

## David Rice - Love

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Well, our subject is love. Today I remember Brother Earl Fowler from the LA class. Many of you will remember him, and if I asked you what did Earl Fowler usually speak on, you probably have one word. I think I already heard it.

Revelation. That's right, and when I was young and I heard him speak on Revelation, I said I knew he was going to speak on that. I was in another class somewhere, said, I'm going to listen really, really careful. I want to get what he's saying on Revelation.

And I know that another brother visited us from the Midwest and he talked to Brother Fowler about Revelation. They were both deep students. But the last time Brother Fowler was ever in San Diego to speak to us as a class, he gave two talks, and the last talk was not on Revelation, and I don't think I ever heard him talk on anything other than Revelation except then.

And that was love, I'll never forget, was different because he didn't usually speak on that subject, and that was the last time I ever heard him give a talk, period. He passed away after that. So I'll never forget that when we sang the hymn this morning, how Great Thou Art, I admit I got a little choked up.

Verse number three, and when I think that God, his Son, not sparing, sent him to die, I scarce can take it in that on the cross my burden gladly bear him. He bled and died to take away my sin. Now, I recently been listening to a number of hymns on the Internet. You know, with YouTube you can do that.

And YouTube seems to know that I like to listen to them. They put things on the side, you know, for me to listen to, and some of them are very deeply involved in almost those same words and very precious. Okay. One of the things about love I would like to mention is the fact that we, because we know the truth and we know the divine plan of the ages, have something that we know that most Christians don't know, and that is that after Jesus died for our sin, there are not one, but two separate ages of redemption.

Now, that's simple. That's straightforward to you. But I wish most Christians knew that. They don't. But when I have an opportunity to zoom into people overseas that are newer in the truth, I frequently make an emphasis on that point.

Two ages of redemption. Now, if there are two ages of redemption, that means something, to change the divine plan. Because everybody knows Christians have a heavenly hope, and if there's the second age of Redemption, then that would be different and that would be an earthly hope, and if that's true, that means the Christian hope requires more than just believing.

It requires diligence and devotion, and it requires character development, and that's where love comes in, of course, and if that's true, and the heavenly calling isn't going to be for the millennium, then maybe it wasn't also for the ages before, and therefore it directs us to the great company. Now, Brother Owen Kendig, who I used to call Richard Kendig, but now he calls himself Owen, gave a lesson on this, and I think it was the July Herald.

You'll find that on the Restoration of. No, I don't. I forget the exact title. I should have it in my mind. But it's about midway in the July issue of the Herald, and he talks about what happened in the early 1800s and how they got a revival of their understanding of truth back again.

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And he listed seven items, and among those seven items is that after the present age is finished, the millennium of blessing for the world of mankind will come. Now, I'm impressed BY that, that 50 people that for periods of four years, four times a year, spend a week at a time studying the. The truth. They came up with that as one of their seven conclusions, and the other conclusions were equally impressive.

But that was remarkable. So I don't know why Christianity can't see that more clearly. But that's the big hope that we have, that Jesus died not just for us, to give us a chance, and if we happen to believe now, we're rescued, but he died for every man, woman and child who has ever lived. Now we're going to look at what we should do in order to mimic what Jesus did.

Now, you all know the scripture, 1st Peter 1:22, see that you love one another with a pure heart. Casually. Oh, wait, did I get that wrong? Oh, yeah. Okay.

You all know fervently, that means whether we like somebody or not, temporally, we should develop a love for every person spiritually, and that should be a deep love. Now, we're going to talk about that a little bit more, and we're going to first look at two other scripture passages that talk about love. Now, you know these as well, Galatians 5, 22 and 23. The fruit of the spirit is, and he lists nine fruits of the Spirit.

Now, next we're going to go to Peter, where he's going to list seven graces of the Spirit, and sometimes I've heard the brethren refer to that as the fruits and the graces of the Spirit. Now, I don't. I didn't know where that expression came from. It was Michael Nicora that years ago told me that that came from these two passages.

Now, we can call these the fruit of the Spirit because it does. That's what the scripture opens by saying. So these nine qualities are that when you go to Peter, he doesn't tell you the name of the list. So we don't want to call them the same thing. So we call them the graces of the Spirit.

