

A Key to Recovery – Love One Another

Introduction

Of the Lord, what is in my heart to share, really sharing over the next few weeks is one of the keys to recovery. We know the Lord in this day is trying to recover His testimony. We hear the word “recovery” used often, and we just consider one of them. And it is this matter of loving one another. It comes from a couple of verses that we are somewhat familiar with, and may our familiarity not be a hindrance: John 13:33-35, “Little children,” I love that little phrase. “Little children, I am with you a little while longer. You shall seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, I now say to you also, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come.’” “A new commandment (it can sound strange saying it is a new commandment, but it is) I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, (that is a key thing) that you also love one another. (The fruit of that is) By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” What a glorious testimony it is when the love of Christ is seen in brothers and sisters.

Let us have another word of prayer. *Lord, we are thankful for the fresh reminder of Your love this morning around this table. Whatever we touch on this matter of Your love, it is a love that is incomprehensible to us. But, Lord, You have revealed it to us through Your Son and through the enabling of Your Holy Spirit. We want to be those who continue to learn more and more about You, Your heart, and Your desires in these days. Lord, we see a great need in our own lives, in the lives of our brethren, and in this world. There is one answer, and it is You. We truly desire to be those who return to You and keep our eyes fixed upon You. In Your precious name, Amen.*

The Need for Recovery

As I said, we have been hearing a lot about recovery lately. In fact, we know it is going to be an aspect of the theme for the coming conference this summer. And in these days, we see that there is a great need for it because nobody has to tell us that the world is in crisis. There is great concern. We all have a deep concern for what is going on. I think what it shows, beyond just looking at the world, is a concern for the lost. We sense these are the last days. The Lord does not desire anyone to perish. There is a great concern going out for the lost, for the gospel. We are thankful for those from here who are able to participate. They will be in Chicago this weekend, dear ones in the midst of the cold. Ryan sent a picture yesterday. They were all bundled up, hoods on and everything. They were pressing on in the midst of the cold of Chicago.

But there is also a great concern for the condition of God's people. Are we who He desires us to be? And there is a question that keeps going out, not only within the church but also within the world: what is really going on? What is happening at this hour? We talk about the crisis locally, but everywhere seems to be in crisis, including the church. People are scared. One of the things that arises in times of crisis is fear. As we look back upon COVID a few years ago, the unknowns and everything that it was hyped to be, one of the tragic effects on so many people, was fear. It was gripping them in an

abnormal way. That fear can resurface during the days we are living in now. What is happening? Bombs are going off everywhere, and so many lone rangers are out there, exploding bombs here and killing people there. It can create great fear within us. That is why the Lord wants us to find Him as our security, to really know Him in a fresh way, so that in the midst of all that is going on, He will carry us through.

And what is God doing? And there is a question of what is God doing in this hour? My focus is not going to be so much on the conditions of the world, but what is really on my heart is within the church, within His testimony. When we say, “What is God doing in this hour?” particularly related to us as His family, I think He is really crying out for us to wake up as the people of God, for the church to wake up, to realize the time that we are in. We are here for such a time as this. As He said in Esther, if we do not stand up, He will just use someone else, some other believers.

We see how God is doing this work and desiring in this hour. He uses this to recover His testimony, recovering that testimony of Jesus back to its original heart, its original purpose, to be seen through His people. Because in general, Christianity is in a weakened condition. Sadly, because of that weakened condition, so much evil has been able to come in—evil within because of sin and self, the flesh, and the enemy itself. We see when the church becomes weakened, it just provides a way for the enemy's work to increase in such a way.

The Recovery of the Testimony of the Lord Jesus

But God is crying out for His testimony to be recovered within the lives of His assembly. When His testimony is strong, there is a place of security, rest, and peace among His people. Also, when the testimony of God is strong, one of the fruits of that is the glorious gospel goes forth. The gospel of God, that spirit of the gospel, is released in a fuller way through the strength of His people in times like that.

I have used this term, “the testimony of Jesus.” So, it is probably good to spend a moment considering what this testimony of Jesus is. There are many ways you can describe it. Trying to put it in a concise way is always a challenge. But when I was considering this, I thought of the testimony of Jesus as when the reality, not just the knowledge, of the headship of Jesus is being lived out, expressed, and seen through the lives of His people, both individually and corporately. That is the testimony of Jesus. It is not us being seen, but it is His life being seen through us. That life of Christ, the power of God, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit are seen and expressed in the lives of His people. He is jealous for that. He is jealous because He is all about one thing. Whenever God does something, it is always with His end in view.

