

Christian Love

Genesis 44:1-34

Halifax: 25 December 2016, 10:30 AM

Introduction:

Today as we continue our sermon series in Genesis, we have come to a wonderful chapter in which we are privileged to see the fruit of God's work in His people!

- In short, how God transformed Joseph's brothers from men of hate to men of amazing love—love that we might call *Christian* love—because Christ is the foundation of this love.

Joseph's brothers did not exhibit this love for many years.

- We have seen how they hated their brother Joseph because he was righteous and they were evil.
 - And because their father Jacob accepted Joseph, but did not accept them.
 - And because God had revealed through Joseph's prophetic dreams that they would all bow down to Joseph.
- We saw how their resentment toward Joseph became so deep that they couldn't even speak a peaceable word to him.
 - And then the day came when they took hold of him to murder him—but then decided instead to sell him to some slave traders who were going to Egypt so they could get rid of him and make twenty pieces of silver.
 - We saw how they returned to their father with Joseph's special garment which they said they had found and which they had dipped in blood to make it appear that Joseph had been attacked by a wild animal.
 - By this, they brought unspeakable sorrow to their father; and they had lived with this wicked deed on their record for 22 years without repentance.

But a couple of weeks ago, we saw how God, in the marvellous way He works,

- finally brought them to face the guilt that they had been denying.
 - First, He humbled them by means of a famine that made it necessary for them to go to Egypt which was the only place that had grain.
 - And although this was not yet known to them, the reason Egypt had bread in the famine was because their brother Joseph had, by God, been enabled to prophesy of the famine and had been made the vizier of Egypt, and was leading the nation through the famine according to God's revealed wisdom.
 - The brothers had to go to Joseph for the bread of life, just as we, when we see that we do not have the spiritual bread of life, must humble ourselves and go to Jesus—the only one who has the bread of eternal life.
 - But when the brothers got there and met the vizier of Egypt, whom they, of course did not recognise as their brother Joseph,
 - God used Joseph—or Zaphnath-Paneah, to test them.
 - He did not tell them that he was Joseph, but spoke harshly to them to test them.
 - He accused them of being spies, but they insisted that they were ten brothers, and that their youngest brother was at home with their aged father.

- Joseph kept one of them as a hostage, and sent the other nine back to their father, insisting that he would not receive them again unless they verified their story by bringing their youngest brother with them when they returned.
 - Here they were, forced to return to their father without one of their brothers, just as they had returned so many years before without Joseph.
 - It was deliberately designed to remind them of what they had done.
 - They were all being threatened with the slavery that they had delivered Joseph into.
- God used this to call to convict them of their sin against to Joseph.
 - They remembered his desperate cries and they remembered how heartless they had been.
 - In Gen 42:21, it says: **Then they said to one another, “We *are* truly guilty concerning our brother, for we saw the anguish of his soul when he pleaded with us, and we would not hear; therefore this distress has come upon us.”**
 - They knew that they were guilty before God.
 - Many of you, by God’s grace, have come to see your own guilt for sin.
- And then when they went home and told their father Jacob that they must take Benjamin and return to Egypt to deliver Simeon, Jacob at first refused...
 - for fear that something would happen to Benjamin.
 - You see, Jacob had wrongly taken four wives, and the only one he really loved was Rachel who had died, and the only sons that he had had by her were Joseph and Benjamin—so Jacob was extremely protective of Benjamin.
 - But when the famine continued and the whole family was in need of more grain, Jacob finally allowed his sons to take Benjamin, but only after Judah, the one among the brothers who was assuming leadership, had promised to be surety for him...
 - that is, that he swore that he would be responsible for Benjamin’s safe conduct and would bear the guilt before his father if he did not bring Benjamin back.
- Last week, we saw how the brothers returned to Egypt with Benjamin and were warmly received by the great Zaphnath-Panneah.
 - He even invited them into his own house and provided a great feast for them in which he showed special favour to Benjamin by giving him five times the portion that he gave the others.
 - But he still did not tell them that he was Joseph and they had no idea that he was Joseph—because there was still need for them to be tested.
- Though they had acknowledged their guilt concerning Joseph, the question remained: Had they really repented or was the same resentment still there toward Benjamin?
 - In our reading today from Genesis 44, we see how Joseph, likely as led by the Holy Spirit, tested them...
 - But even more importantly we see how they pass the test!
 - We see how God had so worked in Joseph’s brothers that they had been transformed from men who hated their brother (and their father) to men who loved their brother and their father!