Michael explained that to me. Haven't forgotten that since. But we have nine qualities here. Now, Paul begins with love and Peter is going to end with love, almost as though to say that's the primary ingredient in both. But the fruit of the Spirit.

Now I've tried to remember these nine qualities, and I have, but it doesn't mean I always remember them. If you ask me right now, don't look there, just say, oh, nine. I might be hard pressed, but I've got them on the screen here. Love, joy and peace. Now those three I do remember all the time.

Love, joy and peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Now, the reason we put gentleness in bold is simply because it's the middle one, and I remember, if I can remember, always gentle, and then when we go to the next one, the middle one of that is patience. If I go out into the public and I'm gentle and I'm patient, at least I'm doing something that will project something about with a spirit that Jesus suggests that we must follow as well the spirit that Jesus had that we should follow.

Okay, here we have add to your faith, virtue. Okay, we always want to be virtuous and do what is right and good. Now that doesn't mean I always do that, but I'm trying to do better, and when I don't, then of course I pray for forgiveness, virtue, knowledge. Okay, I like to study.

I just, I like that. That's good temperance. Am I always temperate in my conduct and in my response to experiences? Don't ask Ruth, but I try to be, but don't ask her. Godliness, brotherly

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kindness and love.

Now that love that ends here and the one that begins there is the same. That's agape, and that's the same love, the word that we usually use for this. Okay, so we all know that. Now we also know in Revelation, chapter four, verse one.

And I'm going to ask Sister Elaine to do some reading for us, the casual now and then. Elaine, if you would get Revelation 4, verse 1, and while she's looking that up, I'll just mention that Revelation has three Basic parts to it. Revelation has a picture of the gospel age, first 13 chapters, and then the harvest and then the millennium thousand year kingdom. So we're still in the first part of that.

And in Revelation, Paul, Peter, John. Excuse me. John is in four locations. He's down here on the island of Patmos, and then after the first three chapters, he's taken in the Spirit in chapter four through a door in heaven.

He's up there for several chapters. Then he's going to go out into the wilderness and he's going to see a woman, very nice woman, picture of the church, and then later he's going to be taken to New Jerusalem and a mountain carried away. But we're in the second time, second place, where he's going to be, and he's caught up into.

Through that door, into the throne of God. Wow, I'd like to see the throne of God. That would be remarkable. So let's find out what he saw when he's up there. Now, I said 4:1, did I?

But that's not the worst I really need, so I better look and find out. Let's see, it is chapter four.

It's verse seven. Verse seven, Sister Elaine.

The first living creature was like a lion. The second was like an ox. The third had a face like a man. The fourth was. Was like a flying eagle.

Okay, so there's four living creatures that are before the throne, and those four living creatures, the brethren often say, represent the four qualities or attributes of God. We have a lion, which represents power. We have a calf that represents justice, because calf was often used and sacrifice in the Old Testament is the highest quality of animal. We have a man, the face of a man, that's different, not an animal.

And only man expresses love. So that's the quality of God as well, and finally, an eagle representing wisdom. So those are the qualities of God that we would like to receive. But of course, down here we're not really trying to get great power, but you're going to have great power when you sit on the throne with Jesus in the future.

And we're not trying to get great. Well, we'd like to be wise. But justice, it's not for us to impose justice, that's for God. But love is something we should try to develop and improve upon daily.

Okay, now there's some things about love we'd like to read from the reprints. Now, before I get to this, I'm going to mention, here's a very quick quote from somebody that I never met, somebody that's not with us anymore. Let's see if you remember who this might have been. Love your enemies, pray for your persecutors, and when someone assaults you, do not fight back.

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I don't know if you're guessing who that might be. I won't even say his name. But he died a month ago. He was shot and assassinated. Now I think you know who that was.

Yeah, Charlie Kirk and I had listened to him on occasion. I thought, boy, he does a nice job. But he was a Christian man. He was also political. I'm also a Christian.

I try not to be political. But in the next stage, I will be political. I want to be part of the government if I'm faithful. But I was deeply impressed by his service, and now he's gone. I think that that has shaped and helped America to remember some of the qualities and attributes that America was founded on at one time, many years ago.

