And hello, radio friends! How in the world are you? Are you doing alright? I trust so. This is your good friend Bob Cook, and I’m glad to be back with you to share with you from the Word of God. We’re looking at 1 Thessalonians, Chapter 3, Verse 13. “Increase and abound in love one toward another and toward all men.” Oh, let’s stop there long enough in Verse 12 just to stop on that phrase, “and toward all men.”

You know, there are some people that it’s pretty hard to love. I was discussing this with another brother about this matter of God’s love and how it ought to affect our attitude toward other people. And we got to speaking about someone who was particularly disagreeable. He said, “God says I have to love him, but I sure don’t have to like him. Well, that’s kind of a distinction without a difference, isn’t it? You find that Calvary love covers a multitude of what my father used to call “idiosyncrasies” and peculiarities, and abrasive spots in the other person’s personality. And I always have to remember that for every person whom I dislike because of some personality quirk, I appear to other people in that same perspective. There are things about Cook that irritate other people, so I’m always glad if people view yours truly with a certain amount of Calvary love that covers. “Toward all men.”

Would you trust God by faith for love today for the people outside of your immediate circle of friends and the community of believers with whom you associate in church? Would you just trust God for love in your heart for the people who don’t know the Lord and who don’t really care about you as well? Now, that’s a big order, and you say, “Well, how can you do that, Bob Cook?” Well, I can’t. I can’t. But I always remember what Hubert Mitchell said to me as we were walking down Chaoringi Street in Calcutta one hot day many years ago.

I was there as a visiting evangelist and preacher representing Youth for Christ, and Hubert Mitchell and others were stationed there for Youth for Christ in India. And we were walking down the street toward our place of meeting, which at that point was in the William Carey Memorial Baptist Church, a church that had a huge courtyard which we used for our meetings (because there was a law just then in effect that you may not have any public meetings outdoors.) But because that was surrounded by a fence that was considered private property and it was alright. So we got hundreds of people in there every night.

Well, as we walked down the street, there was the usual motley aggregation of human beings, and camel caravans, and rickshaws, and Rolls-Royces, and sacred cows, and the street people who had no place to go except to sleep on the street (and many of them each night died on the street and they picked up their bodies in the morning.) There was that aggregation of people, the sights and sounds
and smells that assaulted your nostrils as you went along, and I said to him, “Hubert, how in the world do you live with this?” And he looked at me and stopped walking, and turned to me and looked into my eyes and said, “Bob Cook, I wouldn’t stay here very long, but the love of Christ constraineth us,” said he with a smile. “I love these people.” That was beautiful. That moment lingers with me as a beautiful portrait of what God Almighty can do in a human heart. Let that be true of you and of me, beloved. Let the Holy Spirit of God enlarge your sphere of love to the people who don’t know the Lord and who don’t care a bit about you, who may even oppose you, but for whom Christ died. By faith, take love for the people around you and let Him spill it out of your life. Will you? He wants to do that.

That’s part of the divine plan as revealed in the prayer of our Lord Jesus that John records in his 17th Chapter. Do you remember that? Our Lord Jesus spoke about this very thing. He said, “I want the world to know…” Let me turn the pages so that you hear them turning; that’s me. He said, “That the world may know that Thou hast loved me and hast loved them as Thou hast loved me.” You see, that’s what God wants. He wants people to know that He loves them. John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” God wants people to know that He loves them. And how will they know unless they know through you and through me? Intangible values are transmitted by personal contacts, and when people touch your life, God grant that they may sense the warmth and tenderness of divine love and compassion. Amen?

Well, that’s what that verse is about. Now Verse 13. That was a long detour, wasn’t it? But I thought I ought to stop long enough just to nail that down in my own mind, as well as in yours. Verse 13: “To the end that He may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.