Please give careful attention as I read to you, starting in Genesis 44 verse 1.

Genesis 44:1-34: And he commanded the steward of his house, saying, "Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put each man's money in the mouth of his sack. ² Also put my cup, the silver cup, in the mouth of the sack of the youngest, and his grain money." So he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken. ³ As soon as the morning dawned, the men were sent away, they and their donkeys. ⁴ When they had gone out of the city, *and* were not *yet* far off, Joseph said to his steward, "Get up, follow the men; and when you overtake them, say to them, 'Why have you repaid evil for good?' ⁵ *Is* not this *the one* from which my lord drinks, and with which he indeed practices divination? You have done evil in so doing.'" ⁶ So he overtook them, and he spoke to them these same words. ⁷ And they said to him, "Why does my lord say these words? Far be it from us that your servants should do such a thing. ⁸ Look, we brought back to you from the land of Canaan the money which we found in the mouth of our sacks. How then could we steal silver or gold from your lord's house? ⁹ With whomever of your servants it is found, let him die, and we also will be my lord's slaves." ¹⁰ And he said, "Now also *let* it *be* according to your words; he with whom it is found shall be my slave, and you shall be blameless." ¹¹ Then each man speedily let down his sack to the ground, and each opened his sack. ¹² So he searched. He began with the oldest and left off with the youngest; and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. ¹³ Then they tore their clothes, and each man loaded his donkey and returned to the city. ¹⁴ So Judah and his brothers came to Joseph's house, and he *was* still there; and they fell before him on the ground. ¹⁵ And Joseph said to them, "What deed *is* this you have done? Did you not know that such a man as I can certainly practice divination?" ¹⁶ Then Judah said, "What shall we say to my lord? What shall we speak? Or how shall we clear ourselves? God has found out the iniquity of your servants; here we are, my lord's slaves, both we and *he* also with whom the cup was

found." ¹⁷ But he said, "Far be it from me that I should do so; the man in whose hand the cup was found, he shall be my slave. And as for you, go up in peace to your father." ¹⁸ Then Judah came near to him and said: "O my lord, please let your servant speak a word in my lord's hearing, and do not let your anger burn against your servant; for you *are* even like Pharaoh. ¹⁹ My lord asked his servants, saying, 'Have you a father or a brother?' ²⁰ And we said to my lord, 'We have a father, an old man, and a child of *his* old age, *who is* young; his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother's children, and his father loves him.' ²¹ Then you said to your servants, 'Bring him down to me, that I may set my eyes on him.' ²² And we said to my lord, 'The lad cannot leave his father, for *if* he should leave his father, *his father* would die.' ²³ But you said to your servants, 'Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you shall see my face no more.' ²⁴ So it was, when we went up to your servant my father, that we told him the words of my lord. ²⁵ And our father said, 'Go back *and* buy us a little food.' ²⁶ But we said, 'We cannot go down; if our youngest brother is with us, then we will go down; for we may not see the man's face unless our youngest brother *is* with us.' ²⁷ Then your servant my father said to us, 'You know that my wife bore me two sons; ²⁸ and the one went out from me, and I said, 'Surely he is torn to pieces'; and I have not seen him since. ²⁹ But if you take this one also from me, and calamity befalls him, you shall bring down my gray hair with sorrow to the grave.' ³⁰ Now therefore, when I come to your servant my father, and the lad *is* not with us, since his life is bound up in the lad's life, ³¹ it will happen, when he sees that the lad *is* not *with us*, that he will die. So your servants will bring down the gray hair of your servant our father with sorrow to the grave. ³² For your servant became surety for the lad to my father, saying, 'If I do not bring him *back* to you, then I shall bear the blame before my father forever.' ³³ Now therefore, please let your servant remain instead of the lad as a slave to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brothers. ³⁴ For how shall I go up to my father if the lad *is* not with me, lest perhaps I see the evil that would come upon my father?"