And why does He want us to be strengthened? Why does He want us to be that testimony? Is it simply for today? That is an aspect of it, yes. So that we could really be a testimony of His people in the midst of a dark world for today. But it is also with His end in view, with His purpose in view, with that bride making herself ready. The bride is made ready through the crises of lives that we go through in our life today. As we go through

various things, we would hopefully decrease, His life within us would increase, and there would be a brighter shining of Himself.

Example of God's Recovery in The Old Testament

Now, how is this testimony recovered? How is His desire for His life to be seen? It always starts. The very essential thing is within the hearts of brothers and sisters. Our hearts have to be captured. Our hearts have to be on fire for Him. He wants above all; He is not looking for the outward stuff. What He wants first of all is to capture our hearts.

It is wonderful as you look through Scripture and see how David had that heart for God, and many ones. They are not commended for all of their knowledge about God. They are commended because they had a heart for the Lord. This heart, this love that we have for Him, and hearts that are open to really see our true condition. An honest heart allows the Holy Spirit to shine in and reflect upon us what our true condition is. And it is hearts open in a very fresh way for His people, for Him. We not only have our concern for ourselves, but for Him. And He is just desiring that we in this hour would really wake up as He does this work within us.

One of the characteristics of the days we are living in is that many people refer to this day and time as the Laodicean period. And one of the characteristics of the Laodicean period is that you do not really know your true condition. Speaking in a very broad way, He says you think you are rich and have need of nothing, but actually you are poor, you are blind, and you are naked. And He is trying. He does things to shake up His people, and we have to remember the shakings of God always come out of a heart of love, a love for His Son's life to be expressed through His people. He is jealous for us to return to that simplicity and purity of our devotion to Jesus. Because it always brings us back to that one thing that is necessary, and it is the life of Christ. That is what He is jealous for so much.

When that life of Christ is there, sure, a lot of fruits come forth, but without that vibrant, healthy life, the fullness of Christ within us, the fruit is just hindered from coming out to the glory of God. It is wonderful how the Lord teaches us, and He is so patient with us. The older I get, the more I appreciate the patience and long-suffering of God. And also, how He does not mind repeating things to us. You know, sometimes He teaches us something, and we do not quite get it. He teaches it to us again and again.

One of the things He has given us as a teaching illustration and example is the Old Testament. There are many wonderful stories there of how some started off so well. They had those hearts, but then they fell away. But the Lord did not give up on them, and He brought about a great recovery. I am just going to use one of those examples today as a picture for us to learn from how God goes about doing works of recovery, because that is what He is jealous for.

There is a beautiful Old Testament example when finally, the nation of Israel was taken into captivity in Babylon. We know that they were taken into captivity because of

their sins. They fell short of all that God had provided for them. Even though God had loved them with that everlasting love, He had sent prophets to them over and over again. They fell into that trap of leaning on their own understanding and just committing sins and following after idols and man's ways. And so, the Lord, in His love, took them into captivity so that they would return to Him in that simplicity of devotion to Him.

And as they are in Babylon, we know that God did not just give up on them, but in a marvelous sovereign way, God moved through King Cyrus, opened the door, and gave freedom for all of them to be able to return to Jerusalem to build the house of God. This is recorded, as we know, in Ezra and Nehemiah. They are the historical books that go along with those you have Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi as the prophets of that time. Prophets are so necessary during this time of recovery. We will see that a little more in a minute.

Daniel, A Vessel for God's Recovery

But as we look upon this period of recovery, it is interesting how the first person that is recorded as really standing as a vessel for this recovery was Daniel. There is Daniel. He has this big place of influence in Babylon. And as we see Daniel, it is recorded of him that the work of recovery really starts within the heart of Daniel. Daniel has always had a heart for God. We know all that he went through to stand for God, even with what he would eat, what he would not eat, and when he was tempted, what he would do and what he would not do. So, we see God's heart within Daniel. And even though Daniel was in Babylon, his heart was in Jerusalem. You remember when Joseph was in Egypt and after he passed away, where did Joseph want to be buried? He did not want to be buried in Egypt. He said, "Take my bones back to that promised land." Just like Joseph, he was in Egypt, but his heart was in the Promised Land. Daniel was there in Babylon, but his heart was in the Promised Land. We are in this world, but where are our hearts? That is what He is after today. And Daniel always had that heart for God's purpose.

Travailing Prayers

What really captured Daniel's heart? What was he doing? He was in the Word of God, reading and studying the Word of God. And through the Word of God, the Lord spoke to him in the prophet Jeremiah and said, "This captivity that you are in is only for 70 years." That really revived him; it created a spark within Daniel. That word was united with faith within Daniel, and it created a spark coming forth, a burning within his heart. Led by the Holy Spirit, he entered into travailing prayer for God to really be able to move and to accomplish all that is upon His heart, this heart of recovering His people back to that place that He had chosen.

