

The Covenant Breaker

Unconditional Love's Sinister Plan

Volume 3

Let No Man Deceive You by Any Means

Prepared by
Elder Dwight Burford
www.hisworkmanship.net
Published October 2012

Table of Contents

Remember Ye Not? Know Ye Not?.....	4
But if Our Gospel be Hid.....	8
The Love of Men Shall Wax Cold	10
Prove All Things; Hold Fast that Which is Good	12
And None are Forbidden	21
He that Entereth Not by the Door	23
The Lord ... Saveth Such as be of a Contrite Spirit.....	25
Behold, He Loved Our Fathers, and He Covenanted with Them	31
If Ye Believe Not that I Am He, Ye Shall Die in Your Sins	33
Before John Wrote God is Love, John Wrote God is Light	34
Who Shall Separate Us from the Love of Christ?	35
Ye are My Friends, if Ye Do Whatsoever I Command You	39
A New Commandment I Give Unto You.....	42
Except Ye Abide in Me	45
Therefore Doth My Father Love Me.....	48
Behold What Manner of Love the Father Hath Bestowed Upon Us.....	50
Hereby Perceive We the Love of Christ.....	53
Break Not My Commandments for to Save Your Lives	56
And He That Dwelleth in Love Dwelleth in God, and God in Him.....	58
And Above All These Things Put on Charity.....	60
Having ... A Love of God And of All Men	62
Brought to Sing Redeeming Love.....	64
And Ye Receive the Spirit Through Prayer	66
Watch Unto Prayer.....	70
Endnotes	75

Let No Man Deceive You by Any Means

Prepared by
Elder Dwight Burford
www.hisworkmanship.net
Published October 2012

Let no man deceive you by any means; for there shall come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; So that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? (II Thessalonians 2:3-5)

And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; As God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (II Corinthians 6:16)

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. (I Corinthians 3:16,17)

Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. (Ephesians 2:19-22)

Paul, the Apostle of Jesus Christ, warned that before our Lord returns, Satan, who is the devil, would attempt to exalt himself above God and appear as God in God's own temple, the church.¹

Because God is love,² perpetrating a deception about the love of God would be one of the highest (if not the highest), most decisive and influential forms of deception Satan could ever hope to achieve, especially within and throughout the church.

Therefore, knowing that his time is short, Satan and his servants are working harder than ever to deceive the nations, including *the elect if possible*, about God and His love.³

Satan is attempting to supplant God with his own ideal of love, a love that would rob justice and dismiss the mercy extended to us through the atonement of Jesus Christ. He is seeking to replace the *redemptive covenant love* of our true Lord and Savior with his *unconditional love*.⁴

Now more than ever, then, we must pray fervently for the Lord's kingdom,⁵ which is *righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*,⁶ because *the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us*.⁷

Remember Ye Not? Know Ye Not?

The message of unconditional love is heard throughout the world today. For example, Christian radio stations often feature sermons, presentations, classes, and study groups in which unconditional love is taught and discussed. While it may be found in many Christian publications and in general conversation, it is not a topic that is unique to Christian circles. Many other religions and organizations teach and speak of unconditional love.⁸

On the World Wide Web there are many resources available to promote the furtherance of unconditional love. These include dedicated religious as well as secular websites that offer an array of literature, poems, video clips, and other media. Most, if not all, of these sites and references portray unconditional love to be a positive love, one that is enabling, uplifting, and healing. Many believe unconditional love can be fostered through our own innate abilities and initiatives to choose to be positive instead of negative. They reason that the power to choose to be positive is simply derived from within oneself.

It is not the intent of this collection of writings, presented under the title "*The Covenant Breaker: Unconditional Love's Sinister Plan*," to argue against general aspects of constructive positive thinking. Rather, this set of writings is meant to point individuals and groups of peoples away from deception and toward the real *power* that is able to transform our lives, that is, the power that resides within Jesus Christ and the new birth we may receive in Him and Him alone. Specifically, it is the intention of these writings to point the reader away from the covenant breaker, Satan, and back to the true covenant giver and mediator, Jesus Christ.

While unconditional love may appear to be God's love, it is not. Along with the first two volumes in this series on the *Covenant Breaker*,^{9,10} this third volume will show that unconditional love is inconsistent with the love God revealed through the gift of His Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ.¹¹ In fact, unconditional love competes directly with and even denies God's love.

Notwithstanding the prominence it has gained through the work of many Christians, the doctrine of unconditional love has been established external to and independent of Judeo-Christian scriptures. For example, it is not named or mentioned directly in any scripture relating to the Christian faith. Neither is it derived from nor does it build upon the principles or doctrines established in the gospel Jesus Christ instructed His disciples to preach throughout the world.

The fact that the doctrine of unconditional love is so widespread is significant in light of Paul's warning that before our Lord's return Satan would attempt to *exalt* himself *above all that is called God*.

***Let no man deceive you by any means;
For there shall come a falling away first,
and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;
who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God,
or that is worshiped;
So that he as God sitteth in the temple of God,
showing himself that he is God.***

Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you,
I told you these things?

II Thessalonians 2:3-5

Briefly stated, Satan is intent on *showing himself* to be the God who is love¹² in a very strategic place: in the *temple* of God. What is that temple? Stephen and Paul agree that God does **not dwell** in *temples* made by the hands of men.

Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands;
as saith the prophet, Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool;
What house will ye build me? saith the Lord;
or what is the place of my rest?
Hath not my hand made all these things?

Acts 7:48-50

God that made the world and all things therein,
seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth,
dwelleth not in temples made with hands.

Acts 17:24

However, there is a *temple* that God is *building* for Himself in the *hearts* of men.¹³ According to Paul, that *temple* is *the body of Christ*, which is the *church* as referenced in scripture.

For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
*of whom **the whole family in heaven and earth is named,***¹⁴
That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory,
*to be **strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;***
That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith;
*That ye, being rooted and grounded **in love,***¹⁵
*may be able to comprehend with **all saints***
what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;
*And **to know the love of Christ**, which passeth knowledge,*
that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3:14-19

And he [Jesus Christ] is before all things,
and by him all things consist.
And he is the head of the body, the church;
who is the beginning,
the firstborn from the dead;
That in all things he might have the preeminence.

Colossians 1:17,18

Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners,
*but fellow citizens with the saints, and of **the household of God;***

And are **built** upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets,
Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone;
In whom all the building fitly framed together
groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord;
In whom ye also are **builded together**
for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

Ephesians 2:19-22¹⁶

And what agreement hath **the temple of God** with idols?
for ye are the temple of the living God;
As God hath said, **I will dwell in them, and walk in them;**
and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

II Corinthians 6:16

Paul reinforces this message that *the body of Christ, the church, is the temple of God* by asking rather emphatically if the members of the church know they *are the temple* of God.

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God,
and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?
If any man defile the temple of God,
him shall God destroy;
for the temple of God is holy,
which temple ye are.

I Corinthians 3:16,17

What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost
which is in you, which ye have of God,
and ye are not your own?
For ye are bought with a price;
therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit,
which are God's.

I Corinthians 6:19,20

Note Paul's use of the singular form of the word *temple* in his references to the church. If Paul were speaking principally to individuals instead of the church as a whole, one might expect Paul to use the plural form, *temples*.¹⁷ Yet he did **not** use the plural form when asking, "*Know ye not that ye are the **temple** of God ...?*" Instead, Paul consistently used the singular form, *temple*, and thereby stressed the unity of the body of Jesus Christ, which was a central theme in his ministry to the church in Corinth.¹⁸

Now I beseech you, brethren in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,
that ye all speak the same thing,
and **that there be no divisions among you;**
But that ye be **perfectly joined together**

in the same mind and in the same judgment.

I Corinthians 1:10-15

*For we are laborers together with God;
ye are God's husbandry,
ye are God's building.*

I Corinthians 3:9

*For we being many are **one bread**, and **one body**;
for we are **all partakers of that one bread.***

I Corinthians 10:17

*For as **the body is one, and hath many members,**
and **all the members of that one body, being many, are one body;**
so also is Christ.*

*For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body,
whether we be bond or free;
and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.*

For the body is not one member, but many.

*If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body;
is it therefore not of the body?*

*And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body;
is it therefore not of the body?*

*If the whole body were an eye,
where were the hearing?*

*If the whole were hearing,
where were the smelling?*

*But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body,
as it hath pleased him.*

*And if they were all one member,
where were the body?*

*But now are they many members,
yet but one body.*

I Corinthians 12:12-20

Peter, the Apostle of Jesus Christ, agrees with Paul by stating that we are *lively stones* which are being *built up* together by God into a *spiritual house*.

*Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house,
an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices,
acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*

I Peter 2:5

Plainly stated, with his warning that Satan would attempt to show himself as if he were God in the temple of God, Paul is reminding us that it is Satan's ambition to sit on the throne

of our hearts, upon which only the Lord Jesus Christ has a right to sit.¹⁹ Just as God's love is to dwell within our hearts through the Holy Spirit,²⁰ Satan is attempting to cause unconditional love to dwell within the church in God's place.

In fine, the body of Christ, which is the *temple* of God, is the object of Satan's conquest. It is within the members of Christ's church that Satan desires most to implant his unconditional love in place of God's covenant love, and thereby receive in God's place our worship and praise. Integral to the devil's plan is to sow *tares* within the church in an attempt to spread his doctrines of lies.

*Another parable put he forth unto them, saying,
The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man
who sowed good seed in his field;²¹
But while he slept,
his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat,
and went his way.
But when the blade sprung up, and brought forth fruit,
then appeared the tares also.
So the servants of the house-holder came and said unto him,
Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field?
whence then hath it tares?
He said unto them,
An enemy hath done this...
...Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house.
And his disciples came unto him, saying,
Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.
He answered and said unto them,
He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man.
The field is the world;
The good seed are the children of the kingdom;
but the tares are the children of the wicked.
The enemy that sowed them is the devil.*

Matthew 13:22-26,35-38²²

But if Our Gospel be Hid...

For many people, loving *unconditionally* simply means loving others regardless of who they may or may not be and loving them regardless of what they may or may not have done. Because they believe the scriptures teach God loves us *unconditionally*, some also advocate that all of us are to love *unconditionally* as well, citing, for example:

- the Apostle John's declaration that *God is love*;²³
- the Lord's commands to love as He has loved us, especially our enemies;²⁴ and
- the Apostle Paul's statement of confidence that nothing *shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*.²⁵

With scriptures such as these being used to justify and teach unconditional love, why raise a standard against it?

Unconditional love not only proposes to love everyone irrespective of who they are and what they may have done, **unconditional love also proposes to love them irrespective of who God is and what He has done.**²⁶

- It speaks nothing of Jesus Christ and His atonement for the sins of the world.²⁷
- It fails to take into account the new covenant He mediates.²⁸
- It stands separate from, and thus ignores His commandments.²⁹
- It operates independently of His justice and mercy and thus of His wisdom and will.³⁰
- It denies His holiness and the power He has been given to save us based upon *the conditions of repentance*.³¹
- It is disconnected from *all* that the prophets and apostles have spoken about our Lord and His work.³²

To be true to itself, unconditional love is neither moved by nor motivated by the conditions or circumstances of its host or its recipients, nor would it, if possible, be constrained by the justice of God. Why? Being unconditional, it need not regard any of God's laws and judgments, or His covenants and commandments. Thus, unconditional love is neither purposeful nor compassionate. It is like the person who sees someone in need yet *shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him*.

*Hereby perceive we the love of Christ,
because he laid down his life for us;
And we ought to lay down our lives
for the brethren.*

***But whoso hath this world's good,
and seeth his brother have need,
and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him,
how dwelleth the love of God in him?***

I John 3:16,17

Since it loves others as they are, unconditional love simply proposes to bestow itself upon anyone and everyone without constraint or commitment regardless of any and all things. Nothing needs to change in the lives of people as a result of its presence or its unrestricted actions (e.g. random acts of kindness).

Because it operates blind to circumstances and is not motivated to work directly and purposefully toward change within the lives of people, unconditional love need not affect the conditions or circumstances that surround it. Thus, unconditional love provides no leadership or encouragement to *do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God* as God *requires* of us.³³ Instead, unconditional love promotes pride and rebellion against our Lord's pure and perfect love, charity, by standing separate from the gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord. Thus, unconditional love serves to obscure the true revelation and operation of God's love revealed *in the light of the glorious gospel of Christ*.

*Therefore, seeing we have this ministry,
 as we have received mercy, we faint not;
 But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty,
 not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully;
 But, by manifestation of the truth,
 commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.
**But if our gospel be hid,
 it is hid to them that are lost;
 in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds
 of them which believe not,
 lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ,
 who is the image of God,
 should shine unto them.**
**For we preach not ourselves,
 but Christ Jesus the Lord;
 and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.**
*For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness,
 hath shined in our hearts,
 to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.
 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels,
 that the excellency of the power may be of God,
 and not of us.**

II Corinthians 4:1-7

Briefly stated, unconditional love is not the redeeming covenant love of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. It is a *cold*, uncompassionate love that would save us from the justice of God without satisfying the demands of the justice of God.

The Love of Men Shall Wax Cold

Jesus Christ warned that the time would come when the love of men's hearts would *wax* (not *wane*)³⁴ *cold* because *iniquity* (i.e. *lawlessness*³⁵) would abound.³⁶ This spread of iniquity and the corresponding increase in the coldness of the love of men's hearts are being orchestrated by Satan, the one who drew away a third of the host of heaven and who has deceived many upon the earth.³⁷ In perpetrating his deception about and against³⁸ God and His love, Satan is seeking to:

- establish a lawless state in which the covenants and commandments of God are marginalized and ultimately nullified (including within and throughout the church); and
- spread a *cold* love that is able to exist, even thrive, where the command of Jesus Christ to *repent and believe the gospel*³⁹ is no longer honestly preached or practiced.

Through propagating his cold, unconditional (non-covenant) love, Satan is intent on:

- turning people everywhere away from entering into and continuing in a covenant relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ, and according to the terms and conditions of the New Covenant He mediates;⁴⁰
- leading a departure from faith in Jesus Christ by persuading the world to believe that God loves everyone separately from and independently of the Lamb of God and the atonement He has made to save us *from* our sins;⁴¹
- replacing God's gift of ***the love of the truth*** with an all-encompassing, broad love of any and all things (including all that is outside of the truth, such as vanity, deceptions, lies, etc.);⁴²
- promoting a love that serves the natural inclinations and vain pursuits of our natural/carnal humanity;⁴³
- dispelling concerns about the consequences of not obeying God's commands or of being reconciled to His will (of *remaining in unrighteousness*);⁴⁴
- causing the members of the church to become indifferent to the Lord's command to seek first the *kingdom of God and His righteousness*;⁴⁵
- redirecting the members of the body of Christ away from their Lord's commission to teach His commandments throughout the earth⁴⁶ and to warn of God's judgments that are to come in the last day against *all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men*;⁴⁷
- ending the preaching of *repentance* by attempting to provide a way to circumvent the *conditions of repentance*;⁴⁸
- leading people, both in and out of the body of Christ, away from the provision of the Lord's pure and perfect love, charity, by causing them to *stray* from His teachings, commandments, ordinances, covenants, and counsel, i.e. from His Word of truth;⁴⁹ and
- breaking the Lord's everlasting covenant (with its terms and conditions) through each of the above.⁵⁰

Paul explained why Satan's efforts would be so effective in these *latter times*. He wrote that men would increasingly become *lovers of pleasure more than God*. He further wrote that they would have *itching* ears for unsound doctrines and teachings,⁵¹ especially those doctrines that justify and accommodate *lawless* pursuits and lifestyles.

Paul continued by warning that, in the last days especially, people would ***depart from the faith by giving heed to seducing spirits***.⁵² He testified that in his day Satan had already appeared as an *angel of light*,⁵³ and followers of Satan had appeared as *apostles* of Jesus Christ and *ministers of righteousness*.⁵⁴ In Ephesus, for example, *grievous wolves* rose to prominence within the church, even from among the membership, *to lead disciples away after them*.⁵⁵ In the words of John, the Apostle of Jesus Christ, "*They went out from us, but they were not of us.*"⁵⁶

Now in these *latter times* Paul has warned that things would deteriorate even further, writing, "*evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.*"⁵⁷

Prove All Things; Hold Fast that Which is Good

So that we may not be deceived, we would be wise to heed Paul's admonition, "*Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.*"⁵⁸ How exactly can we go about *proving* anything, let alone *all things*, about God and His love? Peter, the Apostle of Jesus Christ, wrote that we would *do well to heed the word of prophecy, even a more sure knowledge of the word of prophecy*, that he and the other apostles and prophets have provided us through the scriptures.

*For we have not followed cunningly devised fables,
when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,
but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.*

*For he received from God the Father honor and glory,
when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory,
This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

*And this voice which came from heaven we heard,
when we were with him in the holy mount.*⁵⁹

***We have therefore a more sure knowledge of the word of prophecy,
to which word of prophecy ye do well that ye take heed,
as unto a light which shineth in a dark place,
until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts;***

*Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scriptures
is given of any private will of man.*

*For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man;
but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

II Peter 1:16-21

Practically speaking, to understand the truth about God and His love, it will be imperative to ensure that our beliefs about Him and His love are established upon *the sure foundation* of His word.⁶⁰ That is, we will need to examine the matter in *the light of Christ*,⁶¹ the living Word of God and the Light of the world.

