

**God's Got This #5**  
**Faith Works By Love**  
Galatians 5:6

**We have been talking about the phrase “God’s got this,” and stated it is simply a statement of faith.** And we have used this series to better understand what “**faith**” really is according to God’s Word.

**Chick-fil-a has an advertising campaign that displays cows holding up signs saying, “Eat more chicken.”** This is a pretty neat campaign because the cows are trying to save their own lives by convincing others to “**eat more chicken.**” If we as Christians expect to *be all* God that expect from us, and if we are to *receive all* that God has for us, then we need to understand how faith works by love.

**Lee Iacocca once asked legendary football coach Vince Lombardi what it took to make a winning team.** The book, “Iacocca,” records Lombardi’s answer: “There are a lot of coaches with good ball clubs who know the fundamentals and have plenty of discipline but still don’t win the game. Then you come to the third ingredient: if you’re going to play together as a team, you’ve got to care for one another. You’ve got to love each other. Each player has to be thinking about the next guy and saying to himself: If I didn’t block that man, Paul is going to get his legs broken. I have to do my job well in order that he can do his.” Lombardi went on to say, “The difference between mediocrity and greatness is the feeling these guys really care for each other.” **In a healthy church, each Christian learns to care for others.** As we take seriously Jesus’ command to love one another, we contribute to a winning team.

**In this study we have seen what faith is, and the requirements for faith.** We have looked at how to bring our faith to completion. This week we are going to look at a biblical truth that is very seldom ever seen, much less taught, and that is that “**Faith Works By Love.**”

**Most people who know about faith today are not missing it in their confessions.** They are not missing it in *knowing what the Word of God says.* They are not missing it in *believing the Word.* They are missing it by not knowing how to *walk in love.*

**Faith is the hand that takes the things we need from God.** Everything Jesus *purchased* for us on Calvary can be obtained by *faith.*

**That includes salvation, healing, the fullness of the Spirit, the gifts of the Spirit, the fruit of the Spirit, and victory over the world, the flesh, the devil, and**

**all the powers of darkness.** All of these things come to us by *faith* but it must be a faith that *works by love*. The Bible simply says, "Faith works by love..."

**Because we must have faith that works by love, it will do us good to see how that kind of love gets started, and what its characteristics are.** Proverbs 10:12 says, "Love covers all sin." 1 Peter 4:8 says, "Love shall cover the multitude of sins." Put these two Scriptures together, and they say, "Love covers all sins, even when there is a multitude of them."

**For love to reach its highest potential it must begin to work with the sin problem.** Love will not work for you until you are *born again* and the love of God has *covered* your sins. Notice the phrase "the multitude of sins." **How many is a multitude?** We don't usually use the word "multitude" unless there are more elements to something than we can name?

**Think of it: this real, genuine love of God will cover, hide, and put out of sight more sins than we can even name.** What a tremendous thought! John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son..." **For what?** To cover our sins. That is the first area of love. God's love covers sin.

1 John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." **There are those people that point of 1 John 1:9 and use terms like "inner healing."** They say, based on 1 John 1:9 that "You need to confess every sin you've ever done." Conversely they say, "You need to go back and drag out all of the sins from your past and confess them."

**No, you don't!** There are *two things very wrong* with that kind of thinking. **First**, your forgiveness would depend on *your efforts* instead of God's promise. **Second**, your forgiveness would depend on *your ability to remember* as far back as your first sin, and that is foolishness.

**In fact, all you need to do is confess Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, and then plead the blood of Jesus on your past.** Dragging up all your old sins will not do you any good; it will just open the door for Satan to bring *guilt* and *condemnation* on you!

**The truth of the matter is this - if you keep staring at the road-kill in the rearview mirror of your life, how are you ever going to get to the destination where the road ahead is leading you?** Romans 15:13 calls God the "God of hope." And in scripture "hope" means, "the happy anticipation of good." **Without hope, a person may as well be dead.** This is why David testifies in Psalm 27:13-14, "I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." He then further encourages the

downcast to "Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart."

Speaking of love and sin, look at Galatians 6:1, "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted." **The phrase "you who are spiritual" means all of us, because we are *spiritual*.** We are the children of God. We have been *covered with the blood of Jesus*. Therefore, we are told to "restore such an one in the spirit of gentleness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." **In other words, unless you show love and compassion in these areas, you might be filled with pride and be guilty of something just as bad.** Remember, the Bible does not teach that there are "big" sins and "little" sins. James 2:10 simply says, "For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all."

**Unfortunately, the first thing most people want to do when they hear of somebody being "overtaken in a fault" is to reach for the telephone!** They don't want to cover that fault with love and silence or restore the individual; they want to talk about him and his fault.

