

2012 Series “So Loved” (#07)
“Fervent Love”

During the month of Feb., our lesson theme has been “So Loved” taken from (Jn.3:16).

Today’s lesson text was taken from a series of warnings based on this statement,

(Jn.4:7) “The end of all things is near” (eggizo / perf.a.ind.3ps)

Note: Some think it refers to the Rapture and Second Coming of Christ (2 Pet.3; Jms.5:7-9). Others think it refers to undeserved suffering for Christ (1Pet.4:12-19) (perfect tense of eggizo).

Our focus will be on the four grace operating assets Peter gave for dealing with adversity in CWL (Jn.4:7-11)

- Prayer
- Love
- Hospitality with an RMA (Relaxed Mental Attitude)
- Spiritual Gifts

Today’s lesson will study four <u>aspects of just one</u> of those four Grace Operating Assets when dealing with adversity in the Christian Way of Life (CWL) – FERVENT LOVE.
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1. **Peter began by saying that fervent agape love should be placed at the top of the list of priorities - “above all (pro+ablative of priority and pas + abl.pl.n).” Peter is quoting Solomon (Prov.10:12).**

While exercising all four of our Grace Operating Assets is important during times of great adversity, fervent (agape) love is given the place of pre-eminence.

Note that Peter elevated agape love to FERVENT (ektenes) agape love. **Ektenes refers to stretching or straining towards a goal or the finish line.** Like a horse stretching its capacity and winning a race by a nose.

In human terms, fervent would be the intense competitive mental attitude of an athlete straining his athletic ability to reach a goal. Like a football runner who gives second and third efforts and stretches out to the goal line to score a touchdown.

The writer of Hebrew gave an example of fervent in (Heb.12:1-3) (read).

2. **Peter says the spiritually mature believer must elevate his game to fervent agape love during times of adversity.**

Fervent love stretches our spiritual growth capacity on behalf of other believer’s spiritual welfare.

During the Upper Room Discourse, Jesus introduced the New Covenant commandment of agape love in (Jn.13:34-35) – “**Even as** I have loved you, that you also love one another.”

Where **Agape love** requires walking by means of the indwelling Holy Spirit (Gal.5:16, 22; 1 Cor.6:19), **‘fervent’ agape love** requires walking by means of faith (Rom.10:17; 2 Cor.5:7) and spiritual growth maturity (Col.2:6-7; 1 Jn.2:5-6; 2 Jn.5-6) in the midst of fire trials (1 Pet.1:6-8).

3. Peter explains WHY fervent agape love is placed as first priority.

(1 Pet.4:8b) “Because (hoti / declarative) love_covers (kalupto / p.a.ind.3ps) [blots out or remove from sight] a multitude of sins.”

You say, “I thought nothing but the blood of Jesus Christ covered sin?” However (Rom.5:8-9) says: “But God demonstrated His own love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been **justified by His blood**, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.”

“The blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sins.” (1 Jn.1:7b) However, the sacrificial atoning death of Jesus Christ on behalf of our sins is exactly **why** our fervent agape love can cover a multitude of other believer’s sins.

- (1 Jn.4:19) “**We love** because He first loved us.”
- (1 Jn.4:10) “In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be propitiation for our sins.” (Eph.5:25)
- (Eph.4:32) **We forgive** because He first forgave us

I have heard some Church Age believers say” “I will forgive but never forget.” I understand this pain and you may not have the spiritual capacity yet to move that far. However, note where the Lord wants you to go in Fervent Love – “**I will remember their sins no more.**” (Heb.8:12) This is a quote from the prophecy of the New Covenant (Jer.31:31-34); (1 Cor.11:25). Isaiah said the same thing in (Isa.43:25). “**Love keeps no record of wrongs.**” (1 Cor.13:5)

4. Fervent agape love makes it possible for spiritual mature believers to give others in matters of personal convictions and guilt the freedom and encouragement for spiritual restoration

Example: Jesus and Peter in (Lk.22:31-34; Matt.16:21-23).

Paul reminded the Corinthian Church of this doctrinal principle:

(2 Cor.2:6-8) “Sufficient for such a one is this punishment which was inflicted by the majority, **so that** on the contrary you should rather forgive and comfort him, otherwise such a one might be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. Wherefore I urge you to **reaffirm your love for him.**” (1 Cor.Ch.5)

- How many times should I forgive? [Here is fervent love] (Matt.18:21-35)
- How much am I expected to forgive? [Here is fervent love] (Lk.7:36-50)

Paul taught the doctrine of the law of love in (Rom. 14:13-23). “So then let us pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.” (Rom.14:19) “Knowledge makes arrogant, but love edifies.” (1 Cor.8:1b; Phil.2:3-4)

CONCLUSION: Fervent agape love is designed to stabilize relationships within the family of God and enable us to overcome offenses that challenge intimacy and trust (Prov.17:9); (Rom.12:2); (Col.3:12-14).

Peter’s testimony:

(1 Pet.4:8) “Above all, keep (echo / p.a.ptc.nplm / imperatival ptc) fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.”

It is called an imperatival ptc because fervent love works in conjunction with these two imperatives: **Sober** (sophroneo / a.a.impv.2pl) (2 Tim.4:2-5) and **watchful** (nepho / a.a.impv.2pl.) (Col.3:1-2; 1 Jn.2:15-17).

These work with the believer’s spiritual growth capacity to stretch and to give second and third efforts to reach the goal of covering a multitude of sins of others.