Sunday, October 16, 2022

Title: If You Love Me

Grant Hill, Garden Gathering, 10/16/22

Welcome. My name is Grant Hill. For those who do not know me, I am the associate pastor for the Garden Gathering. It is a beautiful day. We received rains today on our land. When they come, we rejoice.

God, I honor your word here. I know that you are faithful to us. I thank you for that faithfulness. We honor this word of the Lord, and I know that you are more than faithful to teach us. It is your words we want to hear, and how you want them spoken, and where you want them taught. We trust Holy Spirit who teaches us all things. You are the Helper sent to us, and we need your help. We bind error, division, divisiveness, deceptiveness, and lies the enemy tries to paint over this word. We receive the truth by the Spirit of Truth. In Jesus's name I pray, amen.

A question that has been brought to this house is, "what are you anticipating?" As you are anticipating, "what are you ready for and what is our reality?" That anticipation can bring anxiety or it can bring courage. It can bring peace. It can bring misunderstanding, or it can bring life. So, I want you to say this with me, "Jesus, your word can teach me. No man has to add to it. It is more than enough." All right, let's let the Lord read to us today. If you do not bring your Bible, bring your Bible. We are going to read the word. The word does not need a man to add to it.

Titus 2:11-14
Ephesians 5:25-30
I Corinthians 12:27-31, 13:1-13
Revelation 2:2-5
John 14:15-24
II John 1:6-8
Romans 13:8-10
I John 5:2-5
I Corinthians 13:13

I am reminded as we read these passages, that "first love" remains. "First love" will always remain. For those of you who may not know, the gospel is this, that at the very beginning, He created us to love. Not just to be loved by Him, but to give our love and our heart back to Him. To know Him as the One who knew us from the beginning.

We read in Ephesians, that Christ has loved us as His very own wife. He has paid the ransom price for her. He paid a severe price. That price was His very own life, shedding His very own blood, so that you could be His. But, it was more severe than that, because sin led us to death, wickedness, and enmity with God. Everything in your flesh hates the Spirit of God. That is a war that is happening in the heavens. The hatred of mankind's flesh towards the holiness and the love of God in heaven. God has a hatred and a wrath against sin, because it has separated His children and His wife from Himself. The only person that has felt the full wrath of God was not mankind or the earth, but His own Son. God's wrath was poured out upon Jesus, so that you would not have to feel it yourself. That is how we can sing a song about how His favor and His blessing and His goodness can shine upon you.

Jesus has made a way to save you from sin and from death, and to love and make you whole from all unrighteousness and uncleanliness. He can bless you. He can touch you. He can heal you. He can love you. You must know this "first love." It is the only thing that will remain on the earth. The love that God has for His church and His Church who loves Him back. "First love," remains.

Love has overcome the world. Love changes how you anticipate tomorrow. If you are in love, even in the natural, you do not care if you are going to be poor. You do not care what is coming in the future, because you are in love. If you are in love with the One who has it all, you can anticipate tomorrow differently. You can anticipate what is coming differently. It starts with where you are in love. Love is obeying God's commandments to yourself.

Simplicity is not just obeying the ten commandments, but what He has asked you to do. Take what He has asked as His commandment to you, not as a request. Take what He has asked as this is His commandment to me, to do this. Love is shown to God as me doing what He has commanded me to do. Love is also not doing what God has told you not to do. If He has told you not to do something, showing Him how much you love Him is not doing it. *It is s*imple, but hard. Love is doing what God told you to do. Love is not doing what God has told you not to do. Love looks like something.

Loving God is supposed to look like a marriage. Marriage is supposed to be a beautiful example of what a believer's walk with Christ looks like. Loving God is supposed to look like your marriage. Marriage is supposed to be a beautiful example of what a believer's walk with Christ looks like. Godly, submitted, dedicated, wholesome, and courteous. A "bearing all things type of love," in a marriage looks like something. Love is surrendering. Love is a bond service to the King. It is not burdensome. Love is the beginning and the enduring fire of eternal life.

If you feel like you have no fire, you need to fall in love with Jesus again. This house has been established from the beginning in "first love." This house will always be established in "first love." All that the Lord has asked us to do and all that we do in prophecy, in interpretation, in tongues, in laboring with saints and for the poor will cease, but our love for the Lord will endure. We must be rooted and grounded in that we are first a house of "first love." One that knows when He has seen our works, how we have been patient, and how we have endured. But, He will always tell us to go back to where we fell away from the simplicity of love.

We know that love bears all things, but there is also wisdom. If as a neighbor, you are treating your neighbor as yourself, you know when you are wearing someone out. You know when you are gossiping about others. You know when you are grumbling to one another, that is not loving my neighbor as myself, because I do not want them to grumble and complain to me. When that bond of peace happens, we obey God's commandments and He dwells with us in greater measure. He says, I will dwell with you. I will be with you, and I will come to you. You will not be an orphan. You have never been an orphan. I have always been with you, but now you see me.

In I John 4, it says for those who have this hope, that "when they see Him, they will be like Him." That is the call on this house. When you know your "first love," you will be like "first love." You can be on fire. You can be fired up with the love of God. That is the call for the Garden Gathering. Our fire isn't in the miraculous, our fire isn't in the signs, our fire is not in what we do, or in our music. Our fire is going to be because we know "first love," and we love Him as a "Bride made ready." He has given Himself for us, and fired up with that love, and we give ourselves for Him.

That is all I have today. If you need to hear that from the Lord, we have music. You can hear the Lord's love for you in music. If you need someone to pray for you *regarding w*hat it looks like to

have "first love," or if you have never known the Lord as your "first love." He is here for that. Amen.

Holy Spirit, we pray that love looks like something. Loving God is supposed to look like a marriage, and we give you our marriages. *We pray* that they would be a beautiful example of what a believer's walk in Christ looks like. That in our marriages we would be as one in identifying and understanding the righteousness of God and understanding the fullness of Jesus, our Bridegroom King. Love is surrendering. Love is a bond service to a King. It is not burdensome, and love is the beginning and enduring fire of eternal life.

I receive it. I thank you for what you have established in this house. You have put me here. I am so thankful, God. You will always be established, because you have laid it. We are not all apostles. We are not all prophets. We are not all teachers. We are not all helps and administrations. But, we are all fired up with the love of the "first love" of Jesus. In Jesus's mighty name we pray, amen.