Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."***

The term **UNTO THE END** in our text is interesting.

εις τέλος

The Greek indicates that **God loves His children** to the **fullness of His capacity to love creatures.**

He **loved them** to the *uttermost* ...

*God's love for His own* **had no beginning** and *will have* **no end.**

Its *beginning* was **before we were in our mother's womb,**  
in *the days of eternity PAST,*  
its *end* will be in the *days of eternity FUTURE* ...

Think about that ... εΙΣ ΤΈΛΟΣ  
*Suggests* ... **no beginning.**

He did not **start loving you when you were born,**  
but **if you are one of His sheep,** He **has** loved you  
from the days of **eternity.**

Look at Psalm 139 ... verse 14 –

or middle of verse 13 ...

*Thou didst weave me in my mother's womb.*

*I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made:  
marvelous are thy works; and my soul knows it well. My  
substance was not hid from Thee, when I was made in secret,  
and skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.*

*Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in  
thy book all my members were written, which in continuance  
were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.*

**How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how  
great is the sum of them!** *If I should count them, they are  
more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with  
thee.*

That's enough to chew on for a few hours ...

This is **not** some **general truth** ... it is TRUE of **YOU** ...  
as a *born-again child of God!*

*How precious also are thy thoughts unto YOU \_\_\_\_\_!  
How great is the sum of them! If YOU \_\_\_\_\_ should  
count them, they are more in number than the sand:*

**How glorious!**

How about ... Jeremiah 31:3 ... which tells us about eternity future.

*"I have loved YOU with an everlasting love;  
Therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness.*

Psalm 103:17

*"But the lovingkindness of the Lord is from everlasting to  
everlasting on those who fear Him".*

So, does *such love* **stop** when we sin?

**NO!** ... *unto the end* ... means *unto the end!*

This *love* **extends** to the farthest extent of our need for His grace.

David said, *"Though I make my bed in hell, Thou art there."*

He knows what you have done ...  
and what you will do ...  
And loves us nevertheless.  
It is **UNCONDITIONAL!**

Jesus **knew** that *in only a few hours,*

- 3 of his disciples would **fall asleep** while he *agonized in prayer.*
- He knew that **Peter** would **deny Him**
- He knew that **all** would *"forsake Him"* that evening
- He knew that just moments ago, they were **clamoring** and **arguing** **among themselves** as to who was the greatest disciple!

- He knew that in a moment, Peter would **pridefully reject** His *desire to wash his feet*.

Yet He *loved them*, and *loved them to the uttermost!*

And He loves us ... *He loves us unto the end*

- of our own *miserable failures*
- Unto the **end** of our *backsliding*
- Unto the **end** of our *wanderings*
- Unto the **end** of our *unworthiness*
- Unto the **end** of our *deepest and darkest hours*

We can take **comfort** in this **strong** and **powerful** and **intense, affectionate** *love of God* that will stop at **NOTHING** to *keep us from perishing!*

That's why 1 Cor 1:8 promises that He

*shall confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

In Rom 16:25, He is *able to establish you according to my gospel*

In 2 Cor 1:21 He is the One

*who establishes us in Christ and anointed us is God, who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.*

In 1 Thess 3:13 ...

*He may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.*

In 2 Thess 3:3-4

*But the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one. And we have confidence in the Lord concerning you, that you are doing and will continue to do what is commanded.*

Peter writes in 1 Pet 5:10-11

*And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.*

And in the *benediction of Jude* vss. 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, 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.*

Grab hold of these promises ... *my brothers and sisters* ...

Cherish them,

Believe them,

they are more precious than gold!

Think upon these great truths!

Let them be your *meditation day and night!*

If you are a disciple of Jesus Christ,

this is *because* God has personally, individually, unconditionally, and lovingly chosen you out of the world.

Today, you may feel far from Jesus, but **take comfort:**

*he loves his own who are in the world.*

**Consume yourself with this truth ...**

Get your eyes off of yourself ... and put them on Him.

<b>This is what He would have us <u>taken with!</u></b>
---

**YOU** have captured His heart, *with just one glance!*

He DELIGHTS in YOU!

*" Listen! ... Behold! ... He is coming ...  
Climbing on the mountains,  
Leaping on the hills!  
Like a gazelle  
Behold! ... he is standing behind your wall,  
He is looking through your windows,  
He is peering through your lattice.  
He has said to you ...  
' Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, and come along.  
For behold, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone.  
The flowers have already appeared in the land;  
The fig tree has ripened its figs,  
And the vines in blossom have given forth their fragrance.  
Arise, my darling, my beautiful one,  
And come with me!'"*

He proclaims it proudly,

*“Behold, YOU are fair  
Like the moon, you outshine the stars, my beloved,  
my beautiful one”*

The beauty of the Perfect One, the Lord Jesus Christ  
has been given to YOU!

So ...

God has said of YOU ... *You are fair, my love, there is no spot in thee.*

His bride has not even one blemish, in His sight!

Though she often wanders from Him and  
grieves His Holy Spirit,  
He does not allow her faults to affect His love.  
There is no remembrance of her follies,  
He does not hold onto one ill thought of her.

Yes, ***we are black*** ... we are ***totally depraved*** ...  
our hearts are ***desperately wicked*** ...  
we do not deny **any** of this ...

But by the **GRACE of God** ...  
we are ***comely*** ...  
**declared** and **made** so by *the King of kings and Lord of lords!*

**He has loved us ... Yes, He has loved us unto the end!**

*My friends, a proper understanding of God's love*  
for **you** ***unto the uttermost***  
will make us a ***strong, faithful, confident, and joy-filled church!***

*Strength of character, faithfulness in conduct, courage of conviction,*  
*humility of spirit, and hope for the future*  
**all stem from this glorious TRUTH.**

That **Jesus Christ has loved his own who are in the world,**  
***and loved them unto the end!***