Yet, is there sufficient information available in scripture to *prove* whether or not God loves us unconditionally or in some other way? Do the scriptures reveal who inspired unconditional love? To help answer these questions, consider the following comparisons between what has been revealed in scripture about God and His love in contrast to various propositions and implications associated with unconditional love.

1. Redemptive, Sacrificial Love versus Unconditional Love

*And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,*⁶²
even so must the Son of Man be lifted up;

*That whosoever believeth on him should not perish,
but have eternal life.*

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his Only Begotten Son,
that whosoever believeth on him should not perish;*

*but have everlasting life.
 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world;
 but that the world through him might be saved.
 He who believeth on him is not condemned;
 but he who believeth not is condemned already,
 because he hath not believed on the name of the Only Begotten Son of God,
 which before was preached by the mouth of the holy prophets;
 for they testified of me.
 And this is the condemnation,
 that light is come into the world,
 and men love darkness rather than light,
 because their deeds are evil.
 For every one who doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light,
 lest his deeds should be reproved.
 But he who loveth truth, cometh to the light,
 that his deeds may be made manifest.
 And he who obeyeth the truth,
 the works which he doeth they are of God.*

John 3:14-22

*Hereby perceive we the love of Christ,
 because he laid down his life for us;
 and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

I John 3:16

*In this was manifested the love of God toward us,
 because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world,
 that we might live through him.*

*Herein is love,
 not that we loved God, but that he loved us,
 and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

I John 4:9,10

- a. God's love, as recorded in the New Testament, was revealed in and through the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.⁶³ In particular, His love was responsible for the giving of Jesus Christ in sacrifice to atone for the sins of the world.⁶⁴ Our Lord suffered and died upon a cross and then rose from the dead and ascended into heaven to *redeem* and *reconcile* us unto God. Now He lives to *ever intercede* for us as our *Advocate* with our heavenly Father.⁶⁵ All that He has done, is doing, and will ever do is in accordance with both His justice and mercy.⁶⁶ Thus we see that God's love was revealed through redemptive means and is, therefore, redemptive in nature.
- b. Unconditional love, on the other hand, does not express itself through such redemptive or sacrificial means. It is not the love which is responsible for the giving of Jesus Christ in sacrifice to atone for the sins of the world. Instead, unconditional love can

only relegate the giving of God's Only Begotten Son in sacrifice to nothing more than a symbolic gesture, an unnecessary but perhaps gracious act of a love that is divorced from God's justice and mercy. In essence, unconditional love stands aloof of God's Anointed One and His gospel of repentance and reconciliation. It finds no need to honor or even recognize Jesus Christ as *the Lamb of God*.⁶⁷ It proposes to exist and to act independently of His redemption.

2. Compassionate Love versus Unconditional Love

*Hereby perceive we the love of Christ,
because he laid down his life for us;
and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.
But whoso hath this world's good,
and seeth his brother have need,
and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him,
how dwelleth the love of God in him?*

I John 3:16,17

*For when we were yet without strength,
in due time Christ died for the ungodly.
For scarcely for a righteous man will one die;
yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.
But God commendeth his love toward us,
in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
Much more then, being now justified by his blood,
we shall be saved from wrath through him.
For if, when we were enemies,
we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son;
Much more, being reconciled,
we shall be saved by his life.
And not only so,
but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
by whom we have now received the atonement.*

Romans 5:6-11

- a. God's love is compassionate love. Recall how, as testified throughout the scriptures, Jesus Christ was often *moved by compassion*⁶⁸ unto intervening in the lives of people in response to their conditions.⁶⁹ This is the nature of God's love which ultimately led our Redeemer to intercede before His heavenly Father on their behalf. Because of His love for mankind, our Lord has, is, and will be moved with compassion⁷⁰ to redeem us, heal us, transform us, correct us, chastise us, inspire us, teach us, support us, challenge us, nurture us, defend us, judge us, etc. – all as an expression of His love and mercy.⁷¹
- b. To be true to itself, unconditional love is not motivated by, moved by, or influenced

by – nor does it have regard for – any *conditions*. Otherwise, it would cease to be unconditional. Unconditional love does not respond to specific needs nor does it intentionally engage itself in any purposeful work of change. Being unconditional, it does not need to bring about any transformation in the world around it. Unconditional love would simply express itself as love through the bestowal of love, having no need or means to serve mankind as an advocate before the throne of God's justice to appeal for His mercy through repentance. According to unconditional love, all are to be loved solely by its bestowing itself upon any and all persons regardless of any and all things. In effect, it serves to maintain conditions as they are, not being motivated to affect change in the conditions it encounters or experiences. Thus, unconditional love contents itself, even realizes itself, in loving irrespective of the way all things exist.

3. Covenant Love versus Unconditional Love

*For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you,
that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread;
And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said,
Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you;
This do in remembrance of me.*

*After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying,
This cup is the new testament in my blood;
This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.*

I Corinthians 11:23-25

*And for this cause he is the mediator of the new covenant,
that by means of death,
for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant,
they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.*

*For where a covenant is,
there must also of necessity be the death of the victim.*

*For a covenant is of force after the victim is dead;
otherwise it is of no strength at all while the victim liveth.*

Whereupon neither the first covenant was dedicated without blood.

*For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law,
he took the blood of calves and of goats,
with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop,
and sprinkled both the book and all the people, saying,*

This is the blood of the covenant which God hath enjoined unto you.

Hebrews 9:15-20

- a. God's love is covenant love. The scriptures speak often of the covenants which the Lord has made with His people.⁷² In fact, many references represent His covenants as a marriage covenant,⁷³ referring to Jesus as the Bride Groom and His church as the Bride, each bound to the other by a covenant. For example, Paul, the Apostle of

Jesus Christ, spoke specifically of the marriage covenant between a husband and wife in light of the relationship between Jesus Christ and His church.⁷⁴ Thus we see that our Lord's love is expressed through covenants (i.e. with terms and conditions).⁷⁵ That is, God's love is covenant love.

- b. Unconditional love is not covenant love. It knows no boundaries nor is it constrained by the terms and conditions of any covenant, including our Lord's New and Everlasting covenant.⁷⁶ Unconditional love presumes to not be guided by any ideal or purpose other than to maintain itself unconditionally as unconditional love. It would simply love us and have us love each other without any constraint, consideration, condition, or commitment; and thus it would have us love recklessly without wisdom. As such, it is a love without restraint or any true redemptive purpose or means. It knows no law or form of justice. Therefore, not only is it not covenant love, but unconditional love is also a covenant-breaking love.

4. The Love that Offers Repentance and Forgiveness versus Unconditional Love

*The God of our fathers raised up Jesus,
whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.
Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior,
for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.
And we are his witnesses of these things;
and so is also the Holy Ghost,
whom God hath given to them that obey him.*

Acts 5:30-32

*And hope maketh not ashamed;
because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts
by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*

Romans 5:5

*And as I began to speak,
the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning.
Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said,
John indeed baptized with water;
but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.
Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift
as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ,
what was I, that I could withstand God?
When they heard these things, they held their peace and glorified God, saying,
Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.*

Acts 11:15-18

- a. God's love grants unto us *repentance* and *forgiveness of sins* based upon the atonement of Jesus Christ. Because our Lord made an *acceptable* offering to atone for sins

(both justly and mercifully), He has been given power to *redeem* us from our sins.⁷⁷ Therefore, He has sent His angels to preach *the conditions of repentance*.⁷⁸ Further, recall how God sent John the Baptist to preach repentance when preparing the way before Him.⁷⁹ Afterwards, Jesus Christ began preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God with the command to *repent and believe the gospel of the kingdom*.⁸⁰ Following His resurrection, Jesus sent His disciples into *all the world* to likewise preach repentance and belief in the gospel of the kingdom.⁸¹ Finally, God's goodness is extended to us today to *lead* us to repentance, that is, to turn us from our *iniquities*⁸² (wicked ways) unto His righteous ways so that we might be cleansed of all sin and be saved in the kingdom of God.⁸³

- b. Unconditional love rejects *the conditions of repentance*.⁸⁴ It dismisses our need to repent and believe the gospel of the kingdom. It ignores the consequences for failing to be reconciled to God through faith in Jesus Christ as unnecessary, if not irrelevant.⁸⁵ Further, unconditional love does not recognize the *preparatory* ministry of repentance⁸⁶ or the gate through which we must pass in order to enter into eternal life, which is the gate of repentance and baptism.⁸⁷ It ignores the Lord's warning that if we are not born again we will not even see the kingdom of God.⁸⁸ It promotes the lie that unrepentant souls will not be cut off from God's presence and, thus, from His love.⁸⁹ It denies the word of God, which states that all unrepentant souls will not be saved from *the wrath to come*. Finally, unconditional love contradicts the word of the Lord that *the wages of sin* are death.⁹⁰

5. Obedient Love versus Unconditional Love

*As the Father hath loved me,
so have I loved you; continue ye in my love.
**If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love;
even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.**
These things have I spoken unto you,
that my joy might remain in you,
and that your joy might be full.
This is my commandment,
That ye love one another, as I have loved you.
Greater love hath no man than this,
that a man lay down his life for his friends.
Ye are my friends,
if ye do whatsoever I command you.*

John 15:9-14

***Therefore doth my Father love me,
because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.
No man taketh it from me,
but I lay it down of myself.
I have power to lay it down,***

and I have power to take it again.
This commandment have I received of my Father.
John 10:17,18

***For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments;
and his commandments are not grievous.***
I John 5:3

- a. God's love is revealed through obedience. The love Jesus Christ demonstrated to the world was obedient love. Therefore, according to His gospel we are likewise to demonstrate our love for God through obedience to His Word.
- b. Unconditional love, on the other hand, is disconnected and disassociated from obedience. Briefly stated, it is a rebellious love. It does not lead us (actively or passively) to obey God or to repent of our rebellion against God (which rebellion is demonstrated by our transgression of His laws, i.e. by our sin⁹¹). Unconditional love does not recognize the sovereignty of Jesus Christ as *the Lord*. It ignores the fact that all things were made by Him and for Him and that all things are sustained and maintained by His eternal presence and power.⁹² Thus, unconditional love is a *lawless* love that seeks to abide outside our Lord's laws and the order that He has established in His kingdom.⁹³ Unconditional love presumes to be unfettered and unconstrained by anything or anyone, including Jesus Christ. It refuses to submit to Him as *the Lord of lords* and *the King of kings*.⁹⁴ It refuses to have Him as its ruler.⁹⁵

6. Cleansing Love versus Unconditional Love

*This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you,
that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.*
*If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness,
we lie, and do not the truth.*
*But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light,
we have fellowship one with another,
and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*
*If we say that we have no sin,
we deceive ourselves,
and the truth is not in us.*
***If we confess our sins,
he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins,
and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.***
*If we say that we have not sinned,
we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.*
I John 1:5-10

*For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish,
disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures,*

*living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.
But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared,
not by works of righteousness which we have done,
but according to his mercy
He saved us,
**by the washing of regeneration,
and renewing of the Holy Ghost;**
Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior;
That being justified by his grace,
we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*
Titus 3:3-7

*And we have known and believed
the love that God hath to us.
God is love;
and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God,
and God in him.
Herein is our love made perfect,
that we may have boldness in the day of judgment;
because as he is, so are we in this world.*
I John 4:16,17

*Now ye are clean
through the word which I have spoken unto you..*
John 15:3

- a. God's love is cleansing.⁹⁶ Specifically, His love makes us holy, for as it is written, "*And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*" Jesus, the name God gave His Only Begotten Son, signifies His mission to save us *from* our sins, not *in* our sins.⁹⁷ We know this because Jesus' earthly father, Joseph, was told, "*thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people **from** their sins.*"⁹⁸ Thus it is written, *there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*⁹⁹ Therefore, we must believe upon His name (i.e. that He will save us *from* our sins, not *in* our sins) or else we will remain in our sin under the *condemnation* that *already* rests upon the world.¹⁰⁰ Meaning, unless we repent and believe the gospel of Jesus Christ, we cannot look to Him for salvation.
- b. Unconditional love, on the other hand, would *save* us in the kingdom of God *in* our sins. Unlike God's cleansing and perfecting love,¹⁰¹ unconditional love is not motivated or equipped to free us *from* sin and its bondage by leading us to forsake evil through repentance and faith in the name of Jesus Christ. Unconditional love does not direct us to our Lord's call to be godly by denying ourselves of all ungodliness and following Him in the ways of truth.¹⁰² It finds no need to call us to take up our cross and follow our Savior. Rather, unconditional love would have us believe that

God's call to be holy and His cleansing ministry in Christ are unrelated to and independent of His love. It would have us believe that there is no need to be cleansed of our sins to abide in God's presence.¹⁰³ Such cleansing, it indicates, is unnecessary and even ineffectual since it maintains that we are loved irrespective of all things.

7. Chastening and Corrective Love versus Unconditional Love.

*And ye have forgotten the exhortation
which speaketh unto you as unto children,
My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord,
nor faint when thou art rebuked of him;
For **whom the Lord loveth**
he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.
If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons;
for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?
But if ye be without chastisement,
whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.
Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us,
and we gave them reverence;
Shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?
For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure;
but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.
Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous;
nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness
unto them which are exercised thereby.*

Hebrews 12:5-11

*I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire,
that thou mayest be rich;
and white raiment,
that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear;
and anoint thine eyes with eye salve,
that thou mayest see.*

***As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten;
be zealous therefore, and repent.***

*Behold, I stand at the door, and knock;
If any man hear my voice, and open the door,
I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.
To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne,
even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.
He that hath an ear,
let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*

Revelation 3:18-22

- a. God's love is a chastening, corrective love that conveys His wisdom and concern for

and to us. It exposes us to His will and concern for us regarding our behavior and mindset. It confronts us in our sin and shows us the way whereby we may escape the wrath to come, meaning the judgment of all sin that has not been repented of through faith in Jesus Christ.

- b. Unconditional love is not a chastening or corrective love. Because it is unconditional, it does not confront sin. It only *loves* since it loves independently of any and all things. One consequence of this limitation imposed by unconditional love is that it cannot offer us voluntary surrender to God through *the love of the truth*. Unconditional love cannot enable us to yield to God to be cleansed of evil. It must leave us hostage to – by not coaxing us or persuading us away from – our fallen state and the evil one who has rule over our carnal nature. Thus, unconditional love is not honorable toward justice or rich in mercy to repentant sinners. This is not the way of true covenant love.

In conclusion, the scriptures hold sufficient information to provide us with a clear understanding of God's love. Further, unconditional love is clearly not the love of God which has been revealed in scripture. It does not represent a just and balanced view of God. It does not embody the true and complete nature and character of God's being. Although it would appear to be a godly love, unconditional love fails to recognize both the *light* and *truth* of God.¹⁰⁴ It fails to satisfy His justice and to express His mercy.

And None are Forbidden

Unconditional love denies God His right to rule according to His knowledge, power, wisdom, mercy, truth, justice, and judgment.¹⁰⁵ It nullifies the work of God's grace by presuming His grace is an automatic trait or expression of His character, even a compulsory trait of His nature. It would relegate any expression of His grace as being involuntary (without volition) on God's part. Therefore, unconditional love assumes and promotes an empty form of grace, i.e. a false grace, which is powerless to express God's true and complete nature, making it unable to actually transform and change lives for good.

The fact that God does not love unconditionally does not imply, however, that He loves conditionally (i.e. as opposed to unconditionally).¹⁰⁶ As it is written, *God is love*. So He never ceases to be love or to do that which is of greatest benefit for mankind.

*He doeth not anything, save it be
for the benefit of the world,
For He loveth the world, even that He layeth down
His own life that He may draw all men unto Him;
Wherefore, He commandeth none that they shall not
partake of His salvation.
Behold, doth He cry unto any, saying, Depart from Me? ¹⁰⁷
Behold I say unto you, Nay!
But He saith:
Come unto Me, all ye ends of the earth,*

*Buy milk and honey without money and without price.
 Behold, hath He commanded any that they should depart
 out of the synagogues, or out of the houses of worship?
 Behold I say unto you, Nay!
 Hath He commanded any that they should not
 partake of His salvation?
 Behold I say unto you, Nay!
 But He hath given it free for all men;
**And He hath commanded His people that they
 should persuade all men unto repentance.**
 Behold, hath the Lord commanded any that they
 should not partake of His goodness?
 Behold I say unto you, Nay!
 But all men are privileged, the one like unto the other,
 And none are forbidden.*

II Nephi 11:96-105

However, while God is and will always be love, those who sin against Him will not know or experience His love if they refuse to repent and come to Him. His justice cannot be compromised. Stated another way, His love cannot stand in conflict with His justice. Only mercy can overpower justice according to the plan of restoration.¹⁰⁸

*What! Do ye suppose that mercy can rob justice?
 I say unto you, nay, not one whit;
 If so, God would cease to be God!
 And thus God bringeth about His great and eternal
 purposes which were prepared from the foundation
 of the world.
 And thus cometh about the salvation
 and the redemption of men,
 And also their destruction and misery.
 Therefore, O my son, whosoever will come, may come
 and partake of the waters of life freely;
 And whosoever will not come, the same
 is not compelled to come,
 But in the last day it shall be restored unto him
 according to his deeds;
 If he hath desired to do evil and hath
 not repented in his days,
 Behold, evil shall be done unto him,
 according to the restoration of God.*

Alma 19:107-111

Thus, terms like *unconditional* or *conditional* serve to trivialize the true character and nature of God. They are embellishments to the word of God, which may satisfy the *carnal*

mind, but not the spiritual mind.¹⁰⁹ Remember, John wrote *God is love*,¹¹⁰ not *God is unconditional love*. Consequently, these terms serve to obscure His grace and glory. They deny God His ability and prerogative to express His will and wisdom and to govern according to His justice and mercy. They divert our thoughts away from what it means to enter fully into the covenant fellowship of His love.