**And, then, in their next breath they expect God to move in their lives, and when He doesn't, they don't understand why.** The truth of the matter is that their faith is hindered because they don't have love working in their life and "faith works by love."

**In fact, when one considers 1 Corinthians 13 in context, you will see that even the gifts of the Holy Spirit must be operated with love, or they become empty.** In 1 Corinthians 13:7, we are told that "(Love) bears all things." The word translated "bears" in the Greek is the word "stego" (stego), which literally means, "to cover with silence." **Therefore, God is saying that love refuses to gossip about someone else's sin.** Listen, if we *tell* of the evil someone else has done, or we *criticize, judge, condemn, or murmur* against them - no matter who they is or what they have done - we are proving we are not walking in love. Why? Because "love" "covers with silence."

While we are here in 1 Corinthians 13:4-6 says, "Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out." **From this Scripture we are told that love works by being kind even under long, continued suffering deep suffering brought on by someone else.** This Scripture is not talking about *suffering or disease* brought your way by the devil. This is suffering caused by *other people*. **It comes from remarks said about you, or deeds done against you.** That is exactly what Jesus said in Matthew 5:43-44, "You have heard that it

was said, You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you." **This is where love really has to work, because you must love those people, keep your mouth shut, endure, and be kind.**

**Now, listen carefully, Satan is aware of the weakness of our flesh, therefore he will seek to make you sensitive to what others say and do.** He knows that if I start walking out of love, my faith will be hindered. **It cannot operate to its fullest capacity.** **Why?** Because my life is being lived in rebellion to God's Word for my life!

**There are two other Scriptures that we need to look at if we are going to understand that "faith works by love."** Romans 12:10 says, "Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another." And Philippians 4:8 tells us, "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy - meditate on these things." **What are these Scriptures saying to us?** Simply this **do not entertain bad thoughts about anybody.** It will hinder your love, and this will hinder your faith, and this will keep you from receiving what you need from God.

**Therefore, it will do us good to realize that love is a choice.** Love is a choice that each of us must make. **Some refuse to love because they are afraid.** **Others refuse to love because of their unwillingness to be inconvenienced.** Others refuse to love because of their reluctance to be made vulnerable. **But most of us refuse to love because of some hostility.**

**You see, hostility and love cannot live in the same heart; one will eradicate the other.** Whether it involves our love for our God, or our love for our friends and families, Christian love is done by choice. **We choose to love our friends, our family, our associates, or our fellow church members.** **We choose to love those who dislike us, those who mistrust us, even those who hate us.** And finally, we choose to love ourselves.

**Once we understand that Christian love is love by choice, we will understand that it is a love that is motivated by our will and implemented by action and conduct.** Listen, you may not like some other Christian. **They may bring you no pleasant feelings; there may even be something about them that causes you displeasure.** However, if you are living the Christian life you will choose to love that person because it is God's will for your life.

You see, the child of God is commanded in Philippians 2:5, “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.” To have the *mind* of Christ, is to have the *love* of Christ you cannot have the one without the other!

The love of Christ is unique to the Christian faith. And while it can be painful and difficult to live by, it is revolutionary in its power to heal. And ultimately this kind of love brings the kind of joy the *world* neither gives nor takes away!

How do we make the choice? How do we learn to love? Listen carefully, love is both a *gift* and an *achievement* - it is something *given* and something *claimed*.

Look, first of all, at love as a gift. 1 John 4:16 says, “And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.” The Word of God is simply teaching us that when we were saved, and God Himself took up residence in our lives, He brought His love with Him, because He is love! Therefore, the ability to love is a *gift* that is ours the moment we receive Jesus Christ as our personal Savior.

Secondly, look at love as an achievement. 1 John 4:7 says, “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.” But, what does that Scripture have to do with achievement? Simply this, God has never commanded us to do something that He Himself did not promise to do through us!

Therefore, when we look at those folks that are unlovable because of their attitude, or actions, or their unforgiving spirits, we must remember that none of those things are the grounds for our loving them. The ground for our love is the Person of Jesus Christ living *in* us and desiring to live *through* us! And that, child of God, will cause love to blossom in your life as you allow God to love through you!

But, let me warn you, when you start living this kind of life, you will not be content to be mediocre, stay in a corner, and barely make it to heaven. You will be loving when you *decide* to be. You will be a success even when you are *not trying to be!*

This kind of Godlove will spill over into your job, your school, and every aspect of your life. Not only will you reap spiritual benefits; you will reap natural benefits you've never thought possible.

Folks, you really cannot afford not to love, because it affects every part of your Christian walk!

If you are not saved, why not?

**Everyone please stand for prayer.**

Father,

Your Word is true. Give the courage to love others that my faith might be all that you have designed it to be in my life. In Jesus' name. Amen.