

“God Is Love”

By Malcolm Xechariah

Sunday, August 12th, 2018

How is everybody? Somebody said, “How great is our God?” Somebody said it. Sounded like a whole lot of somebody's said it, amen? I really appreciate—well, first of all, Elder Giebler's here. Amen, if this is your first time here Elder Giebler and Elder Lee are our pastors here at Great Lakes Christian Fellowship Ministries. So, if you've got any problems or any questions, they're the ones. Any complaints about me? They're the ones. If your seat is not comfortable, they're the ones. Amen? If you didn't get coffee and donuts on the way in, they're the ones. Elder Lee spoke a little bit about the ark, and that's interesting, because I was at work the other night—I work night shift—and I was sharing that with a young man about the ark, and, because he had never heard of it. He was in his twenties, twenty-two or twenty-three years old, I think he lives in Zion. I thought everybody knew about Noah's ark; we teach it in our children's church. But, he didn't know anything about it. So, I shared his few things about eight souls saved by water and how it—that Scripture actually comes from First Peter, chapter three, verse twenty-one, it speaks about eight souls saved by water (1 Peter 3:21). It didn't speak about all the souls that were drowned by water, it just spoke about the souls saved by water, and that was Noah and his wife, that's two, his three sons, that's five, and their three wives, that makes eight. So, if you've got any questions about little Fluffy, or little Garfield, sorry to tell you, they're not included in the souls, because they don't have them. God is only interested in human beings' souls. Everything else is in subjection to man. God gave us dominion over all to see, over all the Earth. And anybody that has a problem with that you've got to talk to God about it. It's in His Word, Amen? I heard somebody say, one time, “Can you imagine, when it started raining, because, according to the Bible, at least from Genesis two to Genesis seven, where is which is where the ark is, there hadn't been any rain. The Bible says God hadn't caused it to rain yet on the earth. So, he caused a mist to come up from the Earth to water all the greenery. And, so, people have probably never seen rain. But, people haven't seen Jesus come back for His people, either. So, either way, you've got to get in the ark. If you want to be saved, you've got to get in the ark, amen? There's no wooden structure for you to scratch on to try to open the door. It'll break your fingernails off, and it'll break your fingers, trying to open that door and get in at the last minute, because that door is going to be sealed, amen? The Ark of God is coming down, and that Ark is Jesus, amen? Okay, that wasn't part of the message, but, that was for free.

Good pre-afternoon everyone. We've all enjoyed the service up 'til now, Amen? We're closing out the series on fruit of the Spirit, which we can find in Galatians, five, verses twenty-two and twenty-three:

Galatians 5:22-23 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, [and verse 23] Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

And, our brother, Pete, is going to put a little graphic up there for us.

Fruit of the Spirit

- Joy is a choice we make to have or not have.
- God brings the peace. If we lack peace then we must ask God for it.
- Longsuffering is the opposite of wrath, patient mercy > wrath delayed
- Gentleness is kindness, integrity & a willingness to yield. (Jesus On the Cross)
- Goodness is a desire to help others and avoid greed which is the opposite of goodness.
- Faith is an action word. The just shall live by faith.
- We bring the meekness. We need it to help restore others lest we be tempted.
- Temperance is self-control. One who has mastered himself is temperant.

So, what have we learned so far? Joy is a choice we make to have or not have. God brings the peace. if we like peace we must ask God for it. Long suffering, as we've learned, is the opposite of wrath. Patient mercy. Wrath delayed. Gentleness is kindness, integrity and a willingness to yield. Think of Jesus on the cross dying for our sins, yielding for man's salvation. Goodness is a desire to help others and avoid greed, which is the opposite of goodness. Not badness, but greed, selfishness, avarice. Faith is an action word. The just shall live by faith. Faith without works is dead. Faith you have to put your shoes on and do something, your hands, your feet. We bring the meekness. We need it to help restore others lest we be tempted. Temperance is self-control. One who is mastered himself is temperate. I want all the preaching team men to

stand up, please. Because that's where I got all of these bullets for this particular presentation. Give God a praise, amen. So these words I just spoke, most of them came from these these men; they're not mine. I just borrowed them because, as brother Kirk spoke last week, plagiarism. Let us pray:

God, we thank You for this opportunity to be before You, to be in Your presence, God, to hear Your Word, God, bless this, Thy servant, to bring forth the Word in a matter that You deem necessary, God, proper. Not adding anything to the message that You've given, and not taking anything from it. God could it be pure and holy in Your sight. that it minister to the need of the people, God, and not just the ones that are sitting in the chairs, but the one that is standing behind the microphone, myself. God, bless our families and our children, God. God, give them a sense of knowing that their parents are trying to lead them in the right path, when we bring them out to service, and we try to teach them Your Word, God. It's not a game. That this is real life, this is something that we're all going to need. God, help us to get to that place where we need to be. God, in Jesus' name we pray; we ask your blessings, amen.

Today we talk about love. So, how is your love? How is my love? The rich ruler was told by Jesus to sell all that he had, give it to the poor. And Luke, chapter eighteen, is where we read that, if you're taking notes. In like manner, we have to sell all that we have, and give away all of our mental possessions, philosophies, and theories, and traditions of men. Kind of reminds me of the teenagers and the tweens. Are there any teenagers in here? You don't have to raise your hands; I know who you are. Can't hide from me. "Ooh, I just love her. And, I know she loves me." "I just love him, and I know he loves me." Yeah, yeah. It's all right. It's all right. I'm not going to embarrass you for long. But, that's how we are when we're that age, right? Some of us are that way now. We, sometimes, are not able to discern between the right kind of love, so I'm telling you what love is not, and that's all of that stuff that's on that side. You know? Cohabitation. Anybody not know what that means? Just raise your hand, and I'll tell you what it is. I think I can be a little bit more plain: cohabitation means you're living with somebody, and you're doing things that married people do, do I need to go any further? Do I need to go any further? I can. Amen. We all know what I'm talking about. That's not love. So, all of that stuff is over here, and I can name a whole bunch of stuff, but I won't waste your time, because I know you already know. And I'll probably forget one, and you'll say, "Well, he didn't name the one that I was thinking." I know you know what I'm talking about, because we're all adults in here, just about. Amen? Paul put it this way, in Philippians, chapter three, verse eight. Philippians, chapter three, verse eight:

Philippians 3:8 *Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,*

We've got to sell it all, we've got to give it all away. Amen? So, here's a question: is it possible to love God and not keep this commandments? So, while you ponder that question, let's read Mark, chapter twelve, verses twenty-nine and thirty. Mark, twelve, verses twenty-nine and thirty:

Mark 12:29 *And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:*

Because, we must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him (Hebrews 11:6). Because, if you don't believe that God is, you can't believe in one God. Somebody could just throw anything at you, and you'd believe it. There are people, and there are nations of people, billions of people who believe in multiple gods. Twenty, and thirty, and forty; even here in America, most people believe in three! You can't even get the Muslims to believe that; they know it's one. Amen? The Jews only believe it's one, so what happened? How come

now, all of the sudden, we so called Christians, we believe there's three? Yeah. Something to think about, right?

Mark 12:30 *And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.*

Let's go to John, chapter two, First John, I'm sorry, chapter two, verses three, four, five and six. First John, chapter two, verses three through six:

1 John 2:3-6 *And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. [verse six] He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.*

So, if we say we're in Christ, we've got to act like it. Amen? We've got to believe that there's one God, amen? We've got to believe that He has commandments, amen? Okay. We're all there. Here's another question: Can God be with us if we don't teach and baptize? Matthew twenty-eight, verse nineteen and twenty. Can God be with us if we don't teach and, and baptize? And is a conjunction, Amen? That's basic grammar, English. You've got to do both. You can't do one or the other. It didn't say, "Or," it said, "And." It's teach and baptize. Verse nineteen; Matthew, twenty-eight, nineteen:

Matthew 28:19-20 *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

So, Jesus was talking to the disciples, amen? But, guess what? We're the disciples. So, we have to teach and baptize, amen? For how long? "How long?" you might say. Well, it says right here, until the end of the world. So, that means that everybody that comes this way, and this bag of bones we call the flesh, they've got to go the same way. They've got to teach, and they've got to be baptized. I don't care who you are. I don't care what granny said, "Well, baby, you know, don't worry about it, the Lord will understand." No, he don't. "Well, I, what if I'm on my deathbed?". What if you are on your deathbed? What happened before you went to your deathbed? "Well, what if I'm in the desert?" Well, that's an easy one, there. because, Phillip went to the desert and baptized a man in the desert. it's called Gaza, right? That was in the name of the desert. So, since when did they start having rivers and lakes and stuff in deserts? because, God knew that man needed to be baptized. That ain't nothing to God. That's nothing to God. Is anything too hard for the Lord? Okay. Just saying, amen? First John, five, and three:

1 John 5:3 *For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.*

"Well, God, why we got to be baptized?" You know, "Why, Elder Lee, why can't we just eat a bunch of tasty cakes?" "Elder Giebler, how come we can't just play the guitar? A Fender, or, you know, one of those fancy guitars they play on TV or something." "How about it, Greg, how come we can't just sing inside the gate, every day, and that'll be enough?" "Jesse, why can't we just have some greens and cornbread? All right?" Because the Bible says so, that's why. The commandment was given, "Go, teach, and baptize," and, here, we have that commandment acted upon. The book of Acts, chapter ten, verses five, six, and verse forty-eight. You can go back and read it if you want, but I'm just going to try to keep it short, for time sake. Cornelius was told by the spirit:

Acts 10:5-6 *And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.*

The word that I'm looking for right here: do. Which requires action, amen? He didn't say, "He will tell you what you ought to believe, and then just let it ride. You'll be okay." He didn't tell him, "He'll tell you what somebody else told him." He said, "He'll tell you what you want to do." Which requires action. Verse forty-eight is the action.:

Acts 10:48 *And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.*

The commandment was given of baptism, the execution of the commandment: baptism. Ain't nobody getting out of this world alive, amen? And ain't nobody getting out of this world expecting to stand before the God in Heaven and hear those words, "Enter in," and not be baptized. Because the commitment is already given. Jesus has already died, He's already resurrected, and the fullness of the covenant has been put into effect. Now, anybody that died before that time was not under that covenant, but, once He rose, that covenant took full effect. The fullness of God was in Him bodily; that's what the Scripture say, that's what the Scriptures say, amen? So once the covenant was in effect, can't nobody slide under it, go around it, and go over it. You've got to go through the covenant. And the covenant, the blood of Jesus, for the remission of sins, is only through baptism, unless you got a whole gallon of blood in your Kool-Aid container and you're going to pour it over yourself, and, guess what? The Bible don't say to do that, so you're still not going to be saved amen? You've got to go the way the Bible, amen?

We're talking about love. "Brother, what's this whole baptism thing?" Because, in order to get into love, you've got to be baptized. I don't want you to be deceived; there's no reason for me to stand here and talk about the love of God if I don't tell you how to get in it. I'm wasting your time. I might as well go home. So, why is it—another question—that some would hear, "Depart from me, I never knew you," as it is written in Matthew, 3, you can—I'm not going to have you turn to it, but I'll read just one line out of it:

Matthew 7:23 *And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

Now, these are they which had done many wonderful works (Matthew 7:22). Were they baptized in Jesus name? Or did they think their infant baptism was sufficient? Or their sprinkling? Which is not baptism, either. You baptize an infant; you just gave him a bath. There's no way for him to believe. He got to believe and be baptized. they're just being obedient to what their parent did for them. A baby don't know nothing. A baby don't even know his name, until you teach him. Amen? The only thing they really know is that they are hungry and, once you get them close to the breast, then they know, "Okay, I think there's something there that I need." Amen? If you ever watch a baby, they're born with that whole suckling thing. But, they don't know nothing else. Baptism is what gets us into the love of God. We love him because he first loved us, and that's, First John, four, nineteen. If you're taking notes. First John, four, and verse nineteen.