While attempting to describe God's love using terms like *unconditional* or *conditional* greatly restricts and dwarfs our understanding of how God loves His creation, identifying the source of this doctrine is beneficial for another reason. By prayerfully examining unconditional love in light of scripture we gain valuable insights into the devil's rebellion and his deceptive work in these latter times.

He that Entereth Not by the Door

Satan came before God in the beginning, volunteering to be the savior of mankind. His ambition was to receive God's glory.¹¹¹ In consequence of his rebellion, he was cast down¹¹² to become the devil, *the father of lies*.¹¹³ His purpose then became to *deceive, blind, and captivate* all those who likewise do not honor God's Word, Jesus Christ.

*And I, the Lord God, spake unto Moses, saying,
That Satan whom thou hast commanded in the name of mine Only Begotten,
is the same which was from the beginning;
And he came before me, saying,
Behold I, send me, I will be thy Son,
and I will redeem all mankind,
that one soul shall not be lost,
and surely I will do it;
wherefore, give me thine honor.
But behold, my beloved Son,
which was my beloved and chosen from the beginning,
said unto me: Father, thy will be done,
and the glory be thine forever.
Wherefore, because that Satan rebelled against me,
and sought to destroy the agency of man,
which I, the Lord God, had given him;
and also that I should give unto him mine own power;
By the power of mine Only Begotten I caused that he should be cast down;
and he became Satan. Yea, even the devil, the father of all lies,
to deceive, and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will,
even as many as would not hearken unto my voice.*

Genesis 3:1-5

In the words of Jesus, Satan is *a thief and robber* who has sought to *climb up* to heaven where he may enter *the sheepfold*, meaning the church, by bypassing *the Door* God has appointed,¹¹⁴ meaning Jesus Christ.¹¹⁵

*Verily, verily, I say unto you,
He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold,
but climbeth up some other way,
the same is a thief and a robber.*

John 10:1

What, then, can we say of Satan's unconditional love? What is it, and what is it not?

1. Unconditional love is a proud love. It dismisses the counsel of *the Good Shepherd* and *Bishop* of our souls.¹¹⁶ It sets aside His guidance and teachings.¹¹⁷ It finds no need to draw upon His leadership and counsel. Unconditional love operates independently of Jesus Christ and His teachings and prides itself in loving without limitation or restrictions; this includes loving without commitment. Being unconditional, it need not listen to His voice.¹¹⁸ It need not receive direction from Him. Despising God's *Suffering Servant*,¹¹⁹ unconditional love attempts to transcend and, thereby, free itself of the meek and lowly ways of our Lord and Savior.¹²⁰ Consequently, unconditional love does not lead us or teach us to pray for guidance or direction from Jesus Christ. By this alone we may know that unconditional love is not of or inspired by the Holy Spirit of the one true and living God.¹²¹
2. Unconditional love is a cold love. It fails to plumb *the breadth, the length, the depth, and the height* of the riches of God's love¹²² that is revealed through the *condescension, birth, ministry, death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession* (the advocacy) of our Lord Jesus Christ, the true Redeemer of mankind. As such, it is not able to save anyone from *the wrath to come*, meaning God's judgment against sin.¹²³ Even if Satan were to have good intentions, his unconditional love could be nothing more than a neutral or neutered love, a monotone love, a *cold love*.¹²⁴
3. Unconditional love is an unfruitful love. It does not lead us or empower us to bear the fruit of God's Holy Spirit of truth unto the glory of God through being grafted into Jesus Christ as the True Vine.¹²⁵ Rather, by default unconditional love would allow us, even encourage us, to continue bearing the fruit (works) of the flesh, thereby keeping us from inheriting the kingdom of God.¹²⁶

*Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; **of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law. (Galatians 5:19-23)*

4. Unconditional love is not the perfect love of God that casts out fear.¹²⁷ It is not able to free us from fear because it does not liberate us from sin and its consequences. Unlike the truly liberating covenant love of Jesus Christ, unconditional love is not able to set us

free from a guilty conscience, the failings of our character, or the accusations and threats of our foes.¹²⁸ Unconditional love is, by its very nature, content to love us in our present carnal conditions without providing any means for us to become *perfect in love in this world* even as our God is *perfect*.¹²⁹ In fact, unconditional love is often found saying things like, “No one is perfect.”¹³⁰

5. Unconditional love is not a regenerating and renewing love.¹³¹ With unconditional love, we can only content ourselves with being loved just the way we are without the hope of becoming a child of God through being born anew (through the reception of the Holy Spirit in the baptism of Jesus Christ).¹³² Though it would welcome us into its presence forever, unconditional love would do so without causing us to be reborn into new creatures so that we may have true fellowship with God through the ministry and friendship of Jesus Christ.¹³³ It does not provide us with the hope of being redeemed and transformed from our fallen state back into the *image* and, thus, the presence of God. Thus, unconditional love denies the meaning of the *fall* and hence the purpose of Christ’s sacrifice. It is, therefore, antichrist.
6. Unconditional love is not reconciling love. It finds no need to reconcile us unto the will of God or to lead us to be accountable unto God as stewards over His creation and the many gifts He has given unto us.¹³⁴ Rather, it seeks to remove the restriction that we must be reconciled unto God to know His love.¹³⁵ When we falter or fail in our God-given stewardships, unconditional love does not call us or lead us to submit to the demands of God’s justice and to seek for His mercy through the repentance that is based on faith in Jesus Christ and His work of redemption.¹³⁶ Unconditional love does not recognize our need to be wise stewards over all that God has placed in our care.¹³⁷ It does not lead us to repent and come unto Jesus Christ so we may live according to His will and plan for our lives through faith and obedience. Neither does unconditional love teach us to recognize or acknowledge God’s justice¹³⁸ nor the commendations and condemnations of His judgments.¹³⁹ Unconditional love would simply love us and have us love without resolution or restitution.

In summary, although Satan, whom Paul calls *the god of this world*,¹⁴⁰ proposes to love everyone with unconditional love,¹⁴¹ he actually loves no one. As unconditional love, he fails to act as our advocate before God. He fails to redeem us *from* sin and the associated chastening and condemnation (requisite with God’s justice) that comes from sinning against God. He fails to appease the demands of divine justice and to extend mercy to us through faith in Jesus Christ. He fails to reconcile us to God.¹⁴²

The Lord ... Saveth Such as be of a Contrite Spirit

Belief in unconditional love is often associated with a belief that the expression of love is redemptive in and of itself (by itself). For this view to be valid, love must be an independent force that is free to act separately from God’s justice and mercy. It must be free to defy the judgments and wisdom of God by freeing, or liberating, its recipients from the same without any resolution to justice’s claims and, thus, without any expression of God’s

wisdom and will.

Thus, belief that the expression of love is redemptive in and of itself is a proposition that the redemption of mankind can be realized without regard for, or consideration of, God's laws and ordinances, or His covenants and commandments. If unconditional love were to be given such license, there could be no reconciliation, no conforming of its recipients to the justice and mercy of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

To subscribe to such a notion one must ignore or dismiss why *reconciliation* through *redemption* was necessary in the first place and why Jesus Christ came to be the *propitiation* (the appeasement of justice) for our sins. One must either discount or fail to understand our Lord's intercession, specifically the need for His intervention on our behalf before God's throne of justice.¹⁴³

As such, those who believe in redemption by the expression of love alone do not acknowledge the place and authority of divine justice, or they simply choose to ignore it. In so doing, they fail to comprehend why our Lord had to actually suffer and die to provide eternal advocacy for mankind through repentance and faith on His name.¹⁴⁴ They may read of how Paul was not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which is *the power of salvation unto those who believe*, without comprehending or acknowledging his warning that the *wrath of God* awaits those ***who love not the truth, but remain in unrighteousness*** after that which may be known of God (meaning Jesus Christ¹⁴⁵) *is manifest to them*.¹⁴⁶

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ;
for it is the power of God unto salvation **to everyone that believeth;**
to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

*For therein is the righteousness of God revealed
through faith on his name;
as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

***For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven
against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men;
who love not the truth, but remain in unrighteousness,
after that which may be known of God is manifest to them.***

*For God hath revealed unto them the invisible things of him,
from the creation of the world, which are clearly seen;
things which are not seen being understood by the things that are made,
through his eternal power and Godhead;
so that they are without excuse.*

Romans 1:16-20

Consequently, those who hold to redemption by love's expression alone, i.e. unconditional love, likewise fail to acknowledge or comprehend the need for God's mercy and compassion, and the proper relationship between these qualities of God's character and His justice.¹⁴⁷ Why? **Unconditional love has no need for mercy since it presumes to operate independently of and separately from God's justice and judgment.**

In contrast, God's love is not only compatible with His justice, but God's love also honors divine justice and works in concert with the same – and is, in fact, manifest through His justice. God's love is therefore able to offer mercy to all truly repentant souls,

to all those who come unto Him contritely in obedience to His call to repent and believe the gospel in reverence of Jesus Christ and the atonement He has offered up on our behalf.¹⁴⁸

*The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart;
and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.*

Psalms 34:18

*For thus saith the high and lofty One
that inhabiteth eternity,
whose name is Holy;
I dwell in the high and holy place,
with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit,
to revive the spirit of the humble,
and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.*

Isaiah 57:15

*Therefore also now, saith the Lord,
Turn ye even to me with all your heart,
and with fasting,
and with weeping,
and with mourning;
and rend your heart, and not your garments,
and repent, and turn unto the Lord your God;
For he is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger,
and of great kindness,
And he will turn away the evil from you.*

Joel 2:13

*But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith,
God resisteth the proud,
but giveth grace unto the humble.
Submit yourselves therefore
to God.
Resist the devil,
and he will flee from you.
Draw nigh to God,
and he will draw nigh to you.
Cleanse your hands, ye sinners;¹⁴⁹
and purify your hearts, ye double-minded.
Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep;
Let your laughter be turned to mourning,
and your joy to heaviness.
Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord,*

and he shall lift you up.

James 4:6-10

According to His word, then, God's love is redemptive for the truly repentant soul.¹⁵⁰ His love is a just and merciful love, a gracious and sacrificial love, a pure and perfect love, an infinite and eternal love, a longsuffering covenant love to those who will have Him be their God.

*Behold, the Lord hath created the earth,
that it should be inhabited;
And He hath created His children,
that they should possess it.
And He raiseth up a righteous nation,
and destroyeth the nations of the wicked.
And He leadeth away the righteous into precious lands;
and the wicked He destroyeth,
and curseth the land unto them for their sakes.
He ruleth high in the heavens, for it is His throne
and this earth is His footstool.
**And He loveth them
which will have Him to be their God;
Behold, He loved our fathers,
and He covenanted with them, yea,
even Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,
And He remembered the covenants which He had made;
Wherefore, He did bring them out of the Land of Egypt.
And He did straiten them in the wilderness with His rod,
for they hardened their hearts even as ye have;
And the Lord straitened them because of their iniquity;
He sent flying fiery serpents among them;
and after they were bitten, He prepared a way
that they might be healed;**¹⁵¹
And the labor which they had to perform was to look;
And because of the simpleness of the way, or the easiness
of it, there were many which perished.
And they did harden their hearts from time to time,
and they did revile against Moses and also against God;
Nevertheless, ye know that they were led forth
by His matchless power into the Land of Promise.*

I Nephi 5:126-137

Briefly summarized, His love is a redemptive, covenant love.

Unconditional love, on the other hand, is not covenant love, being by definition without conditions, including any and all covenant terms or conditions. Thus, it fails to satisfy the demands of divine justice and to offer mercy to those who sin and repent. It fails to commit

itself to us as an intercessor, as our advocate with God when we are at variance with God's commandments and, thus, with His justice and judgment. Only the pure and perfect love of Jesus Christ is able to make peace between God's justice and repentant mankind.

Therefore, those who subscribe to the belief that the bestowal of unconditional love is redemptive in and of itself fail to:

- recognize the condemnation that rests upon all who do not believe on the name of Jesus Christ;¹⁵²
- comprehend the light God revealed in and through the ministry and atonement of Jesus Christ, either for lack of knowledge or by choice;
- grasp the wisdom and will of God that is revealed in His covenants and commandments;
- appreciate the offering for sin that was made for mankind by Jesus Christ upon the cross of His intercession;
- recognize His appeasement of divine justice and the extension of divine mercy toward those who repent and come unto Him through His perfecting light and love;
- receive the witness of the Holy Spirit that Jesus Christ actually had to purchase us through the offering of His own blood so that He might set us free from sin and from the punishment of sin through *the conditions of repentance*;¹⁵³ and
- have confidence in *the faith of the gospel*¹⁵⁴ that is granted through belief and hope in His name and obedience to His word (the belief and hope that He will save us from our sins, not in our sins).¹⁵⁵

Except they repent and come unto Jesus Christ through faith in His name, they will also fail to realize the object¹⁵⁶ of the true faith of the gospel, which is the salvation of their souls.¹⁵⁷ Why? In effect, by failing to be reconciled unto God's will, they must forever remain in their lost and fallen state outside the light and love of God. That is, they will remain forever subject to the devil, the father of lies.¹⁵⁸

Hence, the call of the Lord to each and every one of us is to come to Him with a broken heart and a contrite heart. If we do, He promises He will fill us with His pure and perfecting love through the gift of the Holy Ghost.

*I Am the light and the life of the world;
I Am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.
And ye shall offer up unto Me no more
the shedding of blood;
Yea, your sacrifices and your burnt offerings
shall be done away,
For I will accept none of your sacrifices
and your burnt offerings;
**And ye shall offer for a sacrifice unto Me
a broken heart and a contrite spirit;
And whoso cometh unto Me with a broken heart
and a contrite spirit, him will I baptize
with fire and with the Holy Ghost,**¹⁵⁹*

*Even as the Lamanites, because of their faith in Me
at the time of their conversion, were baptized
with fire and with the Holy Ghost,
And they knew it not.
Behold, I have come unto the world to bring redemption
unto the world – to save the world from sin;
Therefore, whoso repenteth and cometh unto Me
as a little child, him will I receive,
For of such is the kingdom of God.
Behold, for such I have laid down My life
and have taken it up again;
**Therefore, repent and come unto Me,
ye ends of the earth, and be saved!***

III Nephi 4:48-52

*Yea, come unto Christ and be perfected in Him
and deny yourselves of all ungodliness,
And if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness and
love God with all your might, mind and strength,
Then is His grace sufficient for you,
that by His grace ye may be perfect in Christ;
And if by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ,
ye can in no wise deny the power of God.
And again, if ye by the grace of God are perfect in Christ
and deny not His power,
**Then are ye sanctified in Christ by the grace of God
through the shedding of the blood of Christ,
Which is in the covenant of the Father unto the remission
of your sins, that ye become holy without spot.***

Moroni 10:29,30

Remember, Jesus came to do the will of His heavenly Father in establishing this righteous covenant between God and mankind.¹⁶⁰

*But we see Jesus,
who was made a little lower than the angels
for the suffering of death,
Crowned with glory and honor;
that he **by the grace of God**
should taste death for every man.*

Hebrews 2:9

Behold, He Loved Our Fathers, and He Covenanted with Them

In sending His Only Begotten Son into the world, God expressed a love that was in keeping with the provisions of His justice and mercy and was, therefore, expressed through and founded in His covenants.

*And He loveth them which will have Him to be their God;
Behold, He loved our fathers, and He covenanted with them,
yea, even Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,
And He remembered the covenants which He had made.*

I Nephi 5:131,132

*For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel
after those days, saith the Lord;
I will put my laws into their mind,
and write them in their hearts;
And I will be to them a God,
and they shall be to me a people;
And they shall not teach every man his neighbor,
and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord;
for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.
For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness,
and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.
In that he saith, A new covenant,
he hath made the first old.
Now that which decayeth and waxeth old
is ready to vanish away.*

Hebrews 8:10-13

According to this covenant, Jesus came to place His laws within our hearts and our minds so that we might live according to His will and purpose for us.

*Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith,
Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not,
but a body hast thou prepared me;
In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin
thou hast had no pleasure.
**Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me)
to do thy will, O God.**
Above when he said,
Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin
thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein;
which are offered by the law;
**Then said he,
Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.***

*He taketh away the first,
 that he may establish the second.
 By which **will** we are sanctified
through the offering once of the body of Jesus Christ.
 And every priest standeth daily
 ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices,
 which can never take away sins;
 But this man,
 after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever,
 sat down on the right hand of God;
 from henceforth to reign until his enemies be made his footstool.
 For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.
 Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us;
 for after that he had said before,
**This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days,
 saith the Lord;
 I will put my laws into their hearts,
 and in their minds will I write them;
 and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.**
 Now where remission of these is,
there is no more offering for sin.*

Hebrews 10:5-18

*And this I say,
 that **the covenant,**
that was confirmed before of God in Christ,
 the law,
 which was four hundred and thirty years after,
 cannot disannul,
 that it should make the promise of none effect.
 For if the inheritance is of the law,
 then it is no more of promise;
 but God gave it to Abraham by promise.
 Wherefore then,
 the law was added because of transgressions,
 till the seed should come
 to whom the promise was made in the law given to Moses,
 who was ordained by the hand of angels
 to be a mediator of this first covenant, (the law.)
 Now this mediator was not a mediator of the new covenant;
But there is one mediator of the new covenant, who is Christ,
 as it is written in the law concerning the promises made to Abraham and his seed.
Now Christ is the mediator of life;
 for this is the promise which God made unto Abraham.*

Galatians 3:17-20

Only *covenant love*, not an *unconditional love*, could accomplish such a righteous, grace-filled work for fallen humanity, a work that is forever founded in and through everlasting covenant terms and conditions. Why? Unconditional love knows of no need or provision to undertake such a work because it loves unconditionally, without respect of any and all things. It does not acknowledge God's gift and labor of love revealed in the life and ministry of our Redeemer-Savior, Jesus Christ. Briefly comprehended, unconditional love seeks God's favor without regard for His justice and mercy in His light and truth.

If Ye Believe Not that I Am He, Ye Shall Die in Your Sins

Unconditional love's adherents will yet consider themselves to be in the center of God's love for them while remaining outside the light of God. However, notwithstanding their appearance of being free from sin, e.g. by their beliefs, traditions, or religious practices, those who seek to be loved by unconditionally will perish in their sins because unconditional love has no means to bring about any other end for mankind.

*Then said Jesus again unto them,
I go my way, and ye shall seek me, **and shall die in your sins;**
Whither I go, ye cannot come.
Then said the Jews,
Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come.
And he said unto them,
Ye are from beneath; I am from above;
ye are of this world; I am not of this world.
I said therefore unto you, that **ye shall die in your sins;**
for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.
Then said they unto him,
Who art thou?
And Jesus saith unto them,
Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning.
John 8:21-25*

In summary, those who fail to be redeemed by entering into the New Covenant, which Jesus Christ mediates – to be cleansed of their sins so that they may be filled with His Holy Spirit and thus with His love¹⁶¹ – will remain forever as if there had been no redemption made for them.¹⁶²

*He is the beginning and the end,
the first and the last;
And he shall come into the world to redeem his people;
and he shall take upon him the transgressions of those who believe on his name;
and these are they that shall have eternal life,
and salvation cometh to none else;
Therefore the wicked remain as though there had been no redemption made,*

*except it be the loosing of the bands of death;
For behold, the day cometh
that all shall rise from the dead
and stand before God,
and be judged according to their works.*

Alma 8:95-98

*But remember, that he that persists in his own carnal nature,
and goes on in the ways of sin and rebellion against God,
remaineth in his fallen state,
and the devil hath all power over him.
Therefore he is as though there was no redemption made;
being an enemy to God;
and also is the devil an enemy to God.*

Mosiah 8:77,78

*Then I say unto you,
They shall be as though there had been no redemption made;
for they can not be redeemed according to God's justice;
and they can not die, seeing there is no more corruption.*

Alma 9:32

Before John Wrote God is Love, John Wrote God is Light

John, the Apostle of Jesus Christ who wrote “*God is love*,” did not teach that we are loved unconditionally or that redemption is accomplished by the expression of love alone. Rather, John taught that we are redeemed and brought back into God’s presence and into the provisions of God’s love through entering into and abiding in the light God reveals through His Word of truth.

Consider John’s epistle chronicled as *I John*. John begins this profound letter on love by first declaring, “*God is light*.”¹⁶³ With this revelation of the divine nature of God, John introduces us to the *conditions of repentance* by which we may enter into and abide in God’s fellowship and thus in His love:¹⁶⁴

*This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you,
that **God is light**, and in Him is no darkness at all.*

***If** we say that we have **fellowship** with Him, and walk in darkness,
we lie, and do not the truth.*

*But **if** we walk in the light, as He is in the light,
we have **fellowship** one with another,
and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.*

***If** we say that we have no sin,
we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*

***If** we confess our sins,
He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins,*

and to **cleanse** us from all unrighteousness.
If we say that we have not sinned,
 we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.
 My little children,
 these things write I unto you, that ye sin not.
 But **if** any man sin **and repent**,
 we have an Advocate with the Father,
 Jesus Christ the righteous;
 And He is the **propitiation**¹⁶⁵ for our sins;
 and not for ours only,
but also for the sins of the whole world.
And hereby we do know that we know Him,
if we keep His commandments.
He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments,
is a liar, and the truth is not in him.¹⁶⁶
But whoso keepeth His word,
in him verily is the love of God perfected;
Hereby know we that we are in Him.

I John 1:5-2:5

The qualifying statements made by John, emphasized by the frequent use of the word “if,” clearly outline for us the *conditions* by which we may abide in God’s fellowship: **Those who walk in the light as God is in the light have fellowship with God; conversely, those who lie and do not the truth (i.e. those who walk in darkness by not keeping God’s word of truth)**¹⁶⁷ **do not have fellowship with God.**

Therefore, it is vital that we understand that John’s declaration, *God is light*, is as important as his declaration, *God is love*. God is, at the same time, both light and love. Nothing we have done or will ever do can change the true nature and character of God.¹⁶⁸ **Consequently, no one should expect to abide in God’s love except they are also willing and committed to abide in His light. As such it is a very cruel thing indeed to tell people about the love of God without first telling them, as John has done,**¹⁶⁹ **about the light of God.** For as long as individuals and groups of individuals choose to remain in darkness, they will remain outside God’s fellowship.

By remembering that **before John wrote *God is love*, John wrote *God is light***, we are able to keep John’s message that *God is love* in its proper perspective and balance.¹⁷⁰ Without holding the declaration that *God is light* equal in significance to the declaration that *God is love*, we will have an unbalanced understanding and view of God and the covenant relationship (fellowship) He calls us into with Himself and with each other.

Who Shall Separate Us from the Love of Christ?

If God does not love us unconditionally, then one may ask why Paul wrote that he was *persuaded* that *nothing* is able to *separate* us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

Who shall **separate** **us** from the love of Christ?

shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine,
or nakedness, or peril, or sword?
As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long;
we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.
Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.
For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels,
nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,
nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature,
shall be able to **separate** us from the love of God,
which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:35-39

The answer is realized when we understand to whom Paul was referring when he wrote “us.” In the opening verses of this same eighth chapter Paul identified those who are kept in the love of Christ Jesus. They are those individuals and peoples who are *in* Jesus Christ (those who are grafted into Jesus Christ¹⁷¹) and walk no longer after the *flesh* but after His Spirit of truth.¹⁷²

**There is therefore now no condemnation
to them which are in Christ Jesus,
who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.**
For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus
hath made me free from the law of sin and death.
For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh,
God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin,
condemned sin in the flesh;
that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us,
who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.
For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh;
but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.
**For to be carnally minded is death;
but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.**
Because the carnal mind is enmity against God;
for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.
So then they that are after the flesh cannot please God.
**But ye are not after the flesh, but after the Spirit,
if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.**
**Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ,
he is none of his.**

Romans 8:1-9

Briefly summarized, those who are *in* Jesus Christ, who *walk in the light as He is in the light*, are they who are *kept* in His love. They are kept under grace (i.e. law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus) and not under the law (of Moses) because they walk after His Spirit of truth. That is, they are led by the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ.

*For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty;
only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh,
but by love serve one another.
For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this;
Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.
But if ye bite and devour one another,
take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.
**This I say then, Walk in the Spirit,
and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.**
For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit,
and the Spirit against the flesh;
and these are contrary the one to the other;
so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.
**But if ye be led of the Spirit,
ye are not under the law.***

Galatians 5:13-18

*My sheep hear my voice,
and I know them, and they follow me:
And I give unto them eternal life;
and they shall never perish,
neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.
My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all;
and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.
I and the Father are one.*

John 10:27,28

Thus we see that abiding in God's love is not something we should expect to realize or experience in our lives without the appropriate response of obedience on our part to the Spirit of God. The way given for us to abide in His love is through full acceptance of His Lordship.¹⁷³ Recall how Jesus said that unless we take up our cross and follow Him we cannot be His disciple;¹⁷⁴ and, further, that if we deny Him before men He will deny us before His Father in heaven.

*Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me before men,
him will I confess also before my Father who is in heaven.
But whosoever shall deny me before men,
him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven.*
Matthew 10:28,29

*Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men,
him shall the Son of Man also confess before the angels of God.
But he who denieth me before men,*

shall be denied before the angels of God.

Luke 12:8,9

In the words of Jude, there have been and will be those who will in fact **separate** themselves from the Spirit of God and, thus, from the love of God, because of their **sensual** ways.

*I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this,
how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt,
afterward destroyed them that believed not.
And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation,
he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness
unto the judgment of the great day.
Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner,
giving themselves over to fornication,
and going after strange flesh,
are set forth for an example,
suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.
Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh,
despise dominion,
and speak evil of dignities.
Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil
he disputed about the body of Moses,
durst not bring against him a railing accusation,
but said, The Lord rebuke thee.
But these speak evil of those things which they know not;
but what they know naturally, as brute beasts,
in those things they corrupt themselves.
Woe unto them!
for they have gone in the way of Cain,
and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward,
and shall perish in the gainsaying of Core.
These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you,
feeding themselves without fear;
Clouds they are without water,
carried about of winds;
Trees whose fruit withereth,
without fruit,
Twice dead,
plucked up by the roots;
Raging waves of the sea,
foaming out their own shame;
Wandering stars,
to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.
And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying,
Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints,*

To execute judgment upon all,
And to convince all that are ungodly among them
of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed,
and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.
These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts;
and their mouth speaketh great swelling words,
having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.
But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before
of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;
how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time,
who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.
These be they who separate themselves,
sensual, having not the Spirit.

Jude 1:5-19

While these *separate* themselves by being *sensual*, those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit, shall never be removed from the hand of Christ or separated from the love of God.¹⁷⁵ Instead, our heavenly Father will nourish and prune them so that they may bring Him an abundance of fruit through the True Vine, our Lord Jesus Christ.¹⁷⁶ As Jude concluded:

But ye, beloved,
building up yourselves on your most holy faith,
praying in the Holy Ghost,
keep yourselves in the love of God,
looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.
And some have compassion,
making a difference;
And others save with fear,
pulling them out of the fire;
hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.
Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling,
and to present you faultless
before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,
To the only wise Savior,
be glory and majesty, dominion and power,
both now and ever. Amen.

Jude 1:20-25

Ye are My Friends, if Ye Do Whatsoever I Command You

The night of His betrayal by one of His apostles, Jesus Christ spoke plainly to His remaining eleven apostles about His love for them,¹⁷⁷ a love He described as being the *greatest* love of all (implying lesser types of love do exist). He spoke of a sacrificial love, a love that was to be revealed by the laying down of His life for His *friends*.

*This is my commandment,
That ye love one another, **as I have loved you.**
Greater love hath no man than this,
that a man lay down his life for his friends.*

John 15:12,13

Jesus did not stop here in describing His *greater* love, however. As recorded in the next verse, He went on to clarify that this wondrous, unique love is reserved for His *friends*, meaning those who do *whatsoever* He, as their Lord, commands them:¹⁷⁸

***Ye are my friends,**
if ye do whatsoever I command you.*

John 15:14

Together, His words read:

*Greater love hath no man than this,
that a man lay down his life **for his friends.**
Ye are my friends,
if ye do whatsoever I command you.*

John 15:13,14

The message is unmistakably unambiguous. The promise of our Lord's love is to those who obey Him (and those who seek so to do¹⁷⁹) and who are in the world but not of it.¹⁸⁰

Jesus spoke these words of love and friendship the night of the Passover meal (commonly known as *the Last Supper*). Given the setting and the emphasis on friendship with our Lord based in obedience, our Lord was evidently not speaking of unconditional love (which, by definition, knows no covenant terms or conditions). Rather, Jesus was speaking of covenant love, the love He expressed in establishing the New Covenant (Testament) through the shedding of His blood for His *friends*, meaning those who love Him unto the keeping of His words to His honor and glory.¹⁸¹

Remember, the power of salvation is granted to those who both receive and enter into the friendship of Jesus Christ by keeping His commandments out of an honest and sincere love for Him.¹⁸²

*Abide in me,
and I in you.
As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself,
except it abide in the vine;
no more can ye, except ye abide in me.
I am the vine,
ye are the branches.
He that abideth in me, and I in him,
the same bringeth forth much fruit;*

*for without me ye can do nothing.
If a man abide not in me,
he is cast forth as a branch,
and is withered;
And men gather them,
and cast them into the fire,
and they are burned.
If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you,
ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.*
John 15:4-7

Those who abide in Jesus Christ are His friends. Because they have listened to His voice in this life, they will hear Him say to them at that last day, "*Well done, good and faithful servant...*" "*Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*"¹⁸³

On the other hand, though they may have done many good things, there will be those who will hear Jesus Christ say to them, "*Depart from Me all workers of iniquity.*"¹⁸⁴

*Verily I say unto you,
**it is not every one that saith unto me,
Lord, Lord, that shall enter unto the kingdom of heaven;
but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven.**
For the day soon cometh,
that men shall come before me to judgment,
to be judged according to their works.
**And many will say unto me in that day,
Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name;
and in thy name cast out devils;
and in thy name done many wonderful works?
And then will I say,
Ye never knew me;
depart from me ye that work iniquity.***
Matthew 7:30-33

***Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand,
Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire,
prepared for the devil and his angels.**
For I was an hungered,
and ye gave me no meat;
I was thirsty,
and ye gave me no drink;
I was a stranger,
and ye took me not in;
Naked,
and ye clothed me not;*

*Sick, and in prison,
and ye visited me not.
Then shall they also answer him, saying,
Lord, when saw we thee an hungered,
or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison,
and did not minister unto thee?
Then shall he answer them, saying,
Verily I say unto you,
Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these my brethren,
ye did it not unto me.
**And these shall go away into everlasting punishment;
but the righteous into life eternal.***

Matthew 25:42-47

Why? They failed to keep His commandments.¹⁸⁵ In the context of the present discussion, they loved *unconditionally*, that is, without regard for or consideration of the laws and ordinances of God, and without the guidance and wisdom of the Good Shepherd. They did not know Him or His ways. They did not follow in His footsteps. They loved their own way, not the ways of compassion, and thus were without the constraint or direction of His Holy Spirit of truth.

What must we do then to ensure that we are not told by Jesus Christ to *depart* from Him in the last day? We must listen to His voice as the voice of the Good Shepherd, and then follow Him by keeping His words. We must take care not to be like Cain of old, who gloried in his own accomplishments and refused to rely solely with Abel upon the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world for our salvation.¹⁸⁶ For the importance of this lesson to be firmly embedded in our thoughts, to guide and motivate us, we must understand that we can do nothing good apart from Jesus Christ. Only by entering into His new and everlasting covenant and continuing therein by loving Him unto the keeping of His commandments will we find a Savior in Jesus Christ.¹⁸⁷

A New Commandment I Give Unto You

Earlier during the Last Supper, which is a covenant meal, Jesus gave His disciples a *new* commandment, to love each other *as* He loved them. He went on to state that it would be by their love *for each other* that the world would know they are His disciples.

*A new commandment I give unto you.
That ye love one another;
as I have loved you,
that ye also love one another.
**By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples,
if ye have love one to another.***

John 13:34,35

John would later reaffirm this same commandment to the church in his letter on love.

