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.

Loving God is different than loving anyone else. Humans by nature are takers when they love and often leave the one they loved exhausted. God never expresses love that He doesn’t give. “For God so loved the world that he gave... John 3:16”  

Hampton Drum

Isaiah 38:17
   Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.

The Proof of God’s Love in Us:
I John 2:5
   But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.

I John 3:17
   But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

I John 4:20
   If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

I. We are to love the Lord with all the enlightenment of our head. (V.30)

Karl Barth was a Swiss theologian who is often regarded as the greatest Protestant theologian of the twentieth century.

A student asked Barth if he could summarize his whole life’s work in theology in a sentence. Barth said, ‘Yes, I can. In the words of a song I learned at my mother’s knee: Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so.’  

Karl Barth

A. We love Him with our heads by meditation.

Mark 12:30
   And thou shalt love the Lord thy God... and with all thy mind,

Joshua 1:8
   This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.
B. We love Him with our heads by motivation.

Mark 12:30
*And thou shalt love the Lord thy God . . . with all thy mind,*

Jeremiah 20:9
*Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.*

Luke 24:32
*And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us,*

II. We are to love the Lord with all the emotions of our heart. (V.30)

A. We are to love Him with a great admiration.

Mark 12:30
*And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul,*

**Why is loving God with all our heart so critical?**

- Because whatever we love the most captivates our hearts.

Matthew 6:20-21  *But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: (V.21) For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

- Because whatever we love the most determines our future.

Colossians 3:1-2  *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. (V.2) Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*

- Because whatever we love, we become vulnerable to, persuaded by and loyal to its causes.

Matthew 6:24  *No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*  (Anything you love more that God is an idol!)

- Because the presence of love in our life proves the presence of a deep knowledge of God.

1 John 4:8  *He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.*
B. We are to love Him with a great inspiration.

Mark 12:30

And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul,

To love Him with all your soul is to love Him through the Spirit.

Galatians 5:22

But the fruit of the Spirit is love,

It is an extraordinary thing to feel the Holy Spirit’s help in loving God. It is a moment of love that will surpass all the love you have ever felt.  

Hampton Drum

III. We are to love the Lord with all the energy of our hands. (V.30)

A. We love Him with our hands by surrendering our abilities to Him.

Mark 12:30

... and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

You don’t go very far in this world that you don’t run into someone who is attempting to express love to our Lord; song writers, artists, poets, playwrights . . . etc.

Hampton Drum

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, (Paul’s extraordinary measures to know Christ reveals His desire to have an intimate knowledge of Christ’s love.)

B. We love Him with our hands by surrendering our actions to Him.

Mark 12:30

... and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

Joshua 24:15

And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.
To Grow in Love, Our Love Must be Christ-Like Love

Sermon #2

John 13:34
A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

Romans 12:3
For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

“God accepts me – that is grace. Faith, the next step, is my acceptance of God’s acceptance of me. That’s what faith is. Faith just accepts the fact that God accepts me. Grace – God accepts me; Faith – I accept that God accepts me. Now, if God accepts me, what am I to do? I am to accept me. That is peace. Peace. All right. Grace, Faith, Peace. I have to stop trying. I start trusting. And then that wonderful, glorious peace like a river comes into me. Now that I have peace I can love. Ok now with Love – now I accept you.”  

Adrian Rogers

I. Christ like love is a selfless love.

A. Christ’s love stands in contrast to the disciples’ love.

The disciples’ discussion right before the upper room:

Luke 22:24
And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.

B. Christ’s love is characterized to the disciples.

John 13:4-5
He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. (V.5) After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

Philippians 2:5-8
Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: (V.6) Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: (V.7) But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: (V.8) And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.
II. Christ-like love is a steadfast love.

   A. He loved them in the infancy of their spiritual life.

   John 13:1
   Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

   Matt 16:23
   But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

   John 13:37-38
   Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake. (V.38) Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

   B. He loved them in the infidelity of their spiritual life.

   Mark 14:70-71
   And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galilaean, and thy speech agreeth thereto. (V.71) But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak.