We do not have time to go through the full prayer of Daniel, but it is in Daniel chapter nine. We see how, as he is captured by this heart for God's purpose, he humbles himself before the Lord and confesses the sins of the people. One thing you will notice in Daniel's prayer is that he identifies with the people. He does not say, "Oh, they have

sinned so much; they did this; they rebelled.” He says, “We.” He saw the oneness that there was with all of his brothers and sisters, the oneness there. “We have sinned; we have failed; we have come up short; we have rebelled.” He always acknowledges that only the Lord is the righteous one. He concludes his prayer, and this is such a beautiful prayer, it is kind of a model prayer for our instruction. Daniel 9:19 says, “O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive!” You can almost hear when that “O Lord,” you can almost feel the crying out of his heart. He does not have enough words to express it. “O Lord, listen and take action!” And look who Daniel's heart is for in this. It is not focused on the people. Who is it focused on? “For Your own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name.” It is not self-centered, but there is a heart of God that he is after. It is a God-centered, or we could say in our time a Christ-centric prayer for His interest, for His heart, for His purpose. He does not know how God is going to act, but he is saying, “Lord, You take action.”

We see how Daniel is such a wonderful, beautiful picture of this whole matter of recovery. In his prayer, you see some of the keys; there are certain keys to recovery. We see them in Daniel's prayer. I just listed some; they are not in a specific order, and they are by no means intended to be comprehensive. But I was touched.

It always starts. Anytime the Lord wants to bring one back to Himself, it is by the grace of God. The grace of God brought Christ to earth. The grace of God. He is the initiator in all this. That is His great love. Then you will see the fruit of that through travailing prayers, the Holy Spirit, reality, the Word of God. You will see ones that are overcome in the midst of these times. You also see the love of God, which love for the Lord and the love for one another. Maybe some other times, others, or maybe at Christian Family Conference, one is going to talk about some of the other aspects of the keys to recovery.

This matter of the love of God, the love for one another, is upon my heart that I have been touched with. We can just really ask the Lord to show us and continue to teach us on this matter. As we look at these books of recovery, to me there was a twofold aspect of His recovery work. In Ezra and Nehemiah, what we see is an answer to Daniel's prayer. God takes action. Daniel said, “Take action!” God starts taking action. He works sovereignly by turning Cyrus's heart. He allows some to go back. Sadly, even though this dark door is open for all to return, only a few returned. We see this throughout Scripture. We see this as something in this day and time too.

If you go over and look at Revelation 2 and 3, there is a call that goes out in this hour for everyone to return to the Lord. There is a call to overcome for everybody. But that response is individual. Normally, that is just a small number of everybody. Everyone is called. The Lord does not just call individual ones to overcome. He is calling everybody to overcome, everybody to respond to His love. Would we just be able to respond in that wonderful way. As we said, God's sovereign hand turned the heart of King Cyrus. It says in Ezra, “Whoever's spirit or heart is stirred can return to Jerusalem.” Again, it is a matter of the heart. In the Old Testament, spirit and heart get used interchangeably. So, it is if

your heart, if you have a heart attitude to return—not for your own self-centered ways, but that heart for God to return.

It was returning with one purpose. It was not returning to build their own house. It was not returning to start their own soccer league there or to build a fancy city. It was to build the house of God, to rebuild the house of God. Sadly, as we said, many stayed in Babylon. But there were ones who did return. God was able to start this recovery work through Ezra. They returned; they built the altar and started rebuilding the house. Then they faced some resistance and opposition, and they stopped building. They said, “This is too hard. It is not time yet to build the house of God. We need to stop a minute, and when it is time, we will build.” Others have shared on this, but thank the Lord God raised up Haggai and Zechariah to encourage them.

This is where Haggai comes in. How we need prophets during times of recovery because they can speak into situations for that specific moment. What did Haggai do? In a very broad way, Haggai just cries out, “Consider your ways! Consider your heart! Where are your hearts?” He says that numerous times throughout those couple of chapters. “Consider your ways! Look at your heart!” Then they say, “Oh, we have been doing our own thing. We need to keep going.” They rose up and continued building and finished. Zechariah, after they had started building, they continued to need encouragement. The Lord says to them in Zechariah, in a very general way, “Return to Me and I will return to you.” Not just focus upon the outward things they were doing, but returning to Christ, returning to Him.

The Lord, in a wonderful way, would use them, and thank the Lord they responded. Even though they responded and completed the rebuilding of the house, the latter part of the Book of Ezra talks about how they beautified the house of God. What is it that beautifies the house of God? It is Christ, Christ's life. There was a sanctification; there was a cleansing process in their own lives that had to go about. This is what beautifies the house of God and strengthens His testimony in this hour.