*He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments,
is a liar, and the truth is not in him.¹⁸⁸
But whoso keepeth his word,
in him verily is the love of God perfected;
Hereby know we that we are in him.
He that saith he abideth in him
ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.
Brethren, I write a new commandment unto you,
but it is the same commandment which ye had from the beginning.
The old commandment is the word
which ye have heard from the beginning.
**Again, a new commandment I write unto you,
which thing was of old ordained of God,¹⁸⁹
and is true in him, and in you;
because the darkness is past in you,
and the true light now shineth.***

I John 2:4-8

*For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning,
that we should love one another ...
And this is his commandment,
That we should **believe on the name** of his Son Jesus Christ,
and love one another, as he gave us commandment.
**And he that keepeth his commandments
dwelleth in him, and he in him.**
And hereby we know that he abideth in us,
by the Spirit which he hath given us.*

I John 3:11,23,24

To understand and appreciate Jesus Christ's love for His *friends*, it is instructive to recall His teaching about the two great commandments, of which He said all the *law and prophets* hang upon these two commandments.¹⁹⁰

*Jesus said unto him,
Thou shalt love the Lord thy God
with all thy heart,
and with all thy soul,
and with all thy mind.
This is the first and great commandment.
And the second is like unto it;
Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.
**On these two commandments
hang all the law and the prophets.***

Matthew 22:36-39

*Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would
that men should do to you,
do ye even so to them;
For this is the law and the prophets.*

Matthew 7:21

From these words, we learn that our love for each other is to be founded in God's commandments and His prophecies (the prophetic expression of His will and purpose for mankind). Note further how our love for both God and our fellowman must be an obedient love.

***By this we know that we love the children of God,**
when we love God, and keep His commandments.
For this is the love of God,
that we keep His commandments;
and His commandments are not grievous.*

I John 5:2,3

*And now I beseech thee, lady,
not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee,
but that which we had from the beginning,
that we love one another.
And **this is love,**
that we walk after his commandments.
This is the commandment,
That, as ye have heard from the beginning,
ye should walk in it.*

II John 1:5,6

Thus, it is in loving God unto the keeping of His commandments that we may know that we love the children of God as well as God Himself. In other words, we cannot honestly say we love each other or God if we do not keep God's commandments. As reported earlier, John states it rather bluntly by writing:

*He that saith, I know him,
and keepeth not his commandments,
is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*

I John 2:4

In summary, our love for our Lord and His body, the church, must be rooted in obedience to Jesus Christ, a love that is expressed by our keeping His words.

*And why call ye me Lord, Lord,
and do not the things which I say?*

Whosoever cometh to me,
 and heareth my sayings and doeth them,
 I will show you to whom he is like.
 He is like a man who built a house,
 and digged deep,¹⁹¹
 and laid the foundation on a rock,
 and when the flood arose,
 the stream beat vehemently upon that house,
 and could not shake it;
 for it was founded upon a rock.
 But he who heareth and doeth not,
 is like a man that without a foundation built a house upon the earth;
 against which the stream did beat vehemently,
 and immediately it fell;
 and the ruin of that house was great.

Luke 6:46-49

Except Ye Abide in Me

When speaking of His love for His *friends* at the last Supper, Jesus identified and described Himself as the *True Vine*. He explained how we must be *grafted* into Him as a branch is *grafted* into a vine. Additionally, except we bear God the fruit of this union through being grafted into the True Vine, our heavenly Father will *take us away* from Jesus Christ.

I am the True Vine,
 and my Father is the husbandman.
Every branch in me that beareth not fruit
He taketh away;
 And every branch that beareth fruit,
 He purgeth it,
 that it may bring forth more fruit.
 Now ye are clean through the word
 which I have spoken unto you.
 Abide in me, and I in you.
 As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself,
 except it abide in the vine;
 no more can ye,
except ye abide in me.
 I am the vine,
 ye are the branches.
 He that abideth in me, and I in him,
 the same bringeth forth much fruit;
For without me ye can do nothing.
If a man abide not in me,

**he is cast forth as a branch,
and is withered;
and men gather them,
and cast them into the fire,
and they are burned.**

*If ye abide in me,
and my words abide in you,
ye shall ask what ye will,
and it shall be done unto you.*

**Herein is my Father glorified,
that ye bear much fruit;
so shall ye be my disciples.**

*As the Father hath loved me,
so have I loved you;*

Continue ye in my love.

**If ye keep my commandments,
ye shall abide in my love;
even as I have kept my Father's commandments,
and abide in his love.**

*These things have I spoken unto you,
that my joy might remain in you,
and that your joy might be full.*

*This is my commandment,
That ye love one another,
as I have loved you.*

**Greater love hath no man than this,
that a man lay down his life for his friends.**

**Ye are my friends,
if ye do whatsoever I command you.**

John 15:1-14

Note again the use of the word “*if*” in our Lord’s teachings. This small and often overlooked word highlights the provisions and the conditions that God has established for us to abide in our Lord and thus in His love. Through being grafted into Jesus Christ we are enabled to bear the fruit of His countenance, His Spirit (i.e. *all goodness and righteousness and truth*,¹⁹² namely *love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance*¹⁹³), to the honor of our heavenly Father.¹⁹⁴

Our Heavenly Father *grafts* us into Jesus Christ by binding us to Him with covenant terms. He causes our lives to be intertwined with His for the express purpose of our bearing Him *much fruit*, meaning the fruit of His Spirit.¹⁹⁵

*Herein is my Father glorified,
that ye bear much fruit;*

so shall ye be my disciples.

John 15:8

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering,
gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance;
Against such there is no law.*

And they that are Christ's

have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

*If we **live in** the Spirit,*

*let us also **walk in** the Spirit.*

Galatians 5:22-25

Causing fruit to be born in and through our lives is our heavenly Father's work as the *husbandman* of the True Vine. **He is the only one who is able to graft us into Jesus Christ (into His living and abiding Word), and He is the only one who is able to take us out of His fellowship, i.e. out of His hand.**¹⁹⁶ According to His purposes, then, we are to be bound to our Lord through the covenant relationship He has established through His Word so that we may abide in His love through keeping His commandments in light and truth.¹⁹⁷

It is imperative, then, that we understand and acknowledge that we cannot bear our Lord any useful fruit, meaning the fruit of His Spirit, without being directly bound through covenant means to Jesus Christ as the True Vine (i.e. by being grafted into Him). As He testified, without Jesus we can do nothing that is lasting and true, exactly nothing that is of any eternal significance or of positive consequence. As Isaiah confessed, our righteousness is as *filthy rags*.¹⁹⁸ Therefore, God, seeing the weakness of mankind, sent His Only Begotten Son into the world to become our *life*, to become the direct source of strength by which we may live godly lives before Him.

*If ye then be risen with Christ,
seek those things which are above,
where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.*

*Set your affection on things above,
not on things on the earth.*

*For ye are dead,
and your life is hid with Christ in God.*

*When Christ, **who is our life**, shall appear,
then shall ye also appear with him in glory.*

Colossians 3:1-4

*For in him we live,
and move,
and have our being...*

Acts 17:28

In conclusion, God combines and intertwines our lives in the life of Jesus Christ through covenant terms and conditions so that, with the Apostle Paul, we may do *all things* through

Jesus Christ who guides and strengthens us.¹⁹⁹

*I am crucified with Christ;
nevertheless I live;
yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;
And the life which I now live in the flesh
I live by the faith of the Son of God,
who loved me,
and gave himself for me.*

Galatians 2:20

*I can do all things through Christ
which strengtheneth me.*

Philippians 4:13

*Finally, my brethren,
Be strong in the Lord,
and in the power of his might.*

Ephesians 6:10

Therefore Doth My Father Love Me

Expecting God to love us with a love that is separate from His justice and mercy is not in keeping with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Our Lord did not teach that we should believe in redemption by the expression of love alone (i.e. by the bestowal of unconditional love). Rather, Jesus taught that we are to *abide* in His love by keeping His commandments.²⁰⁰ This, Jesus added, is the way He *abides* in His heavenly Father's love.²⁰¹

***Therefore doth my Father love me,
because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.***

*No man taketh it from me,
but I lay it down of myself.
I have power to lay it down,
and I have power to take it again.*

This commandment have I received of my Father.

John 10:17,18²⁰²

***If ye keep my commandments,
ye shall abide in my love;
even as I have kept my Father's commandments,
and abide in his love.***

John 15:10

In saying, "**even as**," Jesus made it abundantly clear that we are to follow Him in His example of obedience.²⁰³ If we obey Him by keeping His words, Jesus assures us that we will

abide in His love.

***If ye keep my commandments,
ye shall abide in my love;
even as I have kept my Father's commandments,
and abide in his love.***

John 15:10

Just prior to stating these words, Jesus made it clear that **if** obedience (unto keeping His words, teachings, etc.) is the form and quality of our love expressed towards God (to His honor and glory), then He and His Father in heaven will love us and will make their *abode* with us. It is only in and through this means, or upon these conditions, that our Lord promises us that we may abide in His love.

***He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them,
he it is that loveth me;
And he that loveth me
shall be loved of my Father,
and I will love him,
and will manifest myself to him.***

...
***If a man love me,
he will keep my words;
and my Father will love him,
and we will come unto him,
and make our abode with him.***

John 14:21,23

John reinforced Jesus' teaching on love and the keeping of His words by saying that this is, in very fact, the love of God, that we keep His commandments.

***By this we know that we love the children of God,
when we love God,
and keep his commandments.
For this is the love of God,
that we keep his commandments;
and his commandments are not grievous.***

I John 5:2,3

Thus it is written, the Lord ***became the author of eternal salvation*** to those who ***obey*** Him,²⁰⁴ and ***He loveth them which will have Him to be their God.***²⁰⁵ Unconditional love is antithetical to these truths. It is the antithesis of God's love. It proposes to *abide* with everyone without any consideration as to whether or not we love and obey the true and living God through keeping His commandments and instructions in the light of truth. Thus Jesus asks:

*And why call ye me Lord, Lord,
and do not the things which I say?*

Luke 6:46

In summary, we are to abide in our Lord's love by keeping His commandments. God extends His mercy and compassion toward us for the sake of Jesus Christ, the only one willing and able to satisfy the demands of justice for us by atoning for our sins. His redemption is effectual for all repentant souls who come to rely upon Him by loving Him and His ways unto the keeping of His words. By failing to, or choosing not to keep His commandments and covenants, we separate ourselves from God and thereby choose to abide outside of the love of God.

*Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save;
neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear;
**But your iniquities have separated between you and your God,
and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.***

Isaiah 59:1,2

***Your iniquities have turned away these things,
and your sins have withholden good things from you.***

Jeremiah 5:25

Behold What Manner of Love the Father Hath Bestowed Upon Us

John the Beloved has called us to have a proper perspective of God and His love by calling us to *behold* the *manner of love* that God has *bestowed* upon us. The godly love John outlines for us is a transformative purifying and perfecting love that is given to us for a specific purpose: so that we may be God's children, His *sons* and *daughters*, a people who love as He loves us.²⁰⁶

*Behold, what **manner of love** the Father hath **bestowed** upon us,
that we should be called the sons of God;
Therefore the world knoweth us not,
because it knew him not.
Beloved, now are we the sons of God,
and it doth not yet appear what we shall be;
but we know that, when he shall appear,
we shall be like him;
for we shall see him as he is.
**And every man that hath this hope in him
purifieth himself, even as he is pure.***

I John 3:1-3

*And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us.
God is love;*

***and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God,
and God in him.***

*Herein is our love made perfect,
that we may have boldness in the day of judgment;
because as he is, so are we in this world.*

I John 4:16,17

This precious *manner* of love is given to us through the gift of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, and comes of the purifying *hope* to be like Jesus Christ when He returns in glory.

*And hope maketh not ashamed;
because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts
by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*

Romans 5:5²⁰⁷

***For as many as are led by the Spirit of God,
they are the sons of God.***

*For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear;
but ye have received the Spirit of adoption;
whereby we cry, Abba, Father.*

***The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit,
that we are the children of God;***

***And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ;
if so be that we suffer with him,
that we may be also glorified together.***

*For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time
are not worthy to be named
with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*

***For the earnest expectation of the creature
waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.***

*For the creature was made subject to tribulation not willingly,
Because the creature itself also shall be delivered
from the bondage of corruption*

into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

*For we know that the whole creation groaneth
and travaileth in pain together until now.*

*And not only they, but ourselves also,
which have the firstfruits of the Spirit,
even we ourselves groan within ourselves,*

***waiting for the adoption,
to wit, the redemption of our body.***

***For we are saved by hope;
but hope that is seen is not hope;***

for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

Romans 8:14-24

*Wherefore, my beloved brethren, **pray unto the Father***

with all the energy of heart,

That ye may be filled with this love

which he hath bestowed upon all who are

true followers of his Son Jesus Christ,

That ye may become the sons of God,

That when he shall appear, we shall be like him;

for we shall see him as he is,

That we may have this hope,

That we may be purified even as he is pure. Amen.

Moroni 7:53

As the One in whose image we were formed, God calls us to be like Himself. He calls us to be pure *even as* He is pure through the expression of His love.

God's aim in bestowing His love upon us is to set us apart, that is, to cause us to be holy as He is holy.²⁰⁸ His aim is to purify us through His light and truth so that we may have complete (*perfect*) fellowship with each other in and through Himself.²⁰⁹ This is why Paul, the Apostle of Jesus Christ, has called us to *separate* ourselves from all ungodliness and the sinful practices of this world. If we do, Paul reminds us that God has promised to be a Father unto us, saying, "*ye shall be my sons and daughters.*"

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers;

for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?

and what communion hath light with darkness?

And what concord hath Christ with Belial?

or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?

for ye are the temple of the living God;

As God hath said, I will dwell in them,

and walk in them;

and I will be their God,

and they shall be my people.

Wherefore come out from among them,

and be ye the separate, saith the Lord,

And touch not the unclean thing;

and I will receive you,

and will be a Father unto you,

and ye shall be my sons and daughters,

saith the Lord Almighty.

II Corinthians 6:14-18

*Wherefore, my beloved, as ye 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;
For it is God which worketh in you
both to will and to do of his good pleasure.
Do all things without murmurings and disputings;
That ye may be blameless and harmless, **the sons of God**,
without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation,
among whom ye shine as lights in the world;
Holding forth the word of life;
that I may rejoice in the day of Christ,
that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain.*

Philippians 2:12-16

Consistent with His plan for humanity, our Lord instructed His disciples to rely upon and to express His love in their lives and ministry, again for this very reason, "*that ye may be the children of your Father who is in heaven.*"

*Ye have heard that it hath been said,
Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy.
But I say unto you, love your enemies;
bless them that curse you;
do good to them that hate you;
and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you;
that ye may be the children of your Father who is in heaven;
For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good,
and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.*

Matthew 5:45-47

Finally, note here how Jesus illustrates God's *manner of love* by stating that God makes His sun to rise on both the evil and the good and His rain to fall on the just as well as the unjust. This does not mean God's *manner of love* is *unconditional* (or conversely, *conditional*). Rather, as noted above, Jesus' command to love our enemies as God has loved us is for a purpose: to both call us and to enable us to be His children in light and love.

Hereby Perceive We the Love of Christ

While some may say we are to love others unconditionally, Jesus and His disciples have called us to love much more fully and committedly than unconditionally. In fact, God expects, even requires greater things of us than unconditional love. He requires us *to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with Him* and to *hear the rod* He has established.

*He hath showed thee, O man, what is good;
And what doth the Lord require of thee,
but to do justly,*

***and to love mercy,
and to walk humbly with thy God?***
*The Lord's voice crieth unto the city,
and the man of wisdom shall see thy name;
Hear ye the rod,
and who hath appointed it.*

Micah 6:8,9

God confirmed that Jesus is that *rod* (the One noted here that we are to *hear*) when He spoke from heaven while Peter, James, and John were present with Jesus at the time He was transformed upon the mount.

*While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them;
and, behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said,
This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;
hear ye him.*

Matthew 17:4

Jesus also confirmed these words by testifying that Moses, who appeared with our Lord on *the mount of transfiguration*, had spoken of Him many years prior.²¹⁰

*Behold, I am he of whom Moses spake, saying,
A prophet shall the Lord your God
raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me,
Him shall ye hear in all things
whatsoever he shall say unto you.*

III Nephi 9:60

Therefore, we are to hearken to the word of our Lord, to hear and do whatsoever our Lord testifies. Unconditional love presumes to be unfettered by this requirement. It pays no attention to Jesus Christ. Neither does it need to recognize Him as the One whom God has appointed to be Lord of all. The gospel speaks otherwise. It calls us to hear and obey God's chosen One, Immanuel, the Word made Flesh.

According to our Lord and His apostles, we are to love others sacrificially in the likeness of our Lord's love and according to His work of reconciliation.

***Hereby perceive we the love of Christ,
because he laid down his life for us;
and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.***
*But whoso hath this world's good,
and seeth his brother have need,
and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him,
how dwelleth the love of God in him?*
*My little children,
let us not love in word, neither in tongue only;*

but in deed and in truth.

I John 3:16-18

*Therefore if any man live in Christ,
he is a new creature;
old things are passed away;
behold, all things are become new,
and receiveth all the things of God,
who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ,
and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;
To wit, that God is in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself,
not imputing their trespasses unto them;
and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.
Now then we are ambassadors for Christ,
as though God did beseech you by us;
we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.
For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin;
that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*

II Corinthians 5:17-21

While reflecting upon these verses, note again how Jesus plainly stated that there is no *greater* love than His *sacrificial covenant love* which He expressed for His *friends*.²¹¹ Simply stated, unconditional love is not greater than our Lord's love. Why? It fails to honor God by honoring His covenants and commandments which have been given for the benefit of mankind.

