

**2020 Fall College Conference
NY, NJ & E. Canada**

FAITH, LOVE AND HOPE FOR THE LORD'S COMING

Message Three

Love for the Lord's Appearing

Scripture Reading: Rev. 3:11; 2 Tim. 4:8; Luke 17:32-36

- I. The Lord's appearing, His coming back, is a warning, an encouragement, and an incentive to us. We should love it and look forward to it with earnest expectation and joy—2 Tim. 4:8; Rev. 3:11; 2 Cor. 11:2:**
- A. Loving the Lord's appearing and loving the Lord Himself are inseparable—1 Cor. 2:9; 2 Tim. 4:8.
 - B. If we are waiting for the Lord to come, we should be those who love His appearing—1 Thes. 1:10; 2 Tim. 4:8.
 - C. Loving the Lord's appearing is in contrast to loving the present age—2 Tim. 4:8, 10:
 - 1. In the last days, we must be lovers of God and be delivered from having an outward form of godliness—2 Tim. 3:1-5.
 - 2. Whatever one loves, his whole heart, even his entire being, is set on and possessed by. This is crucial! Whether there would be a day of glory in the church's victory or grievous days of the church's decline depends altogether on what kind of lovers we are.
 - 3. A sign of the Lord's second coming is that "because lawlessness will be multiplied, the love of many will grow cold"—Matt. 24:12.
 - D. The degradation of the church begins with our leaving the first love toward the Lord. Nothing but love can keep us in a proper relationship with the Lord—Rev. 2:4.
- II. Faith and love are two inseparable, excellent virtues of the believers in Christ—1 Tim. 1:14; 2 Tim. 1:13; Gal. 5:6; Titus 3:15; 1 Cor. 13:13; 1 Thes. 1:3:**
- A. Through faith we receive the Lord, and through love we may enjoy the Lord whom we have received—John 1:12; 14:21; 21:15-17:
 - 1. Our love for the Lord must be absolute—Matt. 10:37; 1 John 2:15; Rev. 12:11.
 - 2. We should not love anyone or anything above Him; whatever we love more than the Lord is an idol—1 John 5:21.
 - 3. "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 with 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.
 - B. This wonderful faith and this super-excellent love are out of the Triune God, who desires to be joined to us to be our everything—Eph. 3:16-19a.
 - C. Love is for the believers to minister and transmit the Triune God to their fellow believers so that, in such a wonderful and powerful faith, all the believers may love one another with divine, transcendent love and live a corporate life in Christ.
 - D. Such faith and love are the rich grace given to us in Christ by the Triune God, not only to be the motivating power and expression of our spiritual life but also to become our breastplate, which covers and protects the vital parts of our being—1 Tim. 1:14; 1 Thes. 5:8.
- III. When we contact this Triune God through prayer and by looking to Him, by means of our spirit, He infuses Himself into us in many ways to become the faith within us toward Him and the love outside of us toward those who belong to Him—Heb. 12:2.**

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is it crucial for us not only to love the Lord but also to love His appearing? How does loving the Lord's appearing affect the way we live our daily life?
2. What is the relationship between faith and love and how does it preserve us from decline?

Ministry Excerpt:

Faith and love are two inseparable, excellent virtues of the believers in Christ. Faith is given to us by God ([note 1⁵ in 2 Pet. 1](#)) that by it we may receive Christ ([John 1:12](#)), the embodiment of the Triune God ([Col. 2:9](#)), and thereby enter into the Triune God and be joined to Him as one, having Him as our life, life supply, and everything. Love issues out of such a wonderful 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, that the Triune God—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—may have a glorious expression. Faith is for appreciating, substantiating, and receiving the unlimited riches of the Triune God; love is for experiencing, enjoying, and living out the immeasurably rich Triune God. Faith is for the believers to be joined to the Triune God, who is everything to them; love is for the believers to minister and transmit the Triune God to their fellow believers so that, in such a wonderful and powerful faith, all the believers may love one another with divine, transcendent love and live a corporate life in Christ. In this way the Body of Christ is realized and the processed Triune God is expressed today on the earth in the all-inclusive Christ through the immeasurable life-giving Spirit.

The Epistle to Titus is the conclusion of the three books, 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus, and it concludes with the wonderful faith and the super-excellent love. This implies that, in the current of the church's degradation, in order to be able to effectively stand firm and overcome the downward trend and factor in the church, this wonderful faith and this super-excellent love are indispensable. We should not walk by sight or care for the outward situation. Rather, in this wonderful faith we should enjoy its source, which is the Triune God, to whom we have been joined through this 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 is desiring to obtain in [Revelation 2](#) and [3](#).

This wonderful faith and this super-excellent love are out of the Triune God, who earnestly desires to be joined to us to be our everything. This Triune God passed through the process of incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection from the dead, and ascension to the heavens on high and was ultimately consummated as the life-giving Spirit ([1 Cor. 15:45](#)). This Spirit of life ([Rom. 8:2](#)), who includes divinity, humanity, and Christ's crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension and is the reality of the all-inclusive Christ ([John 14:16-20](#)), dwells in our regenerated spirit ([Rom. 8:16](#); [2 Tim. 4:22](#)). When we contact this Triune God through prayer and by looking to Him, by means of our spirit, which was once dead and was made alive, He infuses Himself into us in many ways to become the faith within us toward Him and the love outside of us toward those who belong to Him. Such faith and such love are the reality and expression ([1 John 4:8, 16](#)) of the Triune God—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—in whom we believe and whom we worship and receive. Also, they are the rich grace given to us in Christ by the Triune God ([1 Tim. 1:14](#)), not only to be the motivating power and expression of our spiritual life but also to become our breastplate ([1 Thes. 5:8](#)), which covers and protects the vital parts of our being. It is by such faith that we receive and enjoy the divine life that is revealed and ministered to us in the entire Gospel of John ([John 3:16, 36](#)), and it is by such love that we love the Lord and those who belong to Him ([John 21:15-17](#); [13:34-35](#)). Such faith and love are connected and go together: love comes from faith, and faith operates and works through love ([Gal. 5:6](#)). Love with faith enables us to love our Lord in incorruptibility so that we may have an overcoming church life ([Eph. 6:23-24](#)) for the fulfillment of God's New Testament economy in Christ for the church. Therefore, it is in this faith that we are well pleasing to God ([Heb. 11:6](#)) and in this love that we are blessed of the Lord ([1 Cor. 16:22](#)). May this love with this faith be to the brothers from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ ([Eph. 6:23](#)). (*Titus 3:15 Footnote 1*)