Recovering the Personal Relationship with God

If we look at this first aspect of recovery in Ezra, we say the altar and the house were built, but it speaks of our personal relationship with the Lord, our individual relationship with Him through the work of the cross and coming under His headship. To me, in Ezra, if you wanted to summarize, what was recovered there was their personal vertical relationship with the Lord. They got straight with themselves and the Lord. Recovery always starts with individuals getting that personal relationship back, strengthened with Him, strengthened in their hearts, and then He is able to go on.

Recovering the Relationship with One Another

Then we see Him coming into Nehemiah again in a very broad, general way. We see how Nehemiah and some others returned with an intent to build a wall, to build a wall around the city. They start working together and they start rebuilding the wall. It is wonderful how there are so many different ones, old and young, brothers, sisters, a

varied, great variety of ones. They are building the wall, and they face some continued and consistent growing opposition. They are mocked at. They try to scare them. They make very little of all that little thing they are doing; somebody could just jump on it and knock it down. There are all sorts of opposition challenges to them. But praise God, through prayer, they continue. They rise up. They do not allow that to intimidate them. They complete the wall.

Also, after they complete the wall, their life together in that city, again, is purified. There is a sanctifying work of God through all of this. So, as you look in a broad way, the second aspect of this twofold recovery. In these books, as we said in Ezra, you had individual relationships, that vertical relationship restored. In Nehemiah, as they live within the city, what we see being restored is their relationship with one another, their love for one another, their care for one another. In Ezra, we see their love for the Lord, that vertical. In Nehemiah, you see their love, their care for one another, the horizontal.

The Challenge of Loving One Another

This is such a great battle in these things because, you know, it is necessary for both of these aspects to be recovered. As He works both the vertical and the horizontal, it strengthens the full testimony of Jesus because it is not just Him wanting to have individuals out here that love the Lord; but He wants to have a body, a seen, corporate testimony, testifying to the world, the manifestation of His headship among His people. They look at these ones; they are known as Christians. It is a manifestation of His love that you see Christ, you see His love for the Father, His love for God's purpose in all of this.

As we said that purpose was that bride for His Son. Always, the Lord has that bride in view. Everything that God does comes out of a heart of love with that end and that purpose in view. Praise God, we see that, and we see as He is working to make His bride ready. It comes by one's loving the Lord with all their heart and loving the brethren as He has loved us. It reminds us of Romans 12:1. There is that offering, a freewill offering of ourselves to the Lord because by His mercies, our hearts have been captured. We are in love with Him. We see what He is doing, and we manifest His love for one another.

The Role of Abiding

As we yield to Him, as we come under that headship, as we really allow Him to be Lord of our life, what this does and is so critical is it actually, we could say, grants permission, which sounds funny. It grants permission or liberates the Holy Spirit to work in us to perfect our relationship with Him and with one another. That is making that bride ready. As we so often can hinder the Holy Spirit from working within us because we are still in control of our lives. Certain aspects we are going to. We will turn this part over to Him, but we are going to keep this part. But His lovingkindness, His mercy, He loves us. He just keeps going on. Eventually, He will arrange it so that you surrender a little more to Him. It is a progressive surrender.

Then you think you have come through, and you see that you are still holding on to another little part and you will surrender that. I love how patient He is. We talk about loving one another, but it actually can be a challenge. We cannot love one another unless we first love Him. That is the whole foundation. Without having that fundamental love for Him, Him capturing our heart. We know our own personal walk that there can be enough challenges there. But thank the Lord we have that provision in Christ to be able to overcome all of that.

The Difficulty of Unity in the Church

But this is, in my opinion, an even greater challenge for His people to walk and dwell together in unity. That is where such a great challenge comes in this day and time. It is easy for us to love ones who visit from China or Europe or wherever. We see them once and they are gone, and we love these brethren so much. But here we are together. This building work goes on locally together. This is where our challenge is. It is such a challenge. To me, you can see the importance of it because we see the effort that the enemy has made throughout time to destroy it. That always, to me, tells you something significant about what God is doing. When the enemy makes such an effort to destroy something, that is of value.

If you just want to have your individual life with Him, I mean, the enemy is not that happy, but he is not going to destroy it. There is an effort there that once you start trying to relate with brothers and sisters and come together under His headship, boy, that terrifies him. He puts; there is an effort that goes forth. But this is why we have to have first that strong personal relationship with Him, that daily relationship with Him. I will use Lenny's term. It is wonderful if we can abide with Him. That is foundational because if we are not abiding with Him, we are not going to be able to abide with one another.