Christian principles. I can't help but think that this gentleman, in his experience, was overruled by the Heavenly Father to help bring the country to a recognition of some of the principles that were vital to him. Now, this is from reprint 2753. This is a little longer, and it's about love.

But love not for you and me. Love for people that aren't here in our assembly. The mark of the prize is still a higher attainment in love. The very highest attainment is that of loving our enemies, not merely tolerating them, abstaining from injuring them while thinking evil of them. Far beyond this, it is the full purging of anger, malice, strife from our actions, but also from our words and even from our thoughts.

It means such a complete triumph of love in our hearts as loves God supremely and delights to sacrifice in his service from love of the principles represented in his character and love for the brethren, which makes us careful of their feelings and interests, ready to lay down our life on their behalf. It means additionally that we can and do love every intelligent creature. We delight to do good to all, to serve all as we have opportunity, especially the household of faith. Now, let's reprint 2753.

I assure you I don't always do that, but I assure you that's a good goal to have in mind. We should even love our enemies.

Now among we're going to talk next about loving our brethren. Now we have to do a lot with our brethren. We have a lot of interchange and interface with our brethren. So sometimes those are the ones that we have some challenges with. Why would we ever have a challenge of loving our brethren?

Or at least expressing ourselves in a way that reflects love. Well, perhaps sometimes because we have differences. I would like to read something with respect to differences among the brethren. This is in volume six. Now, Jim Parkinson taught me how to remember this even without looking at the number.

The number PI 3.14, page 314 in volume 6. This is part of four kinds of meetings that he suggested the church should always have. This is the third kind of meeting. There should be frequent regular meetings at which reasonably full opportunities would be given to anyone to present what he might believe to be a different view of truth from that perhaps generally held and approved by the Ecclesia. Now he goes on to explain this three pages later.

More no matter how confident we are that we have the truth, it would certainly be unwise for us to shut and lock the door of so to shut and lock the door of interrogation and contrary expressions as thoroughly to exclude all that might be considered error by the leader or by the congregation.

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Now here's another one much later on. This is in 1916. This is reprint 5348. This is when there was a difference of opinion among the brethren about approaching experiences. 1914.

Did I say this was written in 16? It may have been 14. We should not denounce those who in a proper spirit express their dissent, nor should we feel aggrieved toward them. We should recognize the individual right of all and treat everybody according to the Golden Rule. Nor should we feel at liberty to express our views more dogmatically than we would think right for others to do in expressing their views.

There are possibilities of our having made a mistake. Let brotherly love continue. Okay. Now, I don't think any of those are things you've never heard before. I think all of those are probably familiar to you, and it's just something that we all know we should accept as a good standard for our interchange and fellowship together.

However, there are differences. There are fundamental differences. Sometimes that do cause rift among the brethren and sometimes different fellowships to form. That does happen. Doesn't mean we have to stop loving our brethren.

Of those that maybe meet separately or differently. We're going to talk about some different views today. We're going to talk about two views. Two subjects. I should say rather, two subjects that have been disputed among the brethren that are more or less considered fundamental.

That's the Lord's return and also the covenants. Now, those are meaningful subjects and significant subjects. But there are brethren that don't agree with me on those subjects, and I have to make sure that I reflect the proper spirit of love with respect to them. Now, how can we do that?

Well, by perhaps exchanging our views one with another and then our reasons on those views and then learning to appreciate that maybe they have something that gives them rise to their opinion. Now, more and more when I hear different opinions on anything, in the truth, I think, is there a way to understand what each opinion comes from and do some measure of reconciling? Well, sometimes I think there is, sometimes. Now we're going to talk first about the Lord's return. I believe the Lord has returned in 1874.

That's the common view, and we're going to give some reasons for that. Let's see now, this is.

That's right. Okay, and what we're going to do is suggest why I think the Lord has returned. I want to give some easy reasons why the Lord has returned. Then I want to look at some other concerns for this and why somebody might have a different opinion and why they might have some right part to their opinion.