Our Lord's love is a brotherly love that honors God and His covenants and commandments. It is expressed through *the faith which worketh by love*,²¹² whereas unconditional love has no need to directly or indirectly constrain or commit itself to God or His work of redemption.

God's love *constrains* us to follow the doctrine and example of Jesus Christ. It leads us to love even as He has loved us such that we lay down our lives for our brethren according and in keeping with His will for us.²¹³

*For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning,
That we should love one another.
Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother.
And wherefore slew he him?
Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.
Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.
We know that we have passed from death unto life,
because we love the brethren.
He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.
Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer;
and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.
Hereby perceive we the love of Christ,*

*because he laid down his life for us;
And we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

I John 3:11-16

Thus, it should be evident that unconditional love never has been nor ever will be the love of the Christ, the Anointed of God. Neither will it ever be greater than His redemptive and sacrificial love, His pure and perfect covenant love, charity, which is redeeming love.

Break Not My Commandments for to Save Your Lives

Jesus Christ not only taught that we are to lay down our lives for *the brethren*, but He also taught that we must take care not to seek to save our lives by breaking His commandments.

*Break not my commandments for to save your lives;
for whosoever will save his life in this world,
shall lose it in the world to come.*

Matthew 16:27

While Jesus Christ taught that we must be willing to lay down our lives for Him, we are to lay them down for Him only in and according to both His commandment to love and according to the presence of His love abiding within us. For it is written:

*Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels,
and have not charity,
I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.
And though I have the gift of prophecy,
and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge;
and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains,
and have not charity,
I am nothing.
And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor,
and though I give my body to be burned,
and have not charity,
it profiteth me nothing.*

I Corinthians 13:1-3

*And if a man be meek and lowly in heart and confesses
by the power of the Holy Ghost that Jesus is the Christ,
he must needs have charity;
**For if he have not charity, he is nothing;
Wherefore, he must needs have charity-**
And charity suffereth long,
and is kind and envieth not,
and is not puffed up,*

*seeketh not her own,
 is not easily provoked,
 thinketh no evil,
 and rejoiceth not in iniquity,
 but rejoiceth in the truth,
 beareth all things,
 believeth all things,
 hopeth all things,
 endureth all things-*
*Wherefore, my beloved brethren, if ye have not charity
 ye are nothing, for charity never faileth;
 Wherefore, cleave unto charity, which is the greatest of all, for all things must fail;
**But charity is the pure love of Christ,
 And it endureth forever;**
 And whoso is found possessed of it at the last day,
 it shall be well with them.*

Moroni 7:50-52

Because His love, charity, *endures* all things, it is able to enable martyrs to lay down their lives under persecution for His sake.²¹⁴

*And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven,
 Now is come salvation, and strength,
 and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ;
 For the accuser of our brethren is cast down,
 which accused them before our God day and night.
 For they have overcome him by the blood of the Lamb,
 and by the word of their testimony;
**For they loved not their own lives,
 but kept the testimony even unto death.**
 Therefore, rejoice O heavens,
 and ye that dwell in them.*

Revelation 12:9-11

...for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

Revelation 19:10

Unconditional loves neither asks, compels, nor enables anyone to lay down their lives for their brethren or to keep the testimony of Jesus Christ unto the end, for it loves them just the way they are. Neither does it provide us with assistance nor guidance in how to live according to this important doctrine of the Lord's calling on our lives.

And He That Dwelleth in Love Dwelleth in God, and God in Him

God's bestowal of His love upon us is not merely an expression of His love; it is not something we are to just feel or experience. The gift of His love, given to us through the Holy Ghost, comes with the power to become as God is, in light and love, and thus to love as He loves.²¹⁵

*He came unto his own,
and his own received him not.
But as many as received him,
to them gave he power to become the sons of God;
only to them who believe on his name.*

John 1:11,12

*And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us.
God is love;
**And he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God,
and God in him.***

*Herein is our love made perfect,
that we may have boldness in the day of judgment;
because as he is, so are we in this world.*

I John 4:16,17

This empowering gift of His love involves God investing His *express image*, Jesus Christ, into our *countenance* so we may bear Him the fruit of His labor from within us.²¹⁶

*God, who at sundry times and in divers manners
spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,
Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son,
whom he hath appointed heir of all things,
by whom also he made the worlds;
Who being the brightness of his glory,
and the express image of his person,
And upholding all things by the word of his power,
when he had by himself purged our sins,
sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high...*

Hebrews 1:1-3

*And because ye are sons,
God hath sent forth the Spirit of his son into your hearts,
crying, Abba, Father.*

Galatians 4:6

This is what it means to be *born again*. By receiving His own image in our countenances, and thus to love as He loves through the Holy Spirit of truth, we are reborn and receive of

his fullness, *even immortality and eternal life, through his grace.*

*Seeing ye have purified your souls
in obeying the truth through the Spirit
unto unfeigned love of the brethren,
See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently;
being born again, not of corruptible seed,
but of incorruptible, by the word of God,
which liveth and abideth forever.*

I Peter 1:22,23

*For in the beginning was the Word, even the Son,
who is made flesh,
and sent unto us by the will of the Father.
And as many as believe on his name
shall receive of his fullness.
And of his fullness have all we received,
even immortality and eternal life, through his grace.*

John 1:16

The question then is this: Have each one of us actually been born of Him unto the remission of our sins and the sanctification of our souls?

*And now behold, I ask of you my brethren of the church,
Have ye spiritually been born of God?
Have ye received His image in your own countenances?
Have ye experienced this mighty change in your hearts?
Do ye exercise faith in the redemption of Him
who created you?
Do you look forward with an eye of faith and
view this mortal body raised in immortality?
And this corruption raised in incorruption, to stand
before God to be judged according to the deeds
which hath been done in the mortal body?
I say unto you, can you imagine to yourselves that ye hear
the voice of the Lord saying unto you in that day:
Come unto Me, ye blessed,
For behold, your works have been the works
of righteousness upon the face of the earth?*

...
*And now behold I say unto you my brethren,
if ye have experienced a change of heart,
And if ye have felt to sing the song of redeeming love,*

I would ask, can ye feel so now?

Alma 3:27-32,46

Unless we are born of God, we will not inherit or even see the kingdom of God, for we will not be able to endure unto the end.

*Jesus answered and said unto him,
Verily, verily, I say unto thee,
Except a man be born again,
he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

John 3:3

And Above All These Things Put on Charity

Paul, the Apostle of Jesus Christ, admonishes us therefore to *put* on Jesus Christ, as the armor of light, by putting on His pure love charity.

*The night is far spent,
the day is at hand;
Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness,
and let us **put on the armor of light**.
Let us walk honestly, as in the day;
not in rioting and drunkenness,
not in chamberfing and wantonness,
not in strife and evening.
But **put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ**,
and make not provision for the flesh,
to gratify the lusts thereof.*

Romans 13:12-14

*Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved,
bowels of mercies, kindness,
humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering;
Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another,
if any man have a quarrel against any;
even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.
**And above all these things put on charity,
which is the bond of perfectness.***

Colossians 3:12-14

Why? It is through the gift of our Lord's love, charity, that our hearts are bound together in perfectness *and* peace.

*Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God
which is given to me for you, **to fulfill the word of God;***

*Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations,
 but now is made manifest to his saints;
 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory
 of this mystery among the Gentiles;
 which is Christ in you, the hope of glory;
 Whom we preach,
 warning every man,
 and teaching every man in all wisdom;
 That we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus;
 whereunto I also labor,
 striving according to his working,
 which worketh in me mightily.
 For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you,
 and for them at Laodicea,
 and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh;
**That their hearts might be comforted,
 being knit together in love,**
 and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding,
 to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God and of Christ,
 who is of God, even the Father;
 in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*

Colossians 1:25-2:3

*See that ye love one another;
 cease to be covetous;
 learn to impart one to another as the gospel requires;
 cease to be idle;
 cease to be unclean;
 cease to find fault one with another;
 cease to sleep longer than is needful;
 retire to thy bed early, that ye may not be weary;
 arise early, that your bodies and your minds may be invigorated;*

**And above all things,
 cloth yourselves with the bonds of charity, as with a mantle,
 which is the bond of perfectness and peace;**

**Pray always, that you may not faint until I come;
 behold, and lo, I will come quickly, and receive you unto myself. Amen.**

D&C 38a-c

No one can be bound to another through unconditional (a non-covenant) love. Further note that nowhere in scripture have we been told to *put on* unconditional love. Thus, to seek to love God and others through any other means than through charity is to seek to establish a relationship (friendship) separate from Jesus Christ and His mediation for us. This cannot be, for according to Jesus Christ we can only come to God through Him.

*Jesus saith unto him,
I am the way, the truth, and the life:
no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*
John 14:6

No other name under heaven exists by which we can be brought back into God's presence.

*Neither is there salvation in any other;
for there is none other name under heaven given among men,
whereby we must be saved.*
Acts 4:12

Having ... A Love of God And of All Men

Central to the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is the command to have *a love of God and all men.*²¹⁷

*Wherefore, ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ,
**having a perfect brightness of hope,
and a love of God and of all men.**
Wherefore, if ye shall press forward,
feasting upon the word of Christ,
and endure to the end,
Behold, thus saith the Father:
Ye shall have eternal life.*
II Nephi 13:29,30

While we are to love everyone, we are to *especially* love those who have been born of Jesus Christ.²¹⁸ This means we are to especially love those with whom we have entered into a covenant relationship according to the same love by which Jesus Christ established the new covenant.²¹⁹

*A new commandment I give unto you.
That ye love one another;
As I have loved you,
that ye also love one another.
**By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples,
if ye have love one to another.***
John 13:35

*This is my commandment,
That ye love one another, as I have loved you.*
John 15:12

*Honor all men.
Love the brotherhood.
Fear God.
Honor the king.*

1 Peter 2:17

*As we have therefore opportunity,
let us **do good unto all men,**
especially unto them who are of the household of faith.*
Galatians 6:10²²⁰

*But whoso hath this world's good,
and seeth his brother have need,
and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him,
how dwelleth the love of God in him?*

1 John 3:17

Again, this is how we may know we have passed from death unto life, when we love those who are *begotten* of God.

*We know that we have passed from death unto life,
because we love **the brethren.**
He that loveth not his brother
abideth in death.*

1 John 3:14

*Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ
is born of God;
And everyone that loveth him that begat
loveth him also that is begotten of him.
By this we know that we love the children of God,
when we love God, and keep his commandments.*

1 John 5:1,2

We must also remember to love those who are living outside a covenant relationship with God. How? We are to love them with a *reconciling* love which points them towards Jesus Christ and His covenant love.

*Therefore if any man live in Christ,
he is a new creature;
old things are passed away;
behold, all things are become new,
and receiveth all the things of God,
who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ,
and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;*

*To wit, that God is in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself,
not imputing their trespasses unto them;
and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.*

Now then we are ambassadors for Christ,

*as though God did beseech you by us;
we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*

*For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin;
that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*

II Corinthians 5:17-21

Our love for those who are living outside of a covenant relationship with God is to be a love that centers on a hope that they too may become reconciled unto God by repenting of their sins and entering into a covenant relationship with Him before the last day when we all are to be brought before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ.²²¹ Thus we are to go into all the earth, baptizing and teaching everyone to observe the Lord's commandments:

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying,

All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations,

baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you;

and lo, I am with you always, unto the end of the world. Amen.

Matthew 28:17-19

And now, I, Alma, do command you

in the language of him who hath commanded me,

that ye observe to do the words which I have spoken unto you.

I speak by way of command unto you

that belong to the church;

And unto those who do not belong to the church,

I speak by way of invitation, saying,

Come, and be baptized unto repentance,

that ye also may be partakers of the fruit of the tree of life.

Alma 3:107-108

Brought to Sing Redeeming Love

At the end of his explanation of how the covenant people of Israel will be restored Paul graciously praised God for *the depth of the riches both of His wisdom and knowledge.*

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!

how unsearchable are his judgments,

and his ways past finding out!

For who hath known the mind of the Lord?

or who hath been his counselor?

*Or who hath first given to him,
and it shall be recompensed unto him again?
For of him, and through him, and to him,
are all things; to whom be glory forever. Amen.*

Romans 11:33-36

Ammon expressed similar praise for God at the conclusion of the labor he and his brethren had performed among the Lamanites, a truly wonderful labor which brought a great harvest of souls to God from among His covenant people.

*Now have we not reason to rejoice?
Yea, I say unto you, there never were men that had
so great reason to rejoice as we since the world began;
Yea, and my joy is carried away,
even unto boasting in my God,
For He has all power, all wisdom and all understanding;
He comprehendeth all things;
**And He is a merciful Being, even unto salvation,
to those who will repent and believe on His name.**
Now if this is boasting, even so will I boast,
For this is my life and my light, my joy and my salvation
and my redemption from everlasting wo.*

Alma 14:123-125

Ammon's joy was great because through him and his brothers God had *brought* many of their brethren *to sing redeeming love*.

*Behold how many thousands of our brethren
hath He loosed from the pains of hell
and they are **brought to sing redeeming love!**
And this because of the power of His word which is in us,
Therefore, have we not great reason to rejoice?
Yea, we have reason to praise Him forever!
For He is the Most High God and has loosed our brethren
from the chains of hell;
Yea, they were encircled about with everlasting darkness
and destruction,
But behold, He hath brought them into His everlasting
light, yea, into everlasting salvation,
And they are encircled about with the matchless bounty
of His love.
Yea, and we have been instruments in His hands
of doing this great and marvelous work,
Therefore, let us glory--yea, we will glory in the Lord!
Yea, we will rejoice, for our joy is full!*

*Behold, who can glory too much in the Lord?
Yea, who can say too much of His great power
and of His mercy and of His longsuffering
toward the children of men?
Behold I say unto you, I cannot say
the smallest part which I feel.*

Alma 14:93-97

Truly no joy exists like unto the joy of singing *redeeming love*. Unconditional love knows no such joy nor can it because it does not bring about *the conditions of repentance*, meaning a broken heart and contrite spirit. Because it simply bestows its love on others it cannot know the joy of bringing sinners to repentance through a change of heart. Thus it would not ask a question like Alma asked the church of his day:

*And now behold I say unto you my brethren,
if ye have experienced a change of heart,
And if ye have felt to sing the song of redeeming love,
I would ask, can ye feel so now?*

Alma 3:46

Unconditional love simply does not take notice of such things, nor can it. Therefore, it cannot worship God for *the depth of the riches both of His wisdom and knowledge* as did Paul when recounting God's plan for redeeming the house of Israel. Only redeeming love knows of such great and amazing mysteries pertaining to God's love for His covenant people.

And Ye Receive the Spirit Through Prayer

As emphasized previously in this volume, God bestows His love upon us through His Holy Ghost, according to the prayer of Jesus Christ.

*And hope maketh not ashamed;
because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts
by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*

Romans 5:5

*If ye love me, keep my commandments.
And I will pray the Father,
and he will give you another Comforter,
that he may abide with you forever;
even the Spirit of truth (...which is the Holy Ghost...)*

John 14:15,16,(26)

In contrast, unconditional love is not dependent upon the prayer of Jesus or the gift of God's Holy Ghost. In fact, according to some of those who teach unconditional love today, we can simply train ourselves to love unconditionally through our own thought processes and abil-

ities. According to at least some of its advocates, unconditional love is something we can learn to have and live by on our own without God's help or guidance. This is not true of God's love. God Himself must invest His love within us via the Holy Ghost by which we are made holy.

Our praying in agreement with Jesus Christ by faith is crucial to our receiving God's Spirit and thus His love. For as it is written, we receive the Spirit through prayer.

*Remember that that which cometh from above is sacred,
and must be spoken with care, **and by constraint of the Spirit,
and in this there is no condemnation;
And ye receive the Spirit through prayer;
wherefore, without this there remaineth condemnation.***

D&C 63:16a

...and the Spirit shall be given unto you by the prayer of faith...

D&C 42:5b

***Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for,
the evidence of things not seen.***

Hebrews 11:1

*Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive,
because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him;
But ye know him; for he dwelleth with you,
and shall be in you.
I will not leave you comfortless;
I will come to you.*

John 14:17,18²²²

Moreover, praying in the Holy Ghost through faith (in the Comforter's²²³ assurance of our hope²²⁴) keeps us in the love of God.

*But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith,
praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God,
looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.*

Jude 1:20,21

*For we are saved by hope;
but hope that is seen is not hope;
for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?
But if we hope for that we see not,
then with patience we do wait for it.
**Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities;
for we know not what we should pray for as we ought;***

*but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us
with groanings which cannot be uttered.*

Romans 8:24-26

*And the firstfruits of repentance is baptism,
And baptism cometh by faith,
unto the fulfilling the commandments,
And the fulfilling the commandments
bringeth remission of sins,
And the remission of sins
bringeth meekness and lowliness of heart,
And because of meekness and lowliness of heart
cometh the visitation of the Holy Ghost,
**Which Comforter filleth with hope and perfect love,
Which love endureth by diligence unto prayer, until the
end shall come when all the saints shall dwell with God.***

Moroni 8:29

This is the *manner of love* Jesus Christ taught and bestowed in His ministry. It is the love of obedience and devotion to our heavenly Father's commandments, particularly the command to pray to receive His Spirit whereby we may love as He loves.