III. Christ-like love is a sanctifying love.

   A. Christ’s love was longsuffering in Peter’s ignorance.

   John 13:8-9
   Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. (V.9) Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

   B. Christ’s love was restoring in Peter’s inequity.

   John 13:10
   Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

   And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: (V.32) But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.
John 21:17

He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grievèd because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.
Love That Brings Overwhelming Joy

Sermon #3

John 15:9-13

As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

If love is the greatest human emotion ever known to man. If love poses the greatest risk to the human heart. If man will do anything to have and to enjoy the emotion of love. If love reaches its greatest fulfillment in the feeling of joy. Then this passage of Scripture deserves serious consideration.

Dr. Hampton Drum

I. The example of the environment that creates a rich love.

A. This love is defined in the context of a relationship.

John 15:9

As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

How did God express love to Jesus in His earthly ministry?

- God identified Himself with Jesus in the use of endearing terms.
  Beginning of His Ministry
  Matthew 3:17 . . . This is my beloved Son,
  End of His Ministry
  Matthew 17:5 . . . This is my beloved Son,

- God gave verbal assurance to Jesus concerning the action he had taken.
  Beginning of His Ministry
  Matthew 3:17 . . . in whom I am well pleased.
  End of His Ministry
  Matthew 17:5 . . . in whom I am well pleased;

- God gave verbal affirmation to Jesus in His acts of ministry. At Jesus Baptism
  Matthew 3:17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

- God honored Christ’s ministry by allowing His name to be associated with Him.
  John 12:28 Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.
God gave Jesus priority over all other prophets that had preceded Him.

Mount of Transfiguration
Matthew 17:5  While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

B. This love is defined in the commitment of a relationship.

John 15:10
If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love.

What was Jesus’ responsibility in the commitment to receive God’s love?

- Jesus was conscious to know and to do God’s will.
  John 4:34  Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.
- Jesus was determined to do God’s will no matter how difficult.
  Luke 22:42  Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.
- Jesus was determined to set an eternal bench mark in the expression of His love.
  John 15:13  Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

II. The environment Christ sought to create through this example.

A. His desire was that this love would produce lasting joy.

John 15:11
These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you,

“I want to meet Jesus face to face, whom I’ve known heart to heart.”  Adrian Rogers

B. His desire was that this love would produce lavish joy.

John 15:11
... and that your joy might be full.

III. The exercise of Christ’s love that calls for a great expense.

A. We are to expend the sincere energy of loving one another.

John 15:12
This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you...
What benefit is there to making this love investment?

- Each investment of love, no matter how small, Christ receives as an expression of love to Him.
  
  Matthew 25:40  . . . Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

- Christ promises that your joy will increase to its fullest amount.
  
  John 15:11  . . . and that your joy might be full.

- Christ promises that you will have treasures in heaven.
  
  Luke 18:22  . . . sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.

- There is the potential of growing a deep and meaningful love between you and the one you love.

B. We are to expend the sacrificial energy of loving one another.

John 15:13  Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

“Christian love is not basically a feeling; it is an act of the will. The proof of our love is not in our feeling but in our actions, even to the extent of laying down our lives for Christ.”  

  Warren Wiersbe
The Hard Side of Love
Sermon #4

Hebrews 12:4-11
Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. (V.5) And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: (V.6) For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. (V.7) If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? (V.8) But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. (V.9) Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? (V.10) For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. (V.11) Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

This is the side of God’s Love Jesus never experienced until He got to the Cross.

Hampton Drum

I. What chastening pictures about the love our Lord. (V.5-6)

A. Chastening draws the picture of a resilient love.

Hebrews 12:5
And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

1 Corinthians 13:7
Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

B. Chastening draws the picture of a receptive love.

“A father doesn’t love his child when he refuses to correct him. The father loves himself. He doesn’t like the displeasure and inconvenience of having to discipline his child and then listen to him cry.”

Adrian Rogers
II. What chastening proves about the love of our salvation. (V.7-8)

A. Chastening proves the security of our salvation.

Hebrews 12:6

For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

Jesus loves us too much to let us stay the way we are. Patiently, earnestly, with great dedication, He is intimately involved in making our life better.  

Hampton Drum

II. What chastening proves about the love of our salvation. (V.7-8)

A. Chastening proves the security of our salvation.

Hebrews 12:7

If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

2 Samuel 7:14-15

I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: (V.15) But my mercy shall not depart away from him,

“Discipline is not the same thing as punishment. The purpose of discipline is training. God uses discipline to bring us back into a right relationship with Him so that we can receive His love.”  