May the LORD bless to us the reading of His holy Word.

I. What a great test this was!

A. God gives us tests like this to see if our repentance is real!

1. It is one thing to feel guilty about what we have done.
 - The brothers had suppressed their guilt, as people so often do, for years and years, but as I reminded you in the introduction,
 - They had, through their troubles in Egypt, come to confess how greatly they had sinned.
2. But this is not the same thing as full repentance.
 - True repentance occurs not only when you see how wicked you have been, nor even that you are guilty before God and worthy to be punished by Him,
 - but when you actually, by God's grace, turn away from your sin so that when given similar circumstances, you do not do the same thing!
3. And that is what this test is all about.
 - It is a test to see if they want to get rid of Benjamin.
 - Was the old resentment toward Joseph still in them?
 - What would they do if given an easy way to get rid of Benjamin?
 - Have they really been changed or not?

B. You can see how a great temptation is put before them to abandon Benjamin.

1. They were surely feeling very happy as they returned to their father, having been so well received by the vizier or Egypt,
 - having the money they had sought to return, a generous supply of grain, and both their brother Simeon (who had been released to them) and their brother Benjamin about whom their father had been so concerned.
 - They have no idea that Joseph's steward has, at Joseph's instruction, put Joseph's silver cup in Benjamin's sack to test their love for Benjamin.
 - The sense of success that they now had makes the temptation even more tempting—once you feel that your troubles are finally over, you want to keep it that way—and the easy thing to do would be to just abandon Benjamin.
- So they are going happily down the road, congratulating themselves...
2. But not long after they start out, Joseph's steward overtakes them and brings upon them the bizarre accusation that they have stolen his master's silver cup!
 - a. He accuses them of being extremely ungrateful—and foolish...
 - How could they return evil for the good that they had been shown?
 - How could they think that Zaphnath-Panneah would not miss the cup that he regularly drinks from?
 - Did they not recognise as well that he was a prophet who was able to uncover secrets?
 - Verse 5 is probably better translated to say, "Is not this the one from which my lord drinks, and concerning which he would surely obtain revelation from God?"

- From the evidence we have, the Egyptians did not use cups for divination (uncovering secrets) until later times...so translators have read this in...
 - What's more, it is very unlikely that Joseph, who had been so clear when he interpreted dreams that true interpretations are from God,
 - would have resorted to using cups for divination.
 - Besides that, as verse 15 also indicates, the whole point is that they were foolish to think they could escape without being detected...
 - If this was a cup used for divination and they had taken it, how could Joseph have used it for divination?
- Whatever the case...
- b. The brothers, being innocent of this crime quickly defend themselves and confidently assert that they will all become slaves to Zaphnath-Panneah if the cup is found with them (v. 9) and that if any of them have the cup, that one ought to die for doing such a wicked thing.
 - But the steward insists that it will only be required of them that the one who has taken it should become the slave of Zaphnath-Panneah.
 - c. And then in a dramatic scene, he begins the search with the sack of oldest and works his way all the way down to the sack of Benjamin, the youngest!
 - And of course the cup is found in his sack!
 - The brothers immediately tore their clothes—already a great change from when Joseph was taken and only their father tore his clothes.
 - They were secretly rejoicing to have gotten rid of Joseph—but now they are deeply distressed about Benjamin!
 - “Not Benjamin!”
3. But you see how the temptation is put before them.
 - a. Two times, they are told that they can go free—only Benjamin who had the cup in his sack must suffer.
 - 1) First, they are told that by the steward.
 - They might have headed on their way with their grain and their money and with Simeon and let the steward take Benjamin.
 - They could have told their father that Benjamin had been accused of taking the silver cup of Zaphnath-Panneah and that it had been found with him—and so he had been taken into slavery.
 - It would be true in way, but it would be wrong for them to have suspected Benjamin of doing such a thing when all knew how their money had been put into their sacks.
 - But to their credit, they do not do forsake Benjamin.
 - They go with Benjamin and all appear with him before Zaphnath-Panneah—they show their solidarity in standing with their brother.
 - And when they appear before Joseph, Judah even confesses their sin... that God has found out their iniquity (v. 16).

