

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Spring Term of 2026**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE CRUCIAL POINTS OF THE TRUTH IN PAUL'S EPISTLES—
FIRST AND SECOND THESSALONIANS**

Message Eight

**The Need for Our Faith to Be Growing Exceedingly
and the Need for Our Love for One Another to Be Increasing**

Scripture Reading: 2 Thes. 1:3; Heb. 11:1, 5-6

2 Thes. 1:3—We ought to thank God always concerning you, brothers, even as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly and the love of each one of you all to one another is increasing,

Heb. 11:1—Now faith is the substantiation of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Heb. 11:5-6—⁵By faith Enoch was translated so that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God had translated him. For before his translation he obtained the testimony that he had been well pleasing to God. ⁶But without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to Him, for he who comes forward to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

I. Paul commends the Thessalonians by telling them that “your faith grows exceedingly and the love of each one of you all to one another is increasing” (2 Thes. 1:3); faith and love are two inseparable, excellent virtues of the believers in Christ (1 Tim. 1:14; 2 Tim. 1:13; Gal. 5:6):

2 Thes. 1:3—We ought to thank God always concerning you, brothers, even as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly and the love of each one of you all to one another is increasing,

1 Tim. 1:14—And the grace of our Lord superabounded with faith and love in Christ Jesus.

2 Tim. 1:13—Hold a pattern of the healthy words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

Gal. 5:6—For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision avails anything nor uncircumcision, but faith *avails*, operating through love.

A. Faith is for appreciating, substantiating, and receiving the unlimited riches of the Triune God—Heb. 11:1; John 1:12; Eph. 3:16-17a:

Heb. 11:1—Now faith is the substantiation of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

John 1:12—But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,

Eph. 3:16-17—¹⁶That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man, ¹⁷That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

1. Faith is given to us by God that by it we may receive Christ, the embodiment of the Triune God, and thereby enter into the Triune God and be joined to Him as one, having Him as our life, life supply, and everything—2 Pet. 1:1.

2 Pet. 1:1—Simon Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have been allotted faith equally precious as ours in the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ:

2. By faith in the Lord, we receive the forgiveness of sins and eternal life—Acts 10:43; John 3:16.

Acts 10:43—To this One all the prophets testify that through His name everyone who believes into Him will receive forgiveness of sins.

John 3:16—For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that everyone who believes into Him would not perish, but would have eternal life.

3. When we believe in the Lord, we believe *into* Him—v. 15:

John 3:15—That everyone who believes into Him may have eternal life.

- a. By believing into Him, we enter into Him to be one with Him, to partake of Him, and to participate in all that He has accomplished for us.
- b. By believing into Him, we are identified with Him in all that He is and in all that He has passed through, accomplished, attained, and obtained—1 Cor. 1:30; Eph. 2:5-6; Col. 3:1.

1 Cor. 1:30—But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom to us from God: both righteousness and sanctification and redemption,

Eph. 2:5-6—⁵Even when we were dead in offenses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved) ⁶And raised *us* up together with *Him* and seated *us* together with *Him* in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,

Col. 3:1—If therefore you were raised together with Christ, seek the things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.

- B. Love is for experiencing, enjoying, and living out the immeasurably rich Triune God—Mark 12:30:

Mark 12:30—And you shall love the Lord your God from your whole heart and from your whole soul and from your whole mind and from your whole strength."

1. Love issues out of faith and enables us to live out all the riches of the Triune God in Christ with those who have believed into Christ with us in order that the Triune God may have a glorious corporate expression—Eph. 3:19-21.
Eph. 3:19-21—¹⁹And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God. ²⁰But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us, ²¹To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.

2. Love is for the believers to minister and transmit the Triune God to their fellow believers so that all the believers may love one another with the divine, transcendent love and live a corporate life in Christ—Rom. 12:4-5, 10.
Rom. 12:4-5—⁴For just as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, ⁵So we who are many are one Body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

Rom. 12:10—Love one another warmly in brotherly love; take the lead in showing honor one to another.

II. Our faith grows by the hearing of the word and by our looking away unto Jesus:

- A. According to Romans 10:17, faith comes out of the hearing of the word; the source of faith is the word, and there are three aspects of the word:
Rom. 10:17—So faith *comes* out of hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.
 1. The written word of God is the Bible—John 10:35; 5:39-40.
John 10:35—If He said they were gods, to whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken,

John 5:39-40—³⁹You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that testify concerning Me. ⁴⁰Yet you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.