Humility And the Cross

There is so much of this foundational loving Him, abiding with Him that provides the basis and the way for God to work and enable us to be able to abide together and love one another together. We said there is such a challenge. But you have to ask, why is it so hard for us to love one another, dwelling together? In everything that we see you battle. There is actually a very simple answer: our self-love and pride. We love ourselves so much and we are so proud. Because of that, the testimony of Jesus gets weakened in these days. That is why we have so much need for recovery

When we think about self-love and pride, what happens is there is such an unwillingness for us to take the cross and allow the cross to work within us. Remember when the ones first went back from Babylon to Jerusalem, the first thing they did was build that altar. That is the testimony of the cross. That is part of the reason we take this Lord's table every week. It is a fresh reminder of the testimony that our foundation and our life individually, the foundation and our life together is what Christ did on Calvary. That is the One who has made the way for us to be able to walk on these days, individually and together.

Sadly, because of our unwillingness to allow that cross to work within us, so often there ends up being division amongst us. We always agree we need to take the cross, but then when we get in a situation, somehow our perspective changes and, “Well, yes, I am willing to take the cross, but this brother needs to do it first.” I am glad Christ did not wait for us to do something first. While we were yet sinners, in His kindness, as we were reminded about this morning, He took the initiative. He laid down His life to restore and redeem us.

The Blessing of Unity

Thankfully, David got a glimpse into this. David saw that when ones were under that headship, when ones were allowing the Holy Spirit to do this work, which is where God was commanding the blessing. That blessing was His life. As we see in Psalm 133, it is a familiar psalm, but it is so precious. It says, “Behold,” I love when it says “behold,” that is getting your attention. “How good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity!” dwelling together under His headship, the oneness, the unity that they have in Him. “It is like the precious oil upon the head.” The oil is the Holy Spirit. It is that Holy Spirit that comes down, down upon the beard of Aaron, Aaron's beard. He is a priest, and we have been priests unto Him, coming down to the edge of His robes.

I love how it says, “the edge of His robes.” That Holy Spirit comes upon us. But it does not say it drops to the ground. The oil stops at the edge of the robes. What that enables us to do is to walk through a fallen world, walk through a sinful world. We have this fully, we are clothed, we are anointed fully with the Holy Spirit. In the midst of what we are walking through in this fallen world, in the decay that there is, even in weakness within the Church, there is an empowering for us to go through. Praise God for that.

He describes it also like the dew of Hermon coming down upon the mountain of Zion. I love how he says, “The Lord commanded the blessing.” He did not just say, “Oh, the Lord wishes, He hopes there will be a blessing there.” He commands blessing. And what is the blessing? Life. Jesus came that we might have life, His life, the life of Christ forever, that eternal life. Praise God. Oh, this is what He is after. It is so sad. So much damage has been done to His testimony in the Church throughout history when ones just have not been able to diligently keep and preserve that unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

The Consequences of Division in the Church

Oh, there is so much damage caused by division. That is why I am calling it, “the sin of division.” The sin of division, to me, has done more damage to the church and the testimony than any other sin. It is so tragic when we look around at all the divisions in this earth among the body of Christ, and the root of sin, division, gets traced back to that original sin of pride. Oh, how horrible that is. Is there anybody here whose pride is fully dealt with? I would like you to help me if there is. Thank the Lord. I am from Scotland. Scots are very proud. My parents would always tell me how we were, what was it, stout-hearted or something? It was just another fancy word for pride.

As I became a believer, the Lord is so patient. Hopefully, we have had a little bit of that pride dealt with, but He is continuing to work with us. It is just sad. If you really look at church history, so many of the divisions have not been over doctrines or practices or experiences. It has just been self-love and strong flesh. One second. I have this; I have gotten that; strong personalities unwilling to take the cross, unwilling to allow the Lord to work out. Wow, you had this experience with the Holy Spirit. I did not have that experience. Therefore, I am going to divide. Wait a minute, let us. Why do not we come together, humble ourselves, and let us see what God is trying to do? The Lord spoke to you about His return this way. He is speaking to you about His return this way. Oh, we got to divide. You are premillennial. I believe in multiple raptures. Oh no, come together, fellowship. See what we have together in Christ. Let Him work through these things.

There is a little phrase in Jude, and it gets misused so often throughout history. The ones who have said, “We are contending earnestly for the faith,” often mean their interpretation of the faith. You can be right, but dead right. You might have the right doctrine, but your spirit is dead. It is the wrong way of doing it, and it just brings about division among people. Sadly, there is so much division that it starts to become acceptable. Pride says, “Well, we are the group.”