- Although they had not taken the cup, Judah knows that they had done such atrocities to their brother Joseph that now they are being called to bear the punishment of it.
 - So he does not even try to put up a defense.
- As they had delivered Joseph into slavery in Egypt, now they must be delivered into slavery in Egypt.
 - They will stand with their brother Benjamin.
- This is a very right way to look at things.
 - We have been punished far less than we deserve, so if it should happen that we should be punished when we do not deserve it, we have no reason to complain—God has found out our iniquity.
- But you see the temptation—if they had at all wanted to get rid of Benjamin, it would have been very easy to do so—
 - Even if they had simply been indifferent to him, they could have easily headed home and left him with the steward.
 - But instead they all go before Zaphnath-Panneah.
- 2) And then they have the temptation to leave Benjamin and go free brought to them again—only this time by Zaphnath-Panneah himself.
 - He even makes it sound enticing when he says, **“And as for you, go up in peace to your father.”**
 - It may be that Joseph had planned to reveal himself to Benjamin after the brothers had departed.
 - He could see that they had changed—they are sorry about Benjamin and they showed solidarity in standing with him...
 - but now, he probably thought they would surely depart.
- b. But they refuse to depart.
 - This was surely impressive to Joseph.
 - But now something even more impressive occurs—something that could only be accounted for by the gracious working of God!

II. Judah steps forth to offer himself as a slave in place of his brother!

- Remember, this is the man who initiated the sale of Joseph to the slave traders!
 - And this is the man who had also taken a Canaanite wife and had brought forth sons that were so wicked that God had killed them—and then had mistreated his daughter-in-law.
- A. And now look at what he says in this moving speech!
 1. First, he steps forward and speaks respectfully to Zaphnath-Panneah.
 - He says, (v. 18): **“O my lord, please let your servant speak a word in my lord’s hearing, and do not let your anger burn against your servant; for you are even like Pharaoh.”**
 - He speaks so as to show this man that there is no impertinence in him.
 - He is making an earnest appeal with respect to his high position.

2. Next he explains the special love that his father Jacob has for Benjamin.
 - Without even a hint that Zaphnath-Panneah had been unjust to them,
 - He reminds Zaphnath-Panneah how he had required them to bring Benjamin.
 - He reminds him how they had explained that Benjamin was the son of their father's old age.
 - He even explains in v. 20 (with tenderness instead of jealousy), how Benjamin is the only other son of his mother whose brother had died, and how his father has a special love for him!
 - What a change!
 - The very thing that had made Judah jealous and resentful is now the thing that causes him to plead for Benjamin's deliverance!
 - That is how you can know that the Lord has changed you!
 - When the favour of God upon another person that used to make you jealous and resentful, now makes you want to show love to them for God the Father's sake!
 - When instead of being resentful that Jesus is the only one of us all who is truly righteous, and that nobody comes to the Father but through Him, you rejoice that it is so!
 - When instead of being resentful that God has given someone else a very blessed life, you want to bless the one God has blessed.
 - He reminds Zaphnath-Panneah how they had objected to his request to bring Benjamin because (v. 22), **if he should leave his father, his father would die.**
 - He explains how this special love that Jacob has for Benjamin caused Jacob to refuse to let Benjamin go until they pled earnestly with him.
 - With tenderness, he quotes his father's words: v. 27-29: **"Then your servant my father said to us, 'You know that my wife bore me two sons; ²⁸ and the one went out from me, and I said, "Surely he is torn to pieces"; and I have not seen him since. ²⁹ But if you take this one also from me, and calamity befalls him, you shall bring down my gray hair with sorrow to the grave.'**"
3. And Judah declares that he cannot not bear to return to his father Jacob without Benjamin, and that for two reasons...
 - a. First, because he fears that his father will indeed be brought down to his grave in sorrow...
 - b. And secondly, because he, Judah, had made himself surety for Benjamin, saying (v. 32) **'If I do not bring him back to you, then I shall bear the blame before my father forever.'**
 - c. Judah's great love for his father and for his brother is very evident here.
 - He has been completely transformed...
 - It is a very moving appeal...