Okay. Now, if I was actually asked by a class that does not believe the Lord had returned to come on Zoom and give them a lesson of why I thought what I did, well, I was impressed that they would actually ask me to do that.

And I wish I had given a better response, more understandable response. I tried. But this is what I'm going to try to do today. Give you an easy way to understand why we believe the Lord has returned, and I use this overseas now, since then as well.

We have four churches in the last four churches in Revelation. There are seven churches in Revelation. They all represent seven stages of the church. That's a common view. In Thyatira, he told the church which was probably the most difficult experienced church that there was.

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This is when papacy was oppressing the church and probably killing millions of people. Now, you might hear that word and wonder if I'm exaggerating. In volume four, talks about 50 million Christians that were killed because the papacy's influence, and I thought, I don't know, that sounds like an exaggeration. I did a little checking on the Internet.

I did not find any refutation of that. Now, I don't know whether that's over or not, but it's got to be millions. That's the point. Now papacy says we never killed anybody. But the whole point was, no, they didn't.

They told their government to go out and kill people, which they did, of course. Now brother Tim Krupa has given some recent, a couple of years ago, a talk on this where he brought out some persecution that I was not familiar with. So. But so to that church, Thyatiri says, because of your experiences, I'm not going to lay any other burden upon you except this. Whatever you've got already, hold fast until I come.

Sardis, the next church. Church of the Reformation, I think not everybody thinks that. He says, you've got to do better, you've got to repent, you've got to reform, or I'm going to come on you like a thief. Philadelphia Church of Brotherly Love Behold. I'm coming quickly.

Well, yeah, we're the sixth period of the church. It's coming very soon. I wonder how quick it's going to be to the seventh period. Well, let's see. Laodicea.

I'm not coming. I'm standing at the door and I'm knocking. Let me in. Now I'll read the Scripture. Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come into him and I will sup with him and he with me. So he's not on his way. He's present. So I think that that is helpful to explain that at the end of the age, he would have returned when the seventh church was here in the flesh. Still now, if you look at Luke 12:36 and 37, that's a famous scripture where Jesus admonishes the church to watch and be ready for his return at the end of the age.

Wait, he says, when he comes and knocks, you want. You want to open unto him. Blessed are those servants. Now, I should be reading more of this, but blessed are the servants who do that. He shall sit down to meet and serve them.

Now you notice back in Laodicea church, he's got the word knock, just like he does in Luke 12:36, 37. When he comes, when he arrives, he's going to knock, and then if you hear that knock and you open prophetically, he's going to give you a feast of truth. Now, we all understand the divine plan, as I mentioned earlier, better than the church has known it in times past. Now, I sometimes wondered, is that really the right thing to say?

Maybe in the days of the apostles, they understood it better. Well, the answer is no. They didn't understand half of what we understand prophetically because it was too early. Remember when Daniel said at the 12th chapter, he says, I heard all this and I didn't understand, and the angel says, don't worry, Daniel, just seal it up.

It's not for you, it's for the time of the end. Well, even the apostles didn't live in the time of the end. So we're living here in the time of the end, and we learn, we know much more. So anyway, you see the two words knock and meet, understand the truth as we do today.

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Now, in Daniel, the 12th chapter, verse 12 after the 1260, the 1290, and the 1335 years, then he says two words that are also in Luke, the 12th chapter, blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the 1335 days. Now we're interpreting, aren't we? Now we're interpreting. This isn't as straightforward and direct, but I would interpret that to say that the 1335 days point to the Lord's return, and today we're there. Now, earlier I mentioned that Owen Kindig had this article in the Herald, and in that article, One of the seven points that in 1829 this Albury Conference agreed to was, was that the 1260 years began sometime in the reign of the Roman general, Roman Emperor Justinian.

Now, we all agree with that too, you may say. Oh, I do. I agree with that. It was Justinian. Okay, well, think about a little bit.

But we, that's where we get our date, 539 from. It's in the reign of Justinian. Now, they had, they didn't have an exact date, but they had approximately the right time. Now, today, Seventh Day Adventists, well, they don't study time prophecy as much as they used to, but if they did, they would agree with 538. So even they recognize very close to the same time.