Historical Examples of Recovery

The Brethren Movement and Its Impact

One example in history, and it is a little more current than some of the old ones, was the 19th century with the Brethren. We are greatly indebted to the work of God that He did through the Brethren, which started in 1825 in Dublin when various believers from different backgrounds began to see something. They came together to break bread as Christians, regardless of their social status or beliefs. There was a focus on Christ, and Christ was why they were there. Through that, the Lord did a great work of recovering many precious things. A couple of them were the universal priesthood of believers; they did not have titles. Everybody was just a brother, everyone was there to function. It was not like, “Oh, you are the pastor; you function, you do this,” or “You are the responsible brother; therefore, you do that. I do not have to do it.” No. Everybody, brothers and sisters were there together. That unity of the church, the oneness that exists in Christ, had been lost for so long, and it was so fresh to them that they kept that, along with the awareness of the Second Coming. We can go on and on. To me, they recovered the preciousness of the Lord's table, simply gathering around in His presence.

The Division Between John Darby and Benjamin Newton

But sadly, about 20 years after this blessing occurred, a conflict arose between two of the influential brothers, John Darby and Benjamin Newton. It was cloaked, and I use that term very broadly, as a theological issue because there was some misunderstanding that needed to be worked out. The way Newton said something—he commented and shared about Christ interpreted as not being sinless and perfect—and it sounded

strange. Some took exception to it, and Darby took exception as well. This led to a great division between them, and sadly, it broke up the whole work that God had been doing.

But if you really look back and read the history of them, the root cause was really their personalities. Both of these men had very strong and different personalities, and neither was willing to humble themselves, take the cross, and allow the Lord to show His way through. Tragically, a great division occurred. When these two had the difference, instead of coming and humbling themselves together before the Lord, and maybe some other brethren, and ask, “Lord, what is going on here? To me, what this brother is sharing is not right, but this brother feels that he has been misunderstood.” There was not that humbling together. Eventually, a few of years later, Newton did apologize for the way he had said some things. In hindsight, he looked back and thought, “I could have said those better.” We have all done that.

I do not want to get distracted by those two. The issue was really that there was never this humbling of themselves together, standing for defending the faith. Instead, they ended up in division. It was so sad. The Lord wanted to work it out in both of their lives because He wanted to do something in both of them. A lot of times when there is an encounter and a crash, and it looks like there is potential for division, God is actually trying to do a work in both people. He wants this brother to learn something and that brother to learn something. But we deny God the opportunity to prove Himself because we do not stop and humble ourselves before Him and ask Him to work and teach us more about ourselves.

The Hebrides Revival as A Model of Recovery

But praise God, in spite of man, God is a God of recovery. He has always been a God of recovery, ever since Adam He has always been recovering. In history, we see many recovery works, and one of the characteristics, like with Daniel, is that many of these awakenings started, and I even hesitate to use the word “started.” The ones that pick up the burden are a few individuals, maybe one or two, whose hearts are really touched and put on fire, captured by the Lord. They humble themselves with a spirit of repentance and begin to travail in prayer, “Lord, revive Thy work in the midst of years.” And it is continuing today. Praise God for that.

One of my favorite examples, since I am from Scotland, is the Hebrides revival on the Hebrides Islands. If you see this little place, I do not know how it shows up, but that is Inverness, Scotland. That is where my grandparents are from, and they migrated over here not too long ago. So, I am a recent immigrant, but we came in legally through Ellis Island.

The islands, which are in northern Scotland, were very cold. There had not been a real work of God; everything was just dead. Then two sisters, Peggy and Christine Smith, who were pretty young sisters—well, the older I get, the younger that seems—were 84 and 82. The Lord spoke to them that He was going to do a mighty work. They started praying on their own, and after a little while, they went to their local pastor and said,

“We really believe God wants to do a great work of awakening the people of God and reviving the work of God in the islands here.” The pastor agreed, and several nights a week, they got together and started praying. They continued for months without saying anything. Some would get discouraged, while others would say, “No, no, I just sense it is coming soon. I sense it is coming soon.” They kept going.

Then one night, as they were praying as they had been, all of a sudden, the Spirit fell upon them. There was great conviction of sin, and the Spirit moved throughout the island in a marvelous, wonderful way. This is the only picture we can find of the two sisters, and the individual in the middle is Duncan Campbell. He was invited to come there, but it is interesting; as you can see here. His testimony and others about this are available on YouTube. He was caught up in it. He came unprepared, not knowing what God was doing. He thought he was just a regular little minister coming to help these ones, and all of a sudden, he got helped tremendously. He was caught up in it just like any of them.