➤ But now something that is almost unbelievable happens.
 4. Judah offers to switch places with Benjamin and bear Benjamin's guilt!

- In verse 33 & 34, he says: **“Now therefore, please let your servant remain instead of the lad as a slave to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brothers. ³⁴ For how shall I go up to my father if the lad is not with me, lest perhaps I see the evil that would come upon my father?”**
- He is going to suffer a lifetime of slavery instead of Benjamin because of his great love for his father!

B. This love is so beautiful.

1. It is a love that actually puts other people first...
 - A love that says, “your happiness is more important to me than my own.”
 - It is a love that actually makes personal sacrifices for the sake of others.
 - It is a love that says, let me suffer instead of you—I will take your affliction and you can go free.
 - It is that love that truly rejoices in the good of your neighbour instead of resenting his success...
 - A love that truly weeps with him in his troubles and sacrifices to relieve them.
2. It is so opposite to what we are by nature.
 - That self-seeking mentality that we are plagued with...
 - That love that values others only to the degree that they benefit us or please us.
 - The selfishness that looks at others as existing for my own pleasure...
 - The way a man, lusting after a woman, looks at that woman.
 - “You exist to please me, to satisfy me, to fulfill me, to enrich me.”
 - It is similar to the way a selfish employee looks at his employer—and the way the employer looks at his employees...
 - both suppose the other exists for them—for their sake.
 - And I tell you that even parents often look at their children like this and children at their parents.
 - They don’t really love them or care for them.
3. This love that Judah exhibits is like the love of Jesus Christ...
 - a. He saw that His heavenly Father loved us so much that He wanted to redeem us—even though we had become a wretched hating people...
 - And that He loved us so much that He called upon Him (Jesus, His Son) to come into the world as a man to redeem us.
 - And that meant that He would have to bear the curse for us...
 - To take the blame for the wrongs that we have done...
 - To descend into the very depths of Hell as one cut off and cursed by the Father...that we might be liberated.
 - b. And while God’s Son might have resented the Father and been jealous of us...
 - He might have said, “But they are wicked and I am righteous. Why do you show favour to them when I have always been with you?
 - “Why should I suffer for these unworthy wretches?”

- c. But instead, because of His great love for the Father who so loved us, He (Phil 2:6-8) **who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God** [His proper abode was in highest glory], ⁷ **made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.** ⁸ **And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.**
 - He descended into that infinite pit of God's wrath, which only He as the Son of God was able to receive, for the Father's sake and for our sake.
 - This is unspeakable love.

TRANS> It is the love that broke Joseph and caused him to reveal himself—but that is for next week...

- This week, we want to look a little more at this great love.

III. My dear friends, this is the love that is to forever characterise God's kingdom!

A. This love is the foundation of Christ's kingdom.

1. It is the love, as we have just seen, that brought Jesus Christ here that He might die on the cross for us.
 - He takes our place in hell so that we might be set free!
 - If He had not done this, there would be no kingdom of righteousness.
 - It was because of this that He was exalted and given the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess, "Jesus Christ is LORD," to the glory of God the Father.
2. It reveals not only the depth of the love that God the Father and God the Son and God the Spirit have for us,
 - But also the depth of the love that God the Son has for God the Father.
 - The Son obeyed the Father and did all of this because of the love that He has for Him.
 - He showed us what true love looks like—and it was that same love that caused Him to take these measures to redeem us.

➤ This love is how the kingdom of heaven got its start.

B. And it is this same love that Christ calls us have for one other in His kingdom.

- This beautiful love that truly does care about other people so much that it sacrifices for them.
 1. In John 13, just before He went to the cross, Jesus called us to live in this love:
 - **John 13:34-35: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵ By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."**
 - The LORD had told us all along to love our neighbour as ourselves.
 - But this commandment was new because now Jesus is telling us to love each other as He has loved us.
 - This is how we are to be known as His disciples in the world.
 - The world is to look at us and say, "See how they love one another!"