Watch ye and pray,
lest ye enter into temptation.

Mark 14:42

*And what I say unto one, I say unto all,
**Watch ye therefore, and pray always,
and keep my commandments,**
that ye may be counted worthy to escape
all these things which shall come to pass,
and to stand before the Son of Man
when he shall come clothed in the glory of his Father.*

Luke 21:36

*If ye keep my commandments,
ye shall abide in my love;
even as I have kept my Father's commandments,
and abide in his love.*

John 15:10

*For this is the love of God,
that we keep his commandments;
and his commandments are not grievous.*

I John 5:3

Without praying according to the obedience of Jesus Christ, we remain as the hypocrites whose prayers are vain; that is, we remain under condemnation.

*And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites;
for they love to pray standing in the synagogues
and in the corners of the streets,
that they may be seen of men;
For, verily, I say unto you,
They have their reward.
But thou, when thou prayest,
enter into thy closet,
And when thou hast shut the door,
pray to thy Father who is in secret;
and thy Father who seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.
But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions,
as the hypocrites do;
for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.
Therefore be ye not like unto them;
for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of,
before ye ask him.
Therefore after this manner shall ye pray, saying.
Our Father who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven.
Give us this day, our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And suffer us not to be led into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever, Amen.*

Matthew 6:5-16

*For though we walk in the flesh,
we do not war after the flesh;
(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal,
but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;)
Casting down imaginations,
and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God,
**And bringing into captivity
every thought to the obedience of Christ;**
And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience,
when your obedience is fulfilled.*

II Corinthians 10:3-6

Watch Unto Prayer

To conclude, then, the love of God which Jesus Christ revealed to the world is redemptive covenant love. It is the one true love that has power to transform us through faith in His name unto obedience to His word. Accordingly, Jesus Christ came into *the world* as the *light of the world*²²⁵ so that all who are willing may receive *the love of the truth* from Him by repenting of their sins and coming unto Him. It is only in and through Jesus Christ and the means He has provided for our redemption that we may abide with God in the truth of His everlasting light and love.²²⁶

Unconditional love, on the other hand, presumes to redeem mankind without light or the provisions founded in *the love of the truth*. No one need abide in God's light to enjoy unconditional love's presence. You can remain forever in darkness and yet be loved unconditionally by Satan. The problem is that while you may feel loved in some form or fashion, you will remain forever unredeemed. You will not be cleansed from your sins and will thus remain forever outside the true fellowship and friendship of the one true and living God, who is in Christ Jesus reconciling the world unto Himself.

It may be difficult for Christians in general to consider, let alone concede, that they have been deceived into believing unconditional love is God's love. Yet Paul has warned us that we should expect such deceptions to increase in these last days and that Satan and his servants will try to deceive even the elect if possible. Notwithstanding any reluctance to allow ourselves to consider the possibility that we have or may have been deceived, we would be wise to heed Paul's admonitions to let no one deceive us *by any means* and thus to be on the lookout for such deceptions. Otherwise, we will surely be deceived.

Therefore, now, more than ever, we must take great care to be *watchful unto prayer* so that we may be *counted worthy to escape all these things*, including the deceptions that Jesus and His disciples foretold would come upon the inhabitants of the earth in the latter days.²²⁷

*And what I say unto one, I say unto all,
Watch ye therefore, and pray always,
and keep my commandments,
That ye may be counted worthy
to escape all these things which shall come to pass, and
to stand before the Son of Man
when he shall come clothed in the glory of his Father.*
Luke 21:36

*...Be ye therefore sober,
and watch unto prayer.
And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves;
for charity preventeth a multitude of sins.*
1 Peter 4:7b,8

Praying always
with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit,

And watching thereunto

with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.

Ephesians 6:18

Now, more than ever, we must search in *the light of Christ*, the living Word of God and the light of the world.

*Wherefore, take heed, my beloved brethren, that ye
do not judge that which is evil to be of God,
Or that which is good and of God to be of the devil.²²⁸
For behold, my brethren, it is given unto you to judge,
that ye may know good from evil;
And the way to judge is as plain, that ye may know
with a perfect knowledge, as the daylight
is from the dark night;
For behold, the Spirit of Christ is given to every man,
that they may know good from evil.
Wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge:
For everything which inviteth to do good and
to persuade to believe in Christ is sent forth
by the power and gift of Christ;
Wherefore, ye may know with a perfect knowledge
it is of God;
But whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do evil and
believe not in Christ and deny Him and serve not God,
Then ye may know with a perfect knowledge
it is of the devil.
For after this manner doth the devil work,
For he persuadeth no man to do good – No! Not one!
neither doth his angels,
neither doth they which subject themselves unto him.
And now my brethren, seeing that ye know the light by
which ye may judge, which light is the light of Christ,
See that ye do not judge wrongfully;
For with that same judgment which ye judge,
ye shall also judged;
Wherefore, I beseech of you, brethren, that ye
should **search diligently in the light of Christ**
that ye may know good from evil;
And if ye will lay hold upon every good thing, and
condemn it not, ye certainly will be a child of Christ.*

Moroni 7:12-18

Now, more than ever, we must *submit* ourselves unto God and *resist* the devil by *bringing* into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.²²⁹

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God,
that he may exalt you in due time.
Casting all your care upon him;
for he careth for you.
Be sober, be vigilant;
because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion,
walketh about, seeking whom he may devour;
whom resist steadfast in the faith,
knowing that the same afflictions
are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.
But the God of all grace,
who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus,
after that ye have suffered a while,
make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.
To him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.
1 Peter 5:6-11

For though we walk in the flesh,
we do not war after the flesh;
(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal,
but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;)
Casting down imaginations,
and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God,
And bringing into captivity
every thought to the obedience of Christ;
And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience,
when your obedience is fulfilled.
II Corinthians 10:3-6

But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith,
God resisteth the proud,
but giveth grace unto the humble.
Submit yourselves therefore
to God.
Resist the devil,
and he will flee from you.
Draw nigh to God,
and he will draw nigh to you.
Cleanse your hands, ye sinners;²³⁰
and purify your hearts, ye double-minded.
Be afflicted,
and mourn,
and weep;
Let your laughter be turned to mourning,

*and your joy to heaviness.
Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord,
and he shall lift you up.*

James 4:6-10

Now more than ever we must *resist* Satan's plan for all of humanity:

- a plan designed to eclipse God and His love, to steal His honor, and to break His covenants;²³¹
- a plan that would plummet countless souls into despair and misery because of its failure to provide mankind with a space of time to prepare to meet God through repentance and faith in the atoning merits and advocacy of Jesus Christ;²³² and
- a plan that would destroy God's plan of salvation and His gift of liberty²³³ and stewardship, which He has given unto mankind.²³⁴

Let us, therefore, humble ourselves and pray and seek the Lord by turning from (that is, repenting of) our *wicked ways*.

*If I shut up heaven
that there be no rain, or
If I command the locasts
to devour the land, or
If I sent pestilence
among my people;
If my people which are called by my name,
shall humble themselves,
and pray,
and seek my face,
and turn from their wicked ways;
Then will I hear from heaven,
and will forgive their sin,
and will heal their land.*

II Chronicles 7:13,14

Let us renew *the call of repentance*, specifically the repentance that which is founded upon *the conditions of repentance* given in scripture.²³⁵

*Remember the worth of souls is great in the sight of God;
for, behold, the Lord your Redeemer suffered death in the flesh;
wherefore he suffered the pain of all men,
that all men might repent and come unto him²³⁶.
And he hath risen again from the dead,
that he might bring all men unto him
on conditions of repentance.
And how great is his joy*

*in the soul that **repenteth**.
Wherefore you are called
to cry **repentance** unto this people.
And if it so be that you should labor all your days,
in crying **repentance** unto this people,
and bring save it be one soul unto me,
how great shall be your joy
with him in the kingdom of my Father!
And now, if your joy will be great with one soul
that you have brought unto me
into the kingdom of my Father,
How great will be your joy,
if you should bring many souls unto me!
Behold, you have my gospel before you,
and my Rock, and my salvation.*

D&C 16:3c-4b

Let us turn away from the broad road of *unconditional* love – a way that may seem right but the ends thereof are death²³⁷ – and turn back to the one true *Way* that leads to God.²³⁸

Let us turn back to *the faith of the gospel*,²³⁹ to *the faith which was once delivered unto the saints*,²⁴⁰ to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and devotion to His redemption.²⁴¹

Let us turn back to our Lord that we may *know Him*²⁴² and enter into His redemptive, covenant love (His love of commitment and obedience²⁴³), His pure and perfecting love,²⁴⁴ charity.²⁴⁵

*Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about
with so great a cloud of witnesses,
Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin
which doeth so easily beset us,
And let us run with patience
the race that is set before us.
Looking unto Jesus
the author and finisher of our faith;
Who for the joy that was set before him
endured the cross, despising the shame,
and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.
For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself,
lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.*

Hebrews 12:1-3

Endnotes

- 1 cf. II Thessalonians 2:3-5 with Acts 17:24, I Corinthians 6:19,20, Ephesians 2:19-22, Colossians 1:9-29, etc.
- 2 I John 4:8,16
- 3 Revelation 12:8-12, Matthew 24:23, Mark 13:25 with II Corinthians 11:13-15, II Thessalonians 2:3, II Timothy 3:13, & Revelation 20:3; see also Luke 4:1-14 & 21:7-9, Jude 1:6 ...
- 4 http://hisworkmanship.net/index_files/StudyLetters/CovenantBreakerSinisterPlan22Sept2012V2.pdf
- 5 Matthew 6:9-16
- 6 Romans 14:17
- 7 Romans 5:5
- 8 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unconditional_love
- 9 http://hisworkmanship.net/index_files/StudyLetters/CovenantBreakerSinisterPlan22Sept2012V1.pdf
- 10 http://hisworkmanship.net/index_files/StudyLetters/CovenantBreakerSinisterPlan22Sept2012V2.pdf
- 11 For a reference on the gift of God see John 3:16, I John 4:9, etc.
- 12 See I John 4:8,16
- 13 cf. Mosiah 1:82, Alma 5:36, Alma 16:235, & Helaman 2:59
- 14 Note: Compare this statement, "*the whole family in heaven and earth is named*" to the phrase "*all that is called God*" in II Thessalonians 2:3-5.
- 15 Romans 5:5
- 16 See also Ephesians 4:8-16
- 17 Note: Recall how Paul made the distinction between the singular and plural form of the word seed when talking about God's promised to Abraham, saying that Christ was that seed: "*Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ*" (Galatians 3:16).
- 18 I Corinthians 1:10-15, 3:1-6, etc.
- 19 I Corinthians 6:19,20 with Ephesians 2:19-22
- 20 See Romans 5:5
- 21 See Matthew 13:17-21, Mark 4:3-7 & Luke 8:5-8
- 22 See D&C 84 with D&C 38
- 23 I John 4:8,16
- 24 Matthew 5:40-50 (38-48 KJV) with Romans 5:6-11, John 13:34,35 & 15:12-14
- 25 Romans 8:31-39
- 26 Recall how the devil is an enemy to all righteousness, i.e. to God who is holy; see Acts 13:9,10 & John 8:44 with I Peter 1:16
- 27 A description of Christ's redemption may be found Romans 5:6-11, I John 2:1,2, etc.
- 28 The new covenant is described in Galatians 3:19,20, I Timothy 2:1-5, Hebrews 8:6, 9:15, 12:24
- 29 A general description of Jesus Christ's commandments may be found in the 5th through 7th chapters of Matthew
- 30 See for a discussion of our Lord's justice and mercy II Nephi 1:65-125 & Alma 19:59-111 with James 1:18, Philippians 2:12-13
- 31 The conditions of repentance are outlined in D&C 16:3c-4b, Helaman 2:71-75, Alma 19:94-97, Alma 19:105,106, Helaman 5:65-74, Alma 3:19-32, Alma 14:102-104, & Alma 17:38,39 with Matthew 28:17-19, Luke 15:10-32, Romans 2:4, II Corinthians 7:10 and Ezekiel 33:10-20
- 32 Consider Jesus' rebuke to His disciples who failed to remember all that the prophets had written concerning Him; see Luke 24:24,25 (25,26 KJV)
- 33 cf. Micah 6:8,9
- 34 Wax: 1. To increase in size; to grow; to become larger; as the waxing and the waning moon. 2. To pass from one state to another; to become; as, to wax strong; to wax warm or cold; to wax feeble; to wax hot; to wax old; to wax worse and worse.
- 35 Living contrary to God's commands; living outside the bounds and conditions of His covenants and commandments.
- 36 Matthew 24:10,31

³⁷ Revelation 12:1-12, Ezekiel 28:11-19 & Mark 13:24-29 (21-26 KJV) with I Timothy 4:1; see also Genesis 3
³⁸ At the heart of unconditional love is rebellion: rebellion against God and His word, His laws and ordinances, and His covenants and commandments.
³⁹ Note: Repentance was the first command Jesus Christ gave when beginning His earthly ministry; see Mark chapter 1.
⁴⁰ Consider and contrast with Hebrews 8-10 & Matthew 26 with Galatians 3
⁴¹ Consider and contrast with II John 1:7 & Revelation 12:9 with Acts 2 & Hebrews 1&2; see also Matthew 2:4 (1:21 KJV)
⁴² Consider and contrast with Romans 1:18, Romans 5:5 & John 14:6, John 8, II Thessalonians 2:10 ...
⁴³ Consider and contrast with II Corinthians 10:3-6, Galatians 5:16-21, Colossians 3:5-17, etc. with II Nephi 7:41,42
⁴⁴ Consider and contrast with Romans 1:18, Galatians 5:19-21 ...
⁴⁵ Consider and contrast with Matthew 6:38 (6:33 KJV)
⁴⁶ This includes the command to repent and become holy as God is holy through the baptism for the remission of sins and the baptism for the reception of the Holy Ghost; Consider in light of Matthew 28 & I Peter 1:13-16 with I John 5:6-8.
⁴⁷ Consider and contrast with Romans 1:18-2:11 & John 15:18-27
⁴⁸ Consider and contrast with Helaman 2:71-75, 5:63-74, Alma 19:94 & D&C 3:16d, Mosiah 2:12, Alma 3:19, 12:25, I John 1, etc.
⁴⁹ Consider and contrast with I Timothy 4:1, Hebrews 3:12-19 & D&C 1:3 with I Corinthians 13 & Moroni 7; see John 1 with John 17
⁵⁰ Consider and contrast with II Thessalonians 2:9-12 & D&C 1:3 with Genesis 5 & Matthew 24
⁵¹ II Timothy 3:4 & 4:2-4
⁵² I Timothy 4:1-5; cf. D&C 46:3b,4b. Some of the devices (cf. II Corinthians 2:10,11) Satan and his servants use to seduce people and draw them away from God and His covenants and commands include convincing them that Satan is not a devil, that there is no hell, and that there are no eternal consequences for sin (II Nephi 12:1-33 with Matthew 24).
⁵³ II Corinthians 11:14; cf. II Nephi 6:23
⁵⁴ II Corinthians 11:13,15; cf. Romans 16:18
⁵⁵ Acts 20:28-31; cf. Revelation 2:1-7
⁵⁶ I John 2:19
⁵⁷ II Timothy 3:13 with II Peter 2:1-22, II John 1:7-11, Jude 1:17-19; see also Matthew 24
⁵⁸ I Thessalonians 5:21
⁵⁹ Matthew 17:1-5, Mark 9:1-7
⁶⁰ Consider John 5:40-48 (39-47 KJV) with Luke 24:24 (25,26 KJV); see Helaman 2:74,75
⁶¹ Moroni 7:18 with John 1:1-16, John 8:12 & John 12:35,36
⁶² See Numbers 21:5-9 with I Nephi 5:131-137 & II Nephi 11:34-39
⁶³ John 3:16 with I John 4:9
⁶⁴ See John 3:14-16, John 10:17,18 & II Corinthians 5:17-21 with Matthew 28:16-19
⁶⁵ See Hebrews 7:24-27 & I John 2:1,2 with John 10:17,18 & D&C 45:1,2
⁶⁶ Some may attempt to argue that unconditional love predated God's covenant, requiring an atoning sacrifice to redeem mankind from the fall. But why then would unconditional love use covenant conditions to express itself to mankind, to be the basis upon which God works to establish a loving relationship with mankind? How could it remain unconditional if it were to use such conditions? In other words, why would unconditional love "limit" itself to the conditions of covenants outlined in Old and New Covenants/Testaments presented and preserved in the Bible? It should be rather evident that unconditional love would cease to be unconditional if it were to utilize any covenant terms and conditions in order to relate to mankind. It should be evident that it was an afterthought of someone who was critical of covenant love, who opposes the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world; cf. II Nephi 11:95-115
⁶⁷ See John 1:27-33 with Revelation 5:6, 13:8, 21:22, etc.
⁶⁸ cf. Matthew 14:13, Matthew 15:30, Mark 6:35, Luke 15:20, etc.