 2. The living word of God is Christ—1:1; Rev. 19:13.
John 1:1—In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Rev. 19:13—And He is clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is called the Word of God.

 3. The applied word of God is the Spirit—Eph. 6:17; John 6:63.
Eph. 6:17—And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which *Spirit* is the word of God,

John 6:63—It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

4. In conclusion, faith comes to us and grows in us from our hearing of the applied word by the Spirit through the living Christ out of the written word of the Bible; faith is the subjective God applied to our being.
- B. Our faith grows by our looking away unto Jesus continually, who is the Author and Perfecter of our faith—Heb. 12:2:

Heb. 12:2—Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down on the right hand of the throne of God.

1. The Greek word translated “looking away unto” denotes looking with undivided attention by turning away from every other object and every distracting thing; when we look away unto Jesus, He as the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45) transfuses us with Himself, with His believing element, that He may believe for us; hence, He Himself is our faith (Gal. 2:20; Rom. 3:22; cf. Luke 10:38-42).

1 Cor. 15:45—So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul"; the last Adam *became* a life-giving Spirit.

Gal. 2:20—I am crucified with Christ; and *it is* no longer I *who* live, but *it is* Christ *who* lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the *faith* of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Rom. 3:22—Even the righteousness of God through the faith of Jesus Christ to all those who believe, for there is no distinction;

cf. Luke 10:38-42—³⁸Now as they went, He entered into a certain village, and a certain woman named Martha received Him into her home. ³⁹And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at the Lord's feet and was listening to His word. ⁴⁰But Martha was being drawn about with much serving, and she came up to *Him* and said, Lord, does it not matter to You that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to do her part with me. ⁴¹But the Lord answered and said to her, Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things; ⁴²But there is need of one thing, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

2. As the Author and the source of faith, Jesus is also the Leader, the Pioneer, and the Forerunner of faith; as we habitually look away unto Him as the Originator of faith in His life and in His path on earth, and as the Perfecter of faith in His glory and on His throne in heaven, He transfuses and even infuses us with the faith that He originated in us in order to finish and complete the faith that we need for the running of the heavenly race—Heb. 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 4:13; 1 Cor. 9:24; Phil. 3:14.

Heb. 12:1-2—¹Therefore let us also, having so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, put away every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles *us* and run with endurance the race which is set before us, ²Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down on the right hand of the throne of God.

2 Cor. 4:13—And having the same spirit of faith according to that which is written, "I believed, therefore I spoke," we also believe, therefore we also speak,

1 Cor. 9:24—Do you not know that those who run on a racecourse all run, but one receives the prize? Run in this way, that you may lay hold.

Phil. 3:14—I pursue toward the goal for the prize to which God in Christ Jesus has called *me* upward.

III. Our love increases for the Lord and for one another as we continually listen to His voice and hold fast to Him (Deut. 30:19-20), and as His “hidden ones,” we hide ourselves in the hiding place of His presence as the God who hides Himself (Psa. 83:3; 31:20; Isa. 45:15):

Deut. 30:19-20—¹⁹I call heaven and earth to witness against you today: I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore choose life that you and your seed may live, ²⁰In loving Jehovah your God by listening to His voice and holding fast to Him; for He is your life and the length of your days, that you may dwell upon the land which Jehovah swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.

Psa. 83:3—They devise crafty counsel against Your people, / And conspire against Your hidden ones.

Psa. 31:20—You hide them in the hiding place of Your presence / Apart from the conspiracies of men; / You lay them away secretly in a shelter / Apart from the contention of tongues.

Isa. 45:15—Surely You are a God who hides Himself, / O God of Israel, the Savior.

- A. In order for our love to the Lord and to one another to continually increase, we need to keep ourselves in the eternal love of God and allow ourselves to be constrained by the love of Christ that we may live to Him—Jer. 31:3; Jude 19-21; 2 Cor. 5:14-15.

Jer. 31:3—Jehovah appeared to me from afar, *saying*, / Indeed I have loved you with an eternal love; / Therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness.

Jude 19-21—¹⁹These are those who make divisions, soulish, having no spirit. ²⁰But you, beloved, building up yourselves upon your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹Keep yourselves in the love of God, awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

2 Cor. 5:14-15—¹⁴For the love of Christ constrains us because we have judged this, that One died for all, therefore all died; ¹⁵And He died for all that those who live may no longer live to themselves but to Him who died for them and has been raised.