Henry Backaby

B. Chastening proves the sonship of our salvation.

Hebrews 12:8

But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

Proverbs 13:24

He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.

III. What chastening provides in our sanctification. (V.9-11)

A. Chastening provides parental guidance.

Hebrews 12:9

Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

Proverbs 3:12-13

For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth: even as a father the son in whom he delighteth. (V.13) Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.
“A good father’s correction produces a certain amount of fear, respect, and (eventually) love. Because the heavenly Father makes no mistakes—and knows far more about what His children need to grow and learn than earthly fathers do—His sons and daughters can submit to His loving discipline with full confidence.”

David Jeremiah

B. Chastening provides personal gratification.

Hebrews 12:10-11

For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. (V.11) Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.
Wearing Christ’s Love Well
Sermon #5

I John 4:16-21

And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. (V.17) Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. (V.18) There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. (V.19) We love him, because he first loved us. (V.20) If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? (V.21) And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

Christ is the only one who invites us into His love with no hesitation.

Hampton Drum

When love has come into its full bloom, people give themself to it without reservation or without restraint. It causes a person to grow in confidence, assurance, and gives a person a reason for living. That love will cause that person to forget all past loves and become fully engrossed into that love.

Hampton Drum

I. The foundation of wearing Christ’s love. (V.16-17)

A. He is the author of true love.

1 John 4:16

And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us.

In the Bible God has given the most fertile soil in which love can grow. He never changes so ‘He can be trusted.’ He died to forgive our sins so ‘He can be approached.’ He only speaks the truth so ‘He can be believed.’

Hampton Drum

Don’t forget love is God’s idea.

1 John 4:7-8

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, an knoweth God. (V.8) He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

All that anyone knows about real love is rooted in the character and nature of Almighty God, who is the origin, originator, and orchestrator of all true love. David Jeremiah
B. He is the arbitrator of true love.

1 John 4:16-17

. . . God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. (V.17) Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

II. The fear that He takes from wearing Christ’s love well. (V.18)

A. He shows us the signs of a tranquil love.

1 John 4:18

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear:

Just as light drives darkness from the room so it is with perfect love, it drives fear from the heart.  

How does perfect love cast out fear?

- It casts out fear by being unconditional. There will never be a time that God will ever stop loving you. You may go to Hell not believing; but, you will not go to Hell unloved.
  
  John 3:16  **For God so loved the world,** (The choice he made to love will never be rescinded.)

- It casts out fear by being forgiving; therefore, love can always be refreshed.
  
  1 John 1:9  **If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins,** and **to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** (Forgiveness takes away the by-products of sin: guilt, shame, fear of judgement and fear of separation from God.)

- It casts out fear by not changing; therefore, it is a steadfast love.
  
  Malachi 3:6  **For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.**

- It casts out fear because Christ has made provisions to love us forever.
  
  Jeremiah 31:3  **The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.** (A believer does not have to fear the past, present or the future because Christ’s love is already there.)
B. He shows us the signs of a tormented love.

1 John 4:18

. . . because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

The devil seeks to add fear to your love so that you never actually experience perfect love.

• The devil injects fear into love by causing us to neglect repentance.
• The devil injects fear into love by causing us to mix sin with our love. (‘lust,’ ‘he is just using me,’ ‘lying,’ ‘I can’t trust them,’ ‘perversion,’ ‘I feel guilty when we love and we’re not married.’)
• The devil injects fear into love by causing us to reach for love in the wrong way. (Betraying one person to love another, inflating your abilities to deceive a person into loving you, making someone jealous so they will love you.)
• The devil injects fear into love by making us think we are going to lose love.

So beautiful you can’t leave it, so fickle you can’t understand it, so free you can’t trust it, and so fleeting you can’t become secure in it. Fearful love is torment.

Hampton Drum

III. The fellowship of wearing Christ’s love well. (V.19-22)

A. The response that we give to live out His love.

1 John 4:19

We love him, because he first loved us.

“It is not our love for Him, but His perfect love for us that will cast out our fear. The question is not “Are you brave enough to face your fears?” The question is “Do you trust His love enough?”

Adrian Rogers

B. The responsibility of living out His love.

1 John 4:20-21

If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? (V.21) And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

This verse tells us that the profound thing about perfect love is that the more we practice it the more we grow in it and understand it.

Hampton Drum