

## Blind Faith; Blind Love – First Peter 1:8

### I. Introduction:

- A. Peter was writing this epistle to Christians who were living in the Roman provinces east of Greece and northwest of Israel. Many of them were Jews.
1. They had become Christians because God graciously revealed their Messiah to them and gave them faith to trust the message of the Gospel.
  2. I don't know if I have mentioned the fact, but many of these people had been evangelized by the Apostle Paul, not by the man writing this letter.
  3. And outside the *Book of Acts*, the only time Peter mentions Paul, it is with the utmost respect.
  4. In his second epistle he says: *"Our beloved brother Paul has written to you, sharing the wisdom of God."*
  5. Had these people ever actually met Peter, the writer of this epistle?
  6. The familiarity seems to suggest they had, but there is no scriptural proof.
  7. Neither had they ever laid eyes upon their Messiah and Saviour, Christ Jesus.
  8. In this, there is no difference between them and us.
- B. There is nothing deep, confusing or misleading about anything in the first part of our verse.
1. *"Whom"* refers to the person in the preceding reference: *"Jesus Christ."*
  2. And there are no surprises in the word *"love."* It is **not** referring to **affection**, or **lust**, or *"not hating."*
  3. *"Having not seen"* speaks of the use of the eyes as you might expect.
    - a. It is not: not seeing in the sense of understanding or perceiving Him in some spiritual way.
  4. And *"believing"* speaks of putting faith in something.
- C. Despite the simplicity of the words, the message Peter is sharing is exciting and powerful.
1. In fact, I am not sure that I can do it justice.
  2. Paraphrasing, he said, *"Having not laid your eyes upon the Saviour, ye love Him and have faith in Him, rejoicing today in this troublesome world, knowing that eventually ye will receive the end of your salvation."*
  3. *"Whom having not seen ye LOVE."*

### II. What is mechanism behind love? Why do people love things?

- A. Here is where I'm leaving the comfort of the shallow water, getting into depths which I don't know very well.
1. If it is not sight which causes us to love the Lord, or anything for that matter, what is it?
    - a. For instance can we **will**, **demand** or **force** ourselves to love?
    - b. Is it genuine love if we have to convince ourselves to love?
  2. If is not, what do we do with those statements from the Old Testament which were reiterated by Jesus?
    3. *"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. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."*
- B. Think about a tiny baby. Do we have to teach or command an eight or ten month infant to love her mother?
1. Doesn't it come naturally over time, and with a little circumstantial help?
    - a. It seems to me, most often, that infant begins to love because she is loved.
    - b. Isn't love a learned behavior? Maybe I'm all wet, but bear with me for a few moments.
  2. Because she is loved, she is fed, kept warm, cuddled, kept clean and a dozen other things babies enjoy.
  3. Through them that infant learns to appreciate and love the source of those good things: her mother.
  4. Isn't it true that very often we learn to love because we experience love?
- C. A man may be drawn to a beautiful woman, and his attraction, perhaps even his lust, turns into affection and over time it becomes a love that is willing to demand nothing but willing to sacrifice everything for her.
1. On the other hand that woman may think that man is homely, childish, and irresponsible.
  2. But his love is persistent, and gradually it overcomes all the logic which first told her to run.
  3. Love between two people may not begin at precisely the same moment, but their loves feed off each other.

- D. Reversing the question: Why does that mother love her baby?
1. Very often her love begins before she sees his face; that is: before he is born.
  2. It might be argued that despite not locking eyes, she knows her son for months before his birth.
  3. Despite not actually seeing their children mothers learn to love their babies.
  4. Why does the young woman, who is planning on putting her baby up for adoption, change her mind when he is born? It is due to unseen love unseen – until the last moment.
- E. Have there ever been two people who began to love each other through writing letters?
1. I know for a fact that letter-writing can keep existing love burning.
  2. But has anyone kindled or learned to love through the written words of another?
  3. Isn't that exactly what took place in the hearts of the people to whom Peter was writing?
    - a. I'm not speaking of the love which the diaspora, the scattered strangers, had for the Apostle Peter.
    - b. I'm talking about their love for Christ Jesus and the Heavenly Father.
  4. Beside the things which God does for all the people of His creation generally, He has done something special to those whose hearts He stimulates.
  5. He has revealed Himself in the pages of the lengthy love-letter called *"the Word of God."*
  6. And He has revealed Himself to them through the ministry of the Spirit.
- F. The Apostle John deals with some of this in his first epistle.
1. Please turn to ***1 John 4:16: "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us."***
    - a. How did we know of the love which God has for us? He told us.
    - b. We probably never would have known of that love, if He had not written to us.
    - c. We can learn a lot about the Lord by looking around us, but we can't know His love that way.
    - d. By God's grace we have learned of God's love, and we have believed the fact that He loves us.
  2. John goes on: ***"God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."***
    - a. Would anyone have guessed that God is love, if He hadn't told us?
    - b. "Herein is our love made perfect."***
    - c. How is our love made perfect? Through the God-given understanding that He loves us.
    - d. I don't think any fallen human being can love anything perfectly until he experiences the love of God.
  3. From here John talks about the boldness we may have through love, and that if we love God properly we will love other sinners like ourselves.
  4. And then we get to one of the most important and profound statements ever made on this subject (***1 John 4:19: "We love him, BECAUSE he first loved us."***)
  5. God loved each and every individual Christian before the foundation of the world.
    - a. Because of that love, He chose to beget and to eventually adopt those individuals into His family.
    - b. But He also had to deal with our dead spirits and wicked hearts.
    - c. And in this regard the Lord Jesus Himself has said of Himself: ***"Greater love hath no man than this, than that a man lay down His life for his friends (those he loves)."***
  6. When we, by faith perceive Christ's love for us, even though we have not seen Him with our natural eyes, a reciprocating love is kindled in us for Him.
- G. Again, how is it that we love Christ whom we have not yet seen with our eyes?
1. It begins with, ***"We love him, because he first loved us."***
  2. For a great long time, we were those unborn again babes, laying in the womb of the will & love of the Lord.
  3. But now, ***"You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins."***
    - a. "And (he) hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."***
    - b. "But now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."***
  4. No wonder we are filled with love towards this One we have not yet seen with our physical eyes.