- B. “We love because He first loved us” (1 John 4:19); God first loved us in that He infused us with His love and generated within us the love with which we love Him and the brothers (vv. 20-21).

1 John 4:20-21—²⁰If anyone says, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. ²¹And this commandment we have from Him, that he who loves God love his brother also.

- C. We all need to spend an adequate amount of personal time with the Lord in secret so that we may dwell in the secret place of the Most High, having personal, affectionate, private, and spiritual fellowship with Him in our spirit; in this way we can be filled with His loving essence for Him to shepherd others through us, and we can be filled with His shining element for others to see Him in us—Psa. 91:1; S. S. 1:1-4; John 4:24; Luke 15:20; Matt. 6:6; 5:15-16.

Psa. 91:1—He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High / Will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.

S.S. 1:1-4—¹The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's. ²Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth! / For your love is better than wine. ³Your anointing oils have a pleasant fragrance; / Your name is like ointment poured forth; / Therefore the virgins love you. ⁴Draw me; we will run after you--The king has brought me into his chambers--/ We will be glad and rejoice in you; / We will extol your love more than wine. / Rightly do they love you.

John 4:24—God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness.

Luke 15:20—And he rose up and came to his own father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with compassion, and he ran and fell on his neck and kissed him affectionately.

Matt. 6:6—But you, when you pray, enter into your private room, and shut your door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

Matt. 5:15-16—¹⁵Nor do *men* light a lamp and place it under the bushel, but on the lampstand; and it shines to all who are in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in the heavens.

IV. Faith means that we believe that God is and we are not—Heb. 11:5-6, 1-2; 2 Cor. 4:13, 16-18:

Heb. 11:5-6—⁵By faith Enoch was translated so that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God had translated him. For before his translation he obtained the testimony that he had been well pleasing to God. ⁶But without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing *to Him*, for he who comes forward to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Heb. 11:1-2—¹Now faith is the substantiation of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. ²For in this the elders have obtained a good testimony.

2 Cor. 4:13—And having the same spirit of faith according to that which is written, "I believed, therefore I spoke," we also believe, therefore we also speak,

2 Cor. 4:16-18—¹⁶Therefore we do not lose heart; but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner *man* is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷For our momentary lightness of affliction works out for us, more and more surpassingly, an eternal weight of glory, ¹⁸Because we do not regard the things which are seen but the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

A. Without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to God, to make God happy—
Heb. 11:6a.

Heb. 11:6—But without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing *to Him*, for he who comes forward to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

B. To believe that God is, is to believe that He is everything to us and that we are nothing—John 8:58; Eccl. 1:2.

John 8:58—Jesus said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, Before Abraham came into being, I am.

Eccl. 1:2—Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher; / Vanity of vanities; all is vanity.

C. To believe that God is implies that we are not; He must be the only One, the unique One, in everything, and we must be nothing in everything—Gen. 5:24; Heb. 11:5.

Gen. 5:24—And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.

Heb. 11:5—By faith Enoch was translated so that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God had translated him. For before his translation he obtained the testimony that he had been well pleasing to God.

D. To believe that God is, is to deny our self; in the whole universe He is, and all of us are nothing—Luke 9:23.

Luke 9:23—And He said to *them* all, If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me.

E. I should not be anything; I should not exist; only He should exist—"it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ"—Gal. 2:20.

Gal. 2:20—I am crucified with Christ; and *it is* no longer I *who* live, but *it is* Christ *who* lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the *faith* of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

F. Before Enoch's translation he obtained the testimony that he had been well pleasing to God (Heb. 11:5-6); Enoch continually walked upward with God day and night for three centuries, exercising his faith to believe that God is, becoming closer to God and more one with God each day until "he was not, for God took him" (Gen. 5:22-24).

Heb. 11:5-6—⁵By faith Enoch was translated so that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God had translated him. For before his

translation he obtained the testimony that he had been well pleasing to God. ⁶But without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing *to Him*, for he who comes forward to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Gen. 5:22-24—²²And Enoch walked with God after he had begotten Methuselah three hundred years, and he begot *more* sons and daughters. ²³And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty-five years. ²⁴And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.