So my point here is that just generally we're in the end of the age. So we're in the last period of the church, and apparently he's knocking at the door. That's our point, and so whether we have exactly the precise date, which I, I like numbers. I'm sure we do, but that's not the point.

I want to emphasize here that he comes at the end of the age. Okay, let's see now.

Oh, yeah, Matthew 13:39. Sister Elaine, could you look that up for us? Matthew 13:39. Now, this is another reason why I think it's reasonable to say that the Lord has returned. Then we're going to look at another reason why some, some might disagree.

Matthew 13:39 is where Jesus has given the parable of the wheat and the tares, and he's now going to explain, in summary, the meaning of that parable. Now, we're only going to read one verse about his explanation. But it's the verse that contains the word harvest, Sister Elaine, and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels. Okay, now she read from what the niv that the harvest is the end of the age.

Now that's what I put up here, too. Although in my Bible it says the end of the world, but that word is in the Greek *ionos*, and it means age. Nobody doesn't know that. That's not even in dispute, and all modern versions will give that.

But what about this word end? The word end in English can be broadly broad, have a broad meaning, but in the Greek there are different words for it. Now, the word *telos* in the Greek is the word for end. That can also have a broad meaning. But the word *suntelia* has a more specific meaning, not so general.

Now this I don't know Greek, so I'm telling you something I'm getting from sources, not from me. You know that. So this is from Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament words. Harvest, end, soon, *Tellia* is the word for end. The word does not denote a termination, but the heading up of events to the appointed climax.

So I think that also tells us if we're in the ending period of the age in the harvest. Well, you see that picture there? Who's that seated on a cloud with a crown on his head, with a sickle in his hand, doing the work of harvest? That's our return, Lord. So I think this also tells us that we're in that period of time.

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So why would anybody not think that we're in the time of the Lord's return? Well, we're going to point to a scripture. It's Matthew 24:30. We're going to ask Elaine to read that as well. Matthew 24:30 is talking about the end of the age.

Now in Matthew 24, that's a chapter we think of as all about the Lord's return, the end of the age, and circumstances at the end. Starting with about verse 14, we're in the end of the age. But now in 24:30, let's see what we read there. It's history Lane. At that time, the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn.

They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and with great glory. Okay, and would you read verse? Let's see. Was that. That was 30.

Would you read 29 as well?

Immediately after the distress of those days, the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light. The stars will fall from the sky and the heavenly bodies will be shaken. Okay? And some read that, and they say, well, that hasn't happened yet, and verse 30, then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven.

That's the appearance. That's the return of Christ. If that's future, then we haven't arrived there yet. Now, that's an interesting question. If you look in volume four, you're going to find an explanation for this.

You're going to find an explanation that says, no, no, that was early in the harvest. Well, you know, that's what I taught, too, that I. I spoke on. I've spoken on that before. I've said it in panels before. That was years ago.

But I looked at it more carefully and thought, I wonder if I'm really correct on that. Then Brother Carl Hagenseck gave a talk on this scripture, and he pointed out that this really is talking about the close of the harvest and the final ending, and it's not here, and I thought, you know, I think he's right, and then Brother Russell Shalhou came to San Diego, gave a talk on it one time, and he quoted a sermon book by Brother Russell where Brother Russell says, this is not the beginning of the harvest, this is the end of the harvest. So he even agreed.

This is really at the close. So there are things that deal with the end of the harvest which is yet pending, that can use expressions that you think of as referring to the return of Christ, and it does refer to the return of Christ, just not the beginning of that. So my point here is simply there are reasons why brethren have different opinions, and we should be thoughtful enough to digest those, to discuss with them, and then possibly then to resolve the differences. Okay, now I'm going to go on for this to another point, and that is the covenants.

Now, the covenants also are an issue that divided the brethren, even in Brother Russell's day, quite deeply, and is there any way to resolve that issue? Well, I'm just going to mention a couple of points about it. These are some definitions, some expressions that pertain to the seed of blessing in the Old Testament. In the book of Genesis, you have Jacob to Jake.