The things that happened were so powerful that people would just be walking down the street and suddenly be slain by the Spirit. It was not unusual to see individuals kneeling on the ground, weeping, with nobody around them, just captured by the Spirit. The bars were closed, and the sheriff got really busy because people were coming to him, saying, “I stole this plow from John here a couple of years ago, and I have returned the plow and made restitution. I did wrong, and I want to turn myself in.” The other farmers would say, “No, no, he has made restitution; that is okay.” The sheriff would say, “No, you are okay now.” The sheriff got saved too, and people who had swindled each other were making restitution and restoring things. Marriages that had been broken were restored, and relationships between parents and children were healed. All of the normal chaos of life saw a great restoration.

This revival continued mainly through the major islands into the early fifties. The last island that it hit, the Isle of North Uist, had been really hard. People were praying for it, and finally, in 1957, it was captured there. All these people who had resisted for so long finally came about. There is a testimony from one brother about a prayer meeting that was going on. They sensed God beginning to move, and their faces were before Him. At 3 o'clock in the morning, during the prayer meeting, it was not too rare to have all-night prayer meetings. He said that at 3 o'clock in the morning, God swept in, and about a dozen of them were on the ground before the Lord. They knew those forces of darkness were going to be driven back, and they would be set free. Later that morning, they left, and all of a sudden, they saw all these people repenting, falling to the ground, and coming to the Lord in marvelous ways.

You see it in such a wonderful way. It was not the work of man; it was the work of God manifesting Himself with hearts on fire and love for Him in very wonderful ways. We praise God for that.

Introduction For Next Time – Love, Love One Another, Oneness

Let me see, I am not praising God for the time but let me see here. But we see it also, let me move along quickly here, Paul, in one of His letters to the church in Ephesus, and it is interesting. In Ephesians, Paul uses the word love more than in any of His other letters, even more than in Corinthians. Some key verses I just want to read (Ephesians 4:15-16). As we look at them, he says, this is so key, and we can consider it more later. “But speaking the truth in love, we, (everybody) are to grow up in all aspects into Him,” all aspects. I love the comprehensiveness of this verse because it shows the oneness that all of us have together in Him. “Into Him who is the head, even Christ,” the head over each and every one of us, “from whom the whole body,” not just some, the whole body, every one of us, is “being fitted and held together.” I love how it testifies that this not only fits us together, but the power of His love holds us together, that perfect bond of unity. That is the best bonding glue around. We try to use bonding glues to hold things; they never work for long. They work a little bit, but then they break. But that love is that perfect bond of unity by which each and every one of us, “every joint supplies according to the proper working of each individual part.” He has that work for each and every one of us. Praise God. He has such great diverse work, and the fruit of that, the growth of the body, builds itself up in love. I love how it talks about the building work of love, and this is reinforced over in I Corinthians 1, where it talks about how love edifies; love builds up. Praise God for that.

Now, sometimes when we start talking about love, we say, “Oh yes, I have heard of love. I know that and I appreciate it.” That is why Paul, in this the first part of this verse, I Corinthians 8:1, as he says love edifies and builds up just so that we do not get so confident that we know all about that. What does it say? Knowledge puffs up. Oh, we can know about love, but are we living in love? Is it our life? Is it impacting our lives? Does it impact on our relationship? Is it governing us in such a way we are allowing his love?

What is this love of which we are speaking? God is love. And that is a simplistic statement, but it is powerful. It is the very character and nature of His life. Everything He does originates from a heart of love. It is a divine, self-sacrificing love of an altogether other nature and purpose. Praise God for the comprehensiveness of this love. And it is this love that.... I am going to pause here a minute.

I am going to give everybody an assignment. Read John; you have all week. You can read John 13 to 17. I appreciate that because as we look at John 13 to 17, we see how in the beginning, in John 13, this is a very intimate time He has with the disciples. It is the last time He is with them before the cross, and He prays for them. Note the very first thing He says to them. It is the most essential; it is the main thing. And we know what to do with the main thing: we keep it the main thing. He gives us a spiritual treasure, and this is where in this passage, we do not have time to go over it today. This is where He says in John 13, “A new commandment I give you: love one another, even as I have loved you.” Even as I have loved you—that is the key phrase in that. It is not with your love; it

is with His love. Then, as you come to the end of John 17, we see how just as He opened with such a powerful word of loving one another, He concludes John 17 with what is really the Lord's Prayer. The other is the disciples' prayer. This is the Lord's Prayer, or some call it His high priestly prayer. Just as the first thing He shared was so important and essential, the last thing He says is also so essential. It is like the bookends. This is the heart of the issue. This is what holds up everything else in between: this matter of love being the oneness that you have in love, your care, the unity that you have one with another.