V. Romans 12:3 says, “Not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think, but to think so as to be sober-minded, as God has apportioned to each a measure of faith”:

- A. To think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think without a sober mind annuls the proper order of the Body life; God gave us the same faith in quality but not in quantity; the matter of quantity depends upon how we grow; if we grow today as the apostle Paul grew, the portion of faith we receive will be greatly enlarged.
- B. God first allotted faith to us in quality, and then He apportioned it in quantity; what kind of faith we have depends upon God’s allotment; how much faith we have depends upon God’s apportioning.
- C. God’s apportioning depends upon our attitude; if we are not sober-minded (thinking more highly of ourselves than we ought to think, not considering one another more excellent than ourselves, and thinking that we are something when we are nothing), God would not increase His apportioning of faith to us, and He probably would even decrease it—Phil. 2:2-3; Gal. 6:3; 1 Cor. 8:1-3; cf. Luke 1:53; Matt. 5:3.

Phil. 2:2-3—²Make my joy full, that you think the same thing, having the same love, joined in soul, thinking the one thing, ³*Doing* nothing by way of selfish ambition nor by way of vainglory, but in lowliness of mind considering one another more excellent than yourselves;

Gal. 6:3—For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

1 Cor. 8:1-3—¹Now concerning things sacrificed to idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. ²If anyone thinks that he knows anything, he has not yet come to know as he ought to know; ³But if anyone loves God, this one is known by Him.

cf. Luke 1:53—The hungry He has filled with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty.

cf. Matt. 5:3—Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of the heavens.

VI. Love is the most excellent way for us to be anything or do anything for the building up of the church as the organic Body of Christ—1 Cor. 12:31b—13:8a:

1 Cor. 12:31—But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And moreover I show to you a most excellent way.

1 Cor. 13:1-8—If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels but do not have love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. ²And if I have *the* gift of prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³And if I dole out all my possessions to feed *others*, and if I deliver up my body that I may boast, but do not have love, I profit nothing. ⁴Love suffers long. Love is kind; it is not jealous. Love does not brag and is not puffed up; ⁵It does not behave unbecomingly and does not seek its own things; it is not provoked *and* does not take account of evil; ⁶It does not rejoice because of unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; ⁷It covers all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸Love never falls *away*. But whether prophecies, they will be rendered useless; or tongues, they will cease; or knowledge, it will be rendered useless.

A. The love described by Paul in 1 Corinthians 13 is the expression of the divine life (vv. 4-8a); if we do not have love, our speaking is like that of sounding brass and a clanging cymbal, which give sounds without life (v. 1; 14:1, 3, 4b, 12, 31; 2 Cor. 3:6).

1 Cor. 13:4-8—⁴Love suffers long. Love is kind; it is not jealous. Love does not brag *and* is not puffed up; ⁵It does not behave unbecomingly *and* does not seek its own things; it is not provoked *and* does not take account of evil; ⁶It does not rejoice because of unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; ⁷It covers all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸Love never falls *away*. But whether prophecies, they will be rendered useless; or tongues, they will cease; or knowledge, it will be rendered useless.

1 Cor. 13:1—If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels but do not have love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.

1 Cor. 14:1—Pursue love, and desire earnestly spiritual *gifts*, but especially that you may prophesy.

1 Cor. 14:3—But he who prophesies speaks building up and encouragement and consolation to men.

1 Cor. 14:4—He who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but he who prophesies builds up the church.

1 Cor. 14:12—So also you, since you are zealous of spirits, seek that you may excel for the building up of the church.

1 Cor. 14:31—For you can all prophesy one by one that all may learn and all may be encouraged.

2 Cor. 3:6—Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, *ministers* not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

- B. Love is not jealous, is not provoked, does not take account of evil, covers all things, endures all things, survives everything, and is the greatest—1 Cor. 13:4-8, 13.

1 Cor. 13:4-8—⁴Love suffers long. Love is kind; it is not jealous. Love does not brag *and* is not puffed up; ⁵It does not behave unbecomingly *and* does not seek its own things; it is not provoked *and* does not take account of evil; ⁶It does not rejoice because of unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; ⁷It covers all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸Love never falls *away*. But whether prophecies, they will be rendered useless; or tongues, they will cease; or knowledge, it will be rendered useless.

1 Cor. 13:13—Now there abide faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

- C. We should be like God in our love for others, loving people without any discrimination (Matt. 5:43-48); the first one saved by Christ through His crucifixion was not a gentleman but a criminal, a robber, sentenced to death; this is very meaningful (27:38; Luke 23:42-43).