2. It all grows out of beholding Jesus our Master's beautiful love for us.
 - Now that Jesus has been revealed as crucified, the apostle says,
 - **2Co 3:18: But we all, with unveiled face** [because Jesus is fully revealed, there is no veil], **beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.**
 - By looking at Christ, who is revealed as crucified, we see the love we are called to have...
 - And we are transformed into the actual possession and exercise of that love...
 - We learn, by God's grace, to live that way—to love like Jesus—so that other people truly do matter—
 - so that they *really* matter!
3. Can you imagine the beauty of a kingdom like that?
 - A kingdom where people really do care about each other—really and truly?
 - A kingdom where the love is so deep that we would actually take each other's place in suffering?
 - Where, like Judah, we say, "Let me suffer in his place."

TRANS> That is what we are called to do!

- That is what Jesus set us free to do by going to the cross for us.
- That is what we come into His kingdom to be restored to—that beautiful love.

C. And the good news is that God is at work in you to produce this love.

1. First, let me say, that even though it is not yet perfected in you who are in Christ today...
 - as you certainly know—how dreadfully short we come...
 - But even though it is not perfected in us, it is perfected in our Saviour who represents us.
 - The LORD looks at the entire kingdom all together, and because Jesus is there representing us, we are not condemned even though we still come short.
 - The Father is delighted with the love He sees in Christ, and He knows that that same love will be perfected in us...
 - It is there now in Christ...
 - And in us in seed form as those born by the Spirit...
 - And in us to be perfected when we see Christ at the last day and become like Him.
2. But even now, if you are in Christ, God has begun to form this love in you.
 - a. As He worked to form it in Judah, so He works to form it in you.
 - 1) We saw back in chapter 38 how the Lord began to change Judah when he was humbled on account of his wickedness to his daughter-in-law...
 - He confessed then and there that she was more righteous than he was—and he meant it—he was starting to change.

- 2) And then we saw with his first trip to Egypt how God began to show him and his brothers how far they were from righteousness...
 - We saw how they confessed that they were truly guilty—finally after twenty-two years, they were truly admitting it...
 - That is what the LORD does when He begins to work in you—
 - He shows you clearly how wretched you are—He breaks you—you see how selfish you have been—how little you care about others.
 - 3) And then we see how the LORD through affliction brought Judah into a place of testing...with Benjamin being falsely accused...
 - And we see how Judah was transformed so that he sincerely offered to be punished for the rest of his life in Benjamin's place.
 - It was the LORD who transformed him, and it is the LORD who will transform you if you are in Jesus Christ.
- b. I quoted from Philippians 2 before where it tells us about the great love of Jesus Christ that caused Him to become obedient to the point of death on the cross...
- 1) In the context of that passage, the LORD is calling us to have the mind of Christ—
 - to, like Him, esteem others as better than ourselves.
 - to look out not only for our own interests, but also for the interests of others—for the interests of our father Jacob or our brother Benjamin...
 - 2) And we seem so far from that, but there is a great encouragement...
 - that even as God worked in Judah, so He is at work in us.
 - In Philippians 2:12-13—after calling us to have the mind of Christ in esteeming other better than ourselves, it says: **Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³ for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.**
- c. Take heart Christian!
- 1) If you are truly in Christ, God has already granted you initial repentance.
 - Already, you have been born again by God's Spirit...
 - The Spirit has convicted you of your sin, He has given you desire to please God, He has shown you the beauty of Christ, and He has changed you so that you love your brothers.
 - There has been a manifest change as 1 John 3:14 tells us: **We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death.**
 - 2) And now He is at work in you, both to will and to do for His good pleasure.
 - He will chasten you when you need to be chastened...
 - He will test you by bringing opportunities to reach out to those around you in love—to sacrifice for them.
 - And He will give you the strength to do it more and more.

- 3) And He will fully complete this work, as it says in 1 John 3:2: **Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.**

Conclusion

What a magnificent kingdom the kingdom of Christ is!

- Its great characteristic is love.
 - It takes people like us who are full of selfishness and turns us into people who are like Judah—ready to lay down our lives for others.
 - Oh that God would revive us so that we might begin to live in this love!
 - How beautiful that would be!
 - How beautiful our Saviour is in whom this love is fully perfected.
 - Please stand to give thanks and to plead with Him to perfect this love in us.