H. Today our sight is of the **faith variety**.

1. *“Whom having not see, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet **BELIEVING**, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”*
2. Notice that Peter’s reference to *“love”* **precedes** the word *“believing.”*
3. Which comes first in the actual reality of time?
4. Isn’t there a sense in which we believe on Christ only after we have begun to love Him?
5. In order to trust the Lord, we have to know Him to some degree, and to know Him is to love Him.
6. Perhaps this is only foolish speculation on my part.

I. Whether my sequence is accurate, the fact is that those who have been born again – those who are recipients of spiritual heart transplants **always** love the Lord.

1. I am not going to say that we love the Lord sufficiently or as well as we should.
2. I’m not implying that we shouldn’t love the Lord more and more earnestly than we do.
3. I’m not saying that I love the Lord as much as you do. We **all** need to pray for more love.
4. But love for Christ is a natural characteristic of the child of God’s family.
5. If you have no love for the Lord Jesus, then you are **not** a **Christian**.

### III. A second question for this evening is: What does love do?

A. It is hardly anything more than a question for you ponder for a few minutes, because the answer could take us to a dozen additional messages.

B. What does love do?

1. Among other things, it turns selfish, stingy hearts into giving, flowing, fountains of blessing.
2. True lovers naturally want to give to the recipients of their love.
3. For example, the person who loves his country is willing to serve his country. I have heard of people with Ukrainian blood returning from various places in the world to defend their homeland out of love.
4. The person who loves a particular sport may spend thousands of dollars for tickets, jerseys and memorabilia related to that sport or their particular team.
5. And the husband, who loves as he should, should long to give to his wife special gifts to make her happy.

C. What does love do? Ask that infant I spoke of earlier.

1. She can’t get a job to support her mother. She has no money with which to buy presents for her.
2. She can’t wash the dishes, clean her room or do her own laundry.
3. But she can cherish her mother. She can smile at her.
  - a. She can make the wonderful sounds of infant satisfaction.
4. That baby may be demanding at times, but at other times, she can be... loving.

D. Was Peter thinking of any specific proofs when he spoke of those people’s love for their Saviour?

1. He doesn’t mention church attendance or love for the Word of God.
  - a. He doesn’t talk about tithing. There is nothing said about witnessing or praising the Lord.
  - b. John may have referred to love for Christ being expressed through love for the Lord’s brethren, but Peter doesn’t do that.
2. But he does hint at two things: *“Whom having not see, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet **BELIEVING**, ye **REJOICE** with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”*
3. The love we have for Christ should strengthen our faith and intensify our joy.

- E. Notice the tense of the verb Peter uses; he speaks of *“believing.”*
1. If I’m not mistaken that is called a *“present participle.”* It is not speaking of the past but of the present.
  2. There had been a day when these people to whom Peter was writing, did not have faith in Christ.
    - a. But the gospel was given to them, and the Holy Spirit opened their hearts to see the love of God which was expressed in the crucifixion.
    - b. And by the grace of God they put their faith in the Lord, trusting Him to cleanse them from their sins.
  3. But Peter here is not talking about what they trusted at the time of their salvation.
    - a. He is talking about their current faith.
    - b. He is talking about an effect of their love which was as glorifying, if not more glorifying, to the Saviour than their initial repentance and faith.
  4. They were still trusting, still believing, still listening to Christ’s voice, because they were in love with Him.
  5. And it was producing joy which was unspeakable and full of glory to the Lord.
  6. It was producing a joy which superceded the trials and problems of their earthly lives.

#### IV. Conclusion

- A. I’ve given this message the title *“Blind Faith; Blind Love.”*
1. There is such a thing as blind love; at least blind in the sense of physical sight.
  2. The Christian doesn’t need physical sight to know the Saviour; we have other means.
  3. And the combination of those providential means and blessings just add and intensify our love for Him.
- B. But when it comes to faith: there is no such thing as the blind variety.
1. Not only is our faith based upon the very real revelation of God through His word.
  2. But perhaps equally important is that our faith feeds on the love of God towards us and our love for Him.
- C. In God’s salvation, *“ye greatly rejoice...”* awaiting the *“praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.”*