Matt. 5:43-48—⁴³You have heard that it was said, "You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy." ⁴⁴But I say to you, Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵So that you may become sons of your Father who is in the heavens, because He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the just and the unjust. ⁴⁶For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷And if you greet only your brothers, what better thing are you doing? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? ⁴⁸You therefore shall be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Matt. 27:38—At that time two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and one on the left.

Luke 23:42-43—⁴²And he said, Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom. ⁴³And He said to him, Truly I say to you, Today you shall be with Me in Paradise.

- D. The law of the Spirit of life is the law of Christ as the law of love (Rom. 8:2; Gal. 6:2-3); when the law of love is activated within us, we automatically and spontaneously will be shepherds who have the loving and forgiving heart of our Father God and the shepherding and seeking spirit of our Savior Christ (John 21:15-17; Luke 15:3-7).

Rom. 8:2—For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.

Gal. 6:2-3—²Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ completely. ³For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

John 21:15-17—¹⁵Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs. ¹⁶He said to him

again a second time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep. ¹⁷He said to him the third time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.

Luke 15:3-7—³And He told them this parable, saying, ⁴Which man of you, who has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? ⁵And when he finds *it*, he lays *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing. ⁶And when he comes into his house, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost. ⁷I tell you that in the same way there will be *more* joy in heaven over one sinner repenting than over ninety-nine righteous persons who have no need of repentance.

- E. When the law of love is activated within us, our labor in the Lord is a labor of love (1 Cor. 15:58; 1 Thes. 1:3) in which we “support the weak” (Acts 20:35) and “sustain the weak” (1 Thes. 5:14); *the weak* refers to those who are weak either in their spirit or soul or body, or are weak in faith (Rom. 14:1; 15:1).

1 Cor. 15:58—Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

1 Thes. 1:3—Remembering unceasingly your work of faith and labor of love and endurance of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father;

Acts 20:35—In all things I have shown you by example that toiling in this way we ought to support the weak and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

1 Thes. 5:14—And we exhort you, brothers, Admonish the disorderly, console the fainthearted, sustain the weak, be long-suffering toward all.

Rom. 14:1—Now him who is weak in faith receive, *but* not for the purpose of passing judgment on *his* considerations.

Rom. 15:1—But we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those who are weak and not to please ourselves.

- F. The church life is a life of brotherly love (1 John 4:7-8; 2 John 5-6; John 15:12, 17; Rev. 3:7; Eph. 5:2; cf. Jude 12a), and the Body builds itself up in love (Eph. 4:16).

1 John 4:7-8—⁷Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God, and everyone who loves has been begotten of God and knows God. ⁸He who does not love has not known God, because God is love.

2 John 5-6—⁵And now I ask you, lady, not as writing a new commandment to you but that which we have had from the beginning, that we love one another. ⁶And this is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, even as you heard from the beginning, that you walk in love.

John 15:12—This is My commandment, that you love one another even as I have loved you.

John 15:17—These things I command you that you may love one another.

Rev. 3:7—And to the messenger of the church in Philadelphia write: These things says the Holy One, the true One, the One who has the key of David, the One who opens and no one will shut, and shuts and no one opens:

Eph. 5:2—And walk in love, even as Christ also loved us and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor.

cf. Jude 12—These are the hidden reefs in your love feasts, feasting together with *you* without fear, shepherding themselves; waterless clouds being carried off by winds; autumn trees without fruit, having died twice, rooted up;

Eph. 4:16—Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and *through* the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

G. Our God-given, regenerated spirit is a spirit of love; we need a burning spirit of love to conquer the degradation of today's church—2 Tim. 1:7.

2 Tim. 1:7—For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness.

H. To give the Lord the first place in all things is to love Him with the first love, the best love—Col. 1:18; Rev. 2:4.

Col. 1:18—And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;

Rev. 2:4—But I have *one thing* against you, that you have left your first love.

I. "To love God means to set our entire being—spirit, soul, and body, with the heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30)—absolutely on Him, that is, to let our entire being be occupied by Him and lost in Him, so that He becomes everything to us and we are one with Him practically in our daily life"—1 Cor. 2:9, footnote 3.

Mark 12:30—And you shall love the Lord your God from your whole heart and from your whole soul and from your whole mind and from your whole strength."

1 Cor. 2:9—But as it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard and *which* have not come up in man's heart; things which God has prepared for those who love Him."

VII. In this wonderful faith and by this super-excellent love of the Triune God, we should love Him and all those who belong to Him; only in this way can we become, in the current of the church's degradation, the overcomers whom the Lord is calling and desiring to obtain in Revelation 2 and 3.