And so, as we see this is... trying to ensure the time here, I can keep going on, but I want to be considerate and try to pick a good time to stop. But we can see in John 13 to 17, He has this great burden of love for one another, love and unity. Throughout those verses, we see how that comes from knowing Him. Over and over, whether He teaches about being the vine, being a shepherd, or whatever different ways He shares, it is about knowing Him. It is that love and unity that holds us together and keeps us to the very end. This morning what I wanted to share was more of an introduction and a foundation to build upon for the next couple of times when I share. So next time, I do want to look at this matter of loving one another as I have loved you. Let us stop and consider the love of Christ. What is this love of Christ? Sometimes it is so big that we shy away from even touching it. But we are going to try to explore it and see how the Lord can speak to our hearts.

And then after that, you know, there is that testimony that all men will know you are My disciples. That testimony to the world, the testimony to other believers of who we are in Him, really, the practical outworking of love for one another. This little phrase, "one another," is used actually over fifty times in the New Testament: forgiving one another, receiving one another, accepting one another. And they are all really manifestations or the practical outworking of loving one another. This is what we will look into practically the second time after this.

Conclusion

But as we conclude, what we really want to try to reinforce today is that we would be reminded of what God is doing. He is doing this great work of recovering us to come under that headship that we have in Him, that Jesus would be Lord of our life, living within us, both individually and corporately, and that we can be encouraged because God is a God of recovery. He is going to finish and recover everything that He started. Praise God, the gates of hell will not prevail against it. He will accomplish that, and He accomplishes that through the recovering of the testimony, the testimony of Jesus in our days. And we could really be able to know more and more of this work that He is doing.

And as we have said, the key to recovery starts within our own hearts. Would our hearts be open to really hear the call of that Holy Spirit as that cry goes out? He who has an ear to hear, may we be those that open the ears of our heart to really receive from Him what He is saying in this hour. And that we could be those that are really considering how do we love one another? What is the effect of this?

It has somehow caught my heart lately, the impact and the testimony it has when ones loves one another. It sends an unspoken message throughout the seen and the unseen. It does something in a spiritual way of strengthening His testimony, sending forth a power that breaks down barriers. And we have too many barriers today among believers. And we are desiring that we do not necessarily have to agree on everything. I am not talking about trying to agree on everything. We do not have to meet together. I am not talking about having a huge meeting. But at least there can be that fellowship, that love, that care, supporting one another without having divisions and unsettled issues within our hearts and lives towards one another that truly weaken the testimony of Jesus.

That is really what is on my heart as we share for these next couple of times that the Lord could be speaking to us how He desires to, and that we could have those ears to hear what He is saying.

We can close here today. *Lord, we do come, and we are ever grateful for Your great love that You have shown to us. We are ever grateful, Lord, for the way You have reached out to each and every one of us in Your kindness and led us to repentance. And Lord, we are thankful for how You continue to hold us and keep us. As we consider this matter of Your love—the heights, the depth, the length, the breadth of it, the indescribable nature of it—we just want to have hearts open to be expanded, that You could expand our knowing of You, the reality of Your love working in our hearts and lives, so that we could be the people of God that You are desiring us to be in this last hour. Lord, it does break our hearts when we look out and see a lost world. Too often, when they look, they just see a divided church. They do not see what You desire that they see. Lord, even among believers, how there are so many unsettled issues. As far as it is with us, that is all we can be accountable for. We want to be at peace with all men and allow there to be no unsettled things within our hearts. So speak to us, Lord, as we open our hearts to You, that we could be those captured by Your love and really able to be set free from things that entangle us and set free to serve You in a fuller and greater way in these last days. In Thy name we pray. Amen.*

<i>A Key to Recovery – Love One Another</i>	1
Introduction	1
The Need for Recovery	1
The Recovery of the Testimony of the Lord Jesus	2
Example of God’s Recovery in The Old Testament	3
Daniel, A Vessel for God’s Recovery	4
Travailing Prayers	4
Recovering the Personal Relationship with God	6
Recovering the Relationship with One Another	6
The Challenge of Loving One Another	7
The Role of Abiding	7
The Difficulty of Unity in the Church	8
Humility And the Cross	8
The Blessing of Unity	9
The Consequences of Division in the Church	9
Historical Examples of Recovery	10
The Brethren Movement and Its Impact	10
The Division Between John Darby and Benjamin Newton	10
The Hebrides Revival as A Model of Recovery	11
Introduction For Next Time – Love, Love One Another, Oneness	13
Conclusion	14

Speaker	Graham, Mac
Venue	Richmond, Virginia, US
Date	March 15 th , 2026
Link	https://christiantestimonyministry.com/item/a-key-to-recover--love-one-another
Bible Version	NASB95