Excuse me, you have the dust of the earth, the stars of heaven, and the sand of the seashore. We'll get into the covenants in a moment, explain why this is relative. But if you start in Genesis, the 13th chapter, verse 15 and 16, and you find there that's where Lot and Abraham are going to separate ways, and God tells Abraham, after Lot is gone, he said, now you look at all this land that

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you see around you, and he named the four directions.

East, west, south, and north. He says, that land is going to be yours, and your seed is going to be like the dust of the earth. I think that's connecting the dust of the earth to natural Israel, and you'll find in Genesis 28:14, that when Jacob had to flee from his brother Esau and go northward, he saw a vision one night as he was sleeping, and there also God said, your seed will be like the dust of the earth.

Jacob is natural Israel for Isaac. In Genesis 15:1 5, when he told God, told Abraham, you're going to have a seed from your own body. Not like he said, maybe I'll easier have a child for me because I'm so old. No, no, it's going to be from your own body, and he's talking about Isaac.

And then he said, your seed is going to be like the stars of heaven. When you finally get to chapter 22, verse 17, where he's offering Isaac, he says, your seed will be like the stars of heaven and like the sand of the seashore. Because we have two ages of redemption that's going to come from the death of Jesus. So we have the dust of the earth. They got their land way back here in the Jewish age.

Then we have two ages of redemption after the death of Christ, pictured by Isaac's being offered on the altar. So that's why in Genesis 22, he mentions the stars and sand in Genesis 28, verse 4. 28, 26, verse 4. Rather, that's where God is talking to Isaac himself, who is a picture of the spiritual seat. Okay, go down Genesis 22:17, same text.

That's the sand of the seashore, and Genesis. Let's see, and 32:12, that's when Jacob is coming back to the land, which is a picture of the kingdom, ready to open up for the world of mankind. So those have meaning for three ages.

And now we're going to look at three women that have a similar meaning. Three women, Hagar, dust of the earth, Jewish age. Sarah, stars of heaven, gospel age. Keturah, sand of the seashore, millennial age. So in my opinion, this is interpreting.

That is, Hagar does represent the old Law covenant. Now, we don't have to interpret too much because Paul says that in Galatians, the third and fourth chapter. So Sarah, I believe, represents the Abrahamic covenant. That is spiritual and I believe Keturah represents the Abrahamic covenant, that part that is earthly, and that's why Couture became a full wife after Sarah died.

But you know, Couture already had had her children before that, and so before the kingdom mankind is born, she had six children, and we know that she had those children before she was a wife because they were called the children of the concubine, and all six names are listed in first chronicles. So I think that represents mankind for 6,000 years.

And then when Sarah's gone, then Keturah becomes the next part of the Abrahamic covenant. But you notice I say Abrahamic covenant. So what do we do with the new covenant? That's where all the disparity lies. Well, our time is going short and we got more to say, so I'm not going to have that read.

I'll just tell you what it's going to say. But Jeremiah 31:31 says, the days are going to come when I'm going to make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. I'm going to put the law of God in their heart. Today Israel has what, 30% religious and 60, 70% non religious, something like that? That's what I've heard.

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I don't know myself, but not hardly any of them are Christian. Now the Christian community there is growing. I'm glad for that. But they're not Christian yet, so they don't really understand their Messiah yet.

So that hasn't happened. So that new covenant is going to be made in the kingdom. But the question is, is it possible that when you read the book of Hebrews and you study all these detailed things Paul says about it, is it possible that he's taken a second application for those prophecies rather than the one application that we take? You know, that does happen. It happens when in Acts, the second chapter, Paul speaks and he talks about when the Spirit of God is poured out upon all flesh.

Has that happened yet? That the Spirit of God is poured out upon all flesh? No, it's going to happen in the kingdom. But has it happened at least in part already? Perhaps so.

My point here is only that when there are differences of opinion, it's always helpful to listen and discuss and dialogue and see why there might be a different point of view, and perhaps in some cases there's at least some partial reasons why there might be. Okay, we're going to go on. We're going to talk about the Song of Solomon. Now, if I asked you if we're going to Talk about love.

What love story would you like to hear about? What love story is in the Bible? Well, okay. Song of Solomon is a love story, and Song of Solomon has eight chapters.

And, and you can almost split it in half. Four chapters and four chapters, and