⁶⁹ cf. Mark 10:46-54
⁷⁰ cf. Lamentations 3:22 & Psalms 86:15 with Isaiah 53, Isaiah 59, etc.
⁷¹ cf. Hebrew 12:5-13 & Revelation 3:19
⁷² cf. Deuteronomy 7:6-14 with Isaiah 63:9; see also the Title Page of the Book of Mormon
⁷³ cf. Isaiah 49:13-18, Isaiah 54:5-8, Isaiah 59:21, Isaiah 61:10,11, etc.
⁷⁴ cf. Ephesians 5:17-33 with John 13:1 & Luke 22:7-20; see also Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22
⁷⁵ See The New Testament [Covenant] along with all of Deuteronomy; cf. I John 1:1-10 & II Chronicles 7:14 with I Nephi 5:132
⁷⁶ See Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22, John 13-17, I Corinthians 10-11
⁷⁷ Helaman 2:71-75 with Hebrews 8:1-10:18; see also D&C 16:3
⁷⁸ Helaman 2:71-75
⁷⁹ Matthew 3, Mark 1, Luke 3, John 1
⁸⁰ Mark 1:12,13
⁸¹ Matthew 28:17-19 with Acts 3:19
⁸² Acts 3:26
⁸³ Romans 2:4 with II Chronicles 7:14
⁸⁴ The conditions of repentance are referenced in Helaman 5:63-74 & D&C 3:16c
⁸⁵ Consider the command of Jesus Christ to repent and believe the gospel (see Mark 1:12,13 (24,25 KJV) & Mark 16:14,15 (15,16 KJV) with Revelation 2:5)
⁸⁶ Referring back to the ministry of John the Baptist are described in Mark 1:1-4 with Isaiah 40:1-8
⁸⁷ cf. II Nephi 13:24,25 & II Nephi 6:80-84, with Matthew 7:21-23 (12-14KJV), Matthew 28:17-19 (18-20), Mark 16:13-21, Luke 13:24, 24:44-46 & Revelation 22:14, etc.
⁸⁸ John 3:5
⁸⁹ Compare, for example, with Romans 1:8-2:11 with Galatians 5:19-21, etc.
⁹⁰ Referring to Romans 1:18, Romans 6:16,23, Ephesians 5:1-17, Colossians 3:5-7, II Thessalonians 1:10, Hebrews 3:6-4:13, with John 8:44 with I John 1:1-2:17
⁹¹ cf. I John 3:4 with Romans 4:15
⁹² See Colossians 1:12-23 with Ephesians 4:6
⁹³ See Matthew 18:21-34 with Matthew 6:9-16
⁹⁴ See Revelation 17:14
⁹⁵ See Luke 19:14
⁹⁶ cf. John 15:3 with Ephesians 5:26; see also Psalms 51:1,2
⁹⁷ cf. Helaman 2:71-73
⁹⁸ Matthew 2:4 [1:21 KJV]
⁹⁹ Acts 4:12
¹⁰⁰ John 3:18
¹⁰¹ cf. I John 4:17,18 with I John 3:10-18
¹⁰² Consider and compare with Matthew 16:25-30
¹⁰³ Recall how it is written in Revelation 22:11 *“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still.”*
 See also I Nephi 4:52-64.
¹⁰⁴ Consider the necessity of walking in the light as outlined in I John 1:5-10
¹⁰⁵ That is, it would not allow God to follow His plan for salvation which is outlined in Genesis 6:64,65
¹⁰⁶ By saying God’s love is unconditional, Satan has set up an argument against anyone who opposes his train of thought. He has placed himself in a position to accuse those who oppose his manner of thinking that God’s love is conditional. However, he has actually set up a false and impertinent argument, one that is not relevant to a discussion of God and, therefore, draws people away from a valid understanding of God and His love.
¹⁰⁷ This is statement is made in the context that, while it is called *“Today,”* we have an opportunity to repent and come to Jesus Christ (Hebrews 3:12-4:16). The day will come, however, that all who do not repent of their sins

and come to our Lord will be commanded to depart from Him (cf. Matthew 7:22-33 & Matthew 25:24-31,42,47).

¹⁰⁸ Alma 19:64-111

¹⁰⁹ cf. Romans 8:7, Alma 16:68, Alma 17:4 ...

¹¹⁰ I John 4:8,16

¹¹¹ cf. II Thessalonians 2:3-5 & Genesis 3:1-5 with Ezekiel 28:13-18 & Isaiah 14:12-15; see also John 8:44, II Nephi 1:101-104 & D&C 76:3i-m

¹¹² cf. Revelation 12:10 with Luke 10:19

¹¹³ See John 8:44

¹¹⁴ see Colossians 1:18 with I Corinthians 3:16,17, I Peter 2:5,6 & Ephesians 2:19-22

¹¹⁵ cf. John 10:9 with II Nephi 6:81

¹¹⁶ Review John 10:1-18, I Peter 2:25, etc.

¹¹⁷ Review our Lord's teachings in chapters 5 thru 7 of Matthew

¹¹⁸ Recall how Jesus said His sheep hear His voice in John 10. Compare with the 9th chapter of Daniel where the prophet confesses that his people had failed to heed the Lord's voice and thus were in disarray.

¹¹⁹ Described in Isaiah 53

¹²⁰ Recall how it is written that Jesus is meek and lowly in Matthew 11:28-30

¹²¹ Recall Nephi's explanation in II Nephi 14:11,12 with II Nephi 14:4-6 how we are taught of the Lord's Spirit to pray, while that evil teaches us not to pray or that we do not need to pray.

¹²² See Ephesians 5:14-21

¹²³ See Matthew 3:33, Luke 3:12, John 3:36, Romans 1:18, 2:1-9, Ephesians 5:6, I Thessalonians 1:10, 2:16, Hebrews 4:3, Revelation 6:17, etc.

¹²⁴ See Matthew 24:10,31

¹²⁵ See John 15

¹²⁶ cf. I John 3:6-18

¹²⁷ Ponder the message of unconditional love with the message found in I John 4:16-18

¹²⁸ Compare against the message found in Romans 8:38,39

¹²⁹ See I John 4:17 with Matthew 5:40-50; see also Ephesians 4:1-16

¹³⁰ Remember, Jesus Christ is perfect. Therefore, we know that anyone who makes this declaration, that no one is perfect, is simply denying Jesus Christ, i.e. they are agreeing with *the spirit of antichrist* (cf. I John 4).

¹³¹ Compare against Titus 3:5

¹³² This is in stark contrast to God's covenant described in John 1:11-16 with I John 4:7-19

¹³³ In contrast, God's love is truly reconciling as described in II Corinthians 5:11-21

¹³⁴ See Matthew 25 with Romans 1:18-2:11

¹³⁵ For references on our need to be reconciled to God's will so we may know His love, see I John 1:1-10 with II Nephi 7:40-44

¹³⁶ It does not offer invitations such as Hebrews 4:15,16. Compare also with I John 1:5-10 & Matthew 18

¹³⁷ Scriptures discussing our need to be faithful and just stewards are found in Matthew 18, 20, & 25. Compare with Philippians 2:1-13

¹³⁸ This is significant in contrast to II Corinthians 5:9,10

¹³⁹ Recall John 3:19,20

¹⁴⁰ II Corinthians 4:1-7

¹⁴¹ http://hisworkmanship.net/index_files/StudyLetters/CovenantBreakerSinisterPlan22Sept2012V2.pdf

¹⁴² The reason? Unconditional love denies that such a need exists and thus fails to reconcile us to God.

¹⁴³ For an outstanding discourse on the necessity of Christ's redemption, see II Nephi 6:10-85

¹⁴⁴ See the following for a discussion on the judgment and advocacy of Christ: Hebrews 7:24 with Revelation 5:1-14, 7:1-17, 13:8, 19:1-21, 21:22-27, etc.; see also Matthew 26:36

¹⁴⁵ cf. John 14:9 with Colossians 1

¹⁴⁶ Referring specifically to those who fail to repent and rely solely upon the atoning merits and mercies of the Lamb of God unto the end. Consider Lamentations 3:20-26 with Jude 1:20,21; consider also Luke 18:10-14 with

Hebrews 4:12-16 & Matthew 24
¹⁴⁷ Since unconditional love would act independently of and stand apart from justice it has no need for God's mercy. It has no need for sinners to repent and exercise faith in Jesus Christ to redeem mankind.
¹⁴⁸ Mark 1:12,13 IV, Mark 1:14,15KJV
¹⁴⁹ cf. Romans 3:23 & Galatians 3:22 with Isaiah 53; see also James 2:10
¹⁵⁰ cf. Alma 19:106 with Isaiah 64:5
¹⁵¹ cf. Number 21:4-9 with John 3:14-18 & Luke 22:19,20
¹⁵² cf. John 3:14-18 with Number 21:4-9
¹⁵³ cf. Alma 19:92-117, Helaman 2:65-74, Helaman 5:65-74 & D&C 16:3c-e with Mormon 4:71-74 & Alma 8:93-98
¹⁵⁴ See Philippians 1:27 & Jude 1:3 for more on the faith of the gospel.
¹⁵⁵ cf. Ephesians 2:8-10 & John 10:4 with Acts 4:12 & 11:18; see also Helaman 5:65-74 & Hebrews 5:9 with all of Matthew 7
¹⁵⁶ See I Peter 1:9
¹⁵⁷ See Hebrews 3 & 4 with I Corinthians 10 & II Corinthians 5
¹⁵⁸ cf. John 8:42-47 & Alma 8:93-98 with II Nephi 6:10-105 & II Nephi 7:40-44
¹⁵⁹ Romans 5:5
¹⁶⁰ cf. Galatians 3:20 & I Timothy 2:4-6 with Hebrews 8-10
¹⁶¹ cf. Romans 5:5
¹⁶² Except to be raised from the dead to be judged of their works before Jesus Christ at the last day. See John 15:13,14 and Helaman 5:70-74,84-86 with Mosiah 8:77,78 Alma 9: 32. See also Helaman 5:67 with Helaman 4:56
¹⁶³ I John 1:5 with I John 4:8,16
¹⁶⁴ John 14:15-26 & 15:5-14
¹⁶⁵ "Propitiation: that by which God is rendered propitious, i.e., by which it becomes consistent with his character and government to pardon and bless the sinner. The propitiation does not procure his love or make him loving; it only renders it consistent for him to exercise his love towards sinners... Christ is "the propitiation," because by his becoming our substitute and assuming our obligations he expiated our guilt, covered it, by the vicarious punishment which he endured." (ref. Easton's 1897 Bible Dictionary)
¹⁶⁶ cf. John 8:44
¹⁶⁷ See John 1:14-16 & John 17:17 with I John 1:1,2; see John 15:7-10
¹⁶⁸ Hebrews 13:8
¹⁶⁹ I John 1:5 & 4:8,16
¹⁷⁰ Consider how the first chapter of I John sets the stage for the remaining four chapters.
¹⁷¹ See John 15
¹⁷² See also Colossians 2:6-10
¹⁷³ cf. Luke 6:46 with Matthew 5:1-7:37, etc.
¹⁷⁴ Matthew 10:33,16:25-31, Mark 8:36,10:20, Luke 9:23,12:9,14:27, etc.
¹⁷⁵ John 10:27,28 with John 17:5-26
¹⁷⁶ John 15:1,2
¹⁷⁷ See John 13:1
¹⁷⁸ James 2:22-23 with Luke 6:46
¹⁷⁹ cf. D&C 46:4b with I John 1:8-2:2 & Mark 1:12,13
¹⁸⁰ cf. John 17
¹⁸¹ See John 13-17 with Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22
¹⁸² Review John 1:11-16 with John 14:15-18
¹⁸³ Matthew 25:21,23,35
¹⁸⁴ Luke 13:27
¹⁸⁵ Matthew 7:23 KJV, 7:33 IV; Matthew 25:41,42; Luke 13:24-27
¹⁸⁶ Review Genesis 5:4-13 with Jude 1:11
¹⁸⁷ See John 15:1-8 with Romans 5:1-21

¹⁸⁸ cf. John 8:44
¹⁸⁹ cf. Ephesians 2:10
¹⁹⁰ Matthew 22:34-39 & Mark 12:33-39
¹⁹¹ cf. Psalm 119:11 with Luke 9:44
¹⁹² Ephesians 5:9
¹⁹³ Galatians 5:22,23
¹⁹⁴ Matthew 5:16-18
¹⁹⁵ cf. John 15:8 with Galatians 5:22-25; see also Matthew 5-7
¹⁹⁶ cf. John 10:29 with John 15:2a & Luke 12:5
¹⁹⁷ cf. John 10:27-30 with John 17:6-26
¹⁹⁸ Isaiah 64:6
¹⁹⁹ Philippians 4:13
²⁰⁰ e.g. Matthew 7
²⁰¹ e.g. John 5:16-31; cf. Matthew 6:19-24
²⁰² cf. John 12:49,50
²⁰³ cf. I Peter 2:21 with Mosiah 8:28-37; see Galatians 2:16-21
²⁰⁴ Hebrews 5:9
²⁰⁵ I Nephi 5:131; cf. Deuteronomy 5:9
²⁰⁶ cf. II Corinthians 6:14-18 with Matthew 5:45-47; see also Mosiah 3:8 with IV Nephi 1:17-20
²⁰⁷ See I Nephi 3:63-65 with Moroni 8:29
²⁰⁸ See I Peter 1:15,16
²⁰⁹ Romans 5:6-11 & I John 1:3-4:18 with Genesis 1:27
²¹⁰ cf. Matthew 17:1-5 with Deuteronomy 18:15
²¹¹ cf. Alma 5:26-29 & Mosiah 9:39-42
²¹² Galatians 5:6
²¹³ cf. Revelation 12:11 with Matthew 7:30, 12:44 & Hebrews 5:9 with I John 5:14
²¹⁴ cf. Matthew 22: 38 with Revelation 12:11
²¹⁵ This power is given to us to become His children, ones who will always rely upon Him for our all and everything. It is not given for us to become independent of Him, to become parallel or above Him, to replace Him.
²¹⁶ Genesis 1:27 & John 13:34,35 with Galatians 5:22-24
²¹⁷ Matthew 5:40-50 with Matthew 22:34-39
²¹⁸ cf. I Peter 1:22,23, 2:17, 3:8, Romans 12:10, Ephesians 1:15, 4:16, 5:25, Colossians 1:4, I Thessalonians 4:9
²¹⁹ I John 5:1-4 & John 15:10 with Colossians 3:1-17; see Matthew 26 along with John 13-17
²²⁰ See also I Timothy 4:10
²²¹ cf. I Corinthians 2:10, 5:9-21, etc.
²²² See also Galatians 4:6, II Corinthians 3:17, Romans 8:1
²²³ John 14:15-18
²²⁴ Hebrews 12:1
²²⁵ John 8:12,23
²²⁶ I John 1:1-10
²²⁷ cf. Matthew 24, Luke 11, etc., with I Corinthians 10:11, Ephesians 6:18, Colossians 4:2, 1 Peter 4:7 with Nehemiah 4:9
²²⁸ cf. Isaiah 5:20
²²⁹ cf. Matthew 21:36 with II Nephi 7:40-44; Otherwise, we can fall into the condemnation of the devil through being lifted up with pride (I Timothy 3:6 with Isaiah 14: 12-14 & Ezekiel 28:1-19)
²³⁰ cf. Romans 3:23 & Galatians 3:22 with Isaiah 53:6; see also James 2:10
²³¹ cf. Isaiah 14:12-15 & Ezekiel 28:11-19 with Genesis 3:1-5 (IV); see also Romans 13:8-14 & Hebrews 10:24,25, II Nephi 1:116-125; cf. Alma 21:71 & Moroni 9:6
²³² Compare and contrast with Alma 19:83-111
²³³ Compare and contrast with John 8:31,32,36 & II Corinthians 3:17

- ²³⁴ Compare and contrast with Matthew 25:1-47 & II Nephi 1:116-125 with Genesis 3:1-5 (IV)
- ²³⁵ D&C 16:3c-4b with Helaman 2:71-75, Alma 19:94-97, Alma 19:105,106, Helaman 5:65-74, Alma 3:19-32, Alma 14:102-104, and Alma 17:38,39
- ²³⁶ cf. D&C 3:16-18
- ²³⁷ Romans 6:19-23 with Proverbs 14:12 & Matthew 7:22,23
- ²³⁸ John 14:6
- ²³⁹ Philippians 1:27
- ²⁴⁰ Jude 1:3
- ²⁴¹ cf. II Corinthians 13:5 with Acts 20:20,21
- ²⁴² John 17:3 with Philippians 3:7-11 & Alma 17:39
- ²⁴³ John 14:15 & 15:9-14, I John 5:1-4 & Alma 3:46 with I Nephi 5:131-133a & II Nephi 12:77,78
- ²⁴⁴ I John 4:16-18 with Moroni 7:50-53
- ²⁴⁵ Moroni 7:50-53 & Moroni 8:18 with I Corinthians 13 & I John 3:1-3