Now, it’s interesting to me that he talks about God’s love in Verse 12, and he said the reason for this and the purpose of it, uses a little Greek word eis, “unto; in the direction of, for the purpose of, resulting in.” “Resulting in” the idea that He may establish your hearts unblameable. You see, love is the fulfilling of the law. “Love worketh no ill toward his neighbor,” says Paul. Therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law. “Unblameable” means if your heart is full of God’s love, you’re not going to hurt or cheat anybody, you’re not going to snub anybody, you’re not going to hate anybody; you are going to be unblameable. And God’s love, filling your life, makes you a holy person. The more of God you have in your life, the holier you are.

So he said the purpose of the growth of this love and the spill-over of this divine love is that you may be established unblameable in holiness. The more God’s love is poured out in my life, the less there will be of harm or misunderstanding or selfishness exhibited toward other people. And the more God’s love is filling my life, the holier my life will be. Holiness is not a pose. Holiness is a dynamic.
To be a holy person is not simply to wear a certain suit of clothes, or to take a certain attitude. To be a holy person is to be like God. And to be like God, you have to be full of God’s love, ministered to you by the Holy Spirit. Do you follow that line of reasoning? Now that’s what he’s talking about here. He said “He wants to establish your hearts in holiness.”

Now, notice: “before God our Father,” “at the coming of Christ,” “with the saints.” There are going to be three kinds of audience to whom you will be exposed at the second coming. One, almighty God; God our Father. God knows the hearts. “Men looketh at the outer appearance, but God looketh on the heart.” “God, who tries the hearts,” the Bible says. God knows our thoughts. He is acquainted with all our ways. And so, there will be absolutely no hiding from him on that day. But if your life has been filled with the love of Christ and the holiness of God, you’ll be unblameable for two reasons: One, Jesus paid your debt on Calvary. And so, John 5:24 says, “He that heareth My Word and believeth on Him that sent Me hath everlasting life and shall not come into the judgment but is passed from death unto life.”

So you’ll not be judged for your sins. Jesus paid it all; “all to Him I owe.” And then, in addition, there will be the realization that your life has been filled with the Spirit of God and the love of God, so that the very presence of your Father has been exhibited in your life; what we call “holiness.” Unblameable in holiness before God.

Second, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. When He comes, you want to be unblameable in holiness. Why? John, the beloved apostle, said, “Now little children, abide in Him, that we may have confidence before Him at His coming and not be shamed away from Him.” You want your life to be the kind of a life of which you will not be ashamed when you meet the Lord Jesus Christ. What else? He says, “He’s coming with all His saints.” There is going to be a large audience there, and these people will see you and me as we really are. What, then, if our record is spotty? What, then, if our profession has been shallow? What, then, if our motivation has been selfish. What, then, if we’ve been an “on-again, off-again,” kind of a person, sometimes quitting and sometimes being helpful. No, he said, “I want you to be established unblameable in holiness,” the very presence of God manifest in your life when those millions of believers look at you at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. What else?

Now, that’s a big order, and every time you look at a verse like that, you are immediately reminded of the fact that you and I are fallible, failing human beings, and every day of our lives we have to say, “Lord, forgive me my sins as I also forgive others.” There is the realization that we are human. But Jesus died for human beings; He died for people with faults. He died for people who come short, and you and I don’t have to live in failure. We can repent of our sins; we can be cleansed of them and go on. If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.
Someone asked a believer in Africa, in an area where they were having great revival, “What’s the secret of the perennial joy and revival you have here?” And the answer came quickly. “The minute any of us is aware of stepping out of the will of God, we repent and confess it and go on.” Well, that’s exactly what it is. So that when Jesus comes, you’ll be established unblameable. Why? Because you’re perfect? No! Because He’s perfect, and because He has been in charge of your life as your Savior and your Redeemer, and your All-in-All.

Holy Father, today, in Jesus’ name, I pray Thou wilt fill us with Thy love, and make us holy people, ready to meet our Lord Jesus Christ. In His name, I pray, “Amen.”

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