1 John 4:19 *We love him, because he first loved us.*

Psalms, twenty-two, nine and ten. Psalms, twenty-two, nine and ten:

Psalm 22:9-10 *But thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts. I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother's belly.*

God already knows us. God already loves us. He loved us long before we even knew the name Jesus. Jeremiah, thirty-one, and three. Jeremiah, thirty-one, verse three:

Jeremiah 31:3 *The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: [Lo, I am with you always, amen? I have loved thee with an everlasting love] therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.*

Who chose whom? I think, if there any English teachers in here, I think I said that right. Who chose whom? So, there was this thing I read one time, about this famous producer, who produced music acts, really famous guy—and I don't want to call the name of the music guy, but, you know, it's not all that serious—so, but, anyway, really rich guy, really popular, he put these groups out there, and they made a whole lot of money. So, read a story about him, somewhere, I don't remember where, he said, "Well, you know, when I finish with all of this, and I, you know, made the money I want to make, then I'm going to go ahead and get saved." God chose us, we did not choose Him. You don't get to choose when you get saved. You get the opportunity, when God gives you the opportunity, but you're not just going to conjure in your mind and say—I'm not going to conjure in my mind and say, "Oh, I'm going to get saved, such and such a time." John, fifteen, verse sixteen. John, fifteen, verse sixteen:

John 15:16 *Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.*

We don't deserve any credit. God does not need us. Acts, seventeen, versus twenty-four and twenty-five. The book of Acts, chapter seventeen, versus twenty-four and twenty-five:

Acts 17:24-25 *God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; [I don't care what kind of church you make, you can't fit God in your church. He's too big.] Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;*

Church, we can't earn God's love. It's a gift. It is His good pleasure to give us the kingdom. God doesn't need stuff from us. He just wants us. Amen? Another question for you: Can we be with Him, if He is not with us? John, chapter fifteen, verses four and five. John, fifteen, four and five:

John 15:4-5 *Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: [And, the last part of that verse:] for without me ye can do nothing.*

So, what if somebody said, "You know, I don't know. I don't really think you got to do all that." Okay, here you go, hit him with this one. Romans, chapter three, verse four. Romans, chapter three, verse four—but, you know, we should probably read three, as well. It says something like:

Romans 3:3-4 *For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? [And then verse four:] God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.*

So, it don't really matter what somebody else said, because, they're not going to be the ones that judge us. Amen? We're going to be judged by the Word of God, amen? I would like to challenge you with this thought, and when I say you, I mean, there's more than one you in here, but, you, take it personally, you and me, if we have love, then we have all of the other fruit of the spirit. "What you talking about, brother?" How can we not? No other foundation can be laid, than the one we now have in Jesus Christ. Now, maybe, only certain foods active in our lives, and in our walk with God, but, church, the ground has already been tilled, the seeds have already been planted, let us allow God to grow a garden of fruit in our lives, for His glory. Also, as a side note, notice that there is no mention of obedience in the fruit of the spirit. It's not in there, right? You didn't say you have to obey, as a fruit. There is no love without obedience. Let me say that again: there is no love without obedience. It's inherent, inside the commandment of love, because, it is, as our last Scripture states and contains, the true title of the message, that's first John, chapter four, verse sixteen:

1 John 4:16 *And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. [The title of the message] God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.*

And, that him has no gender, amen? He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. God is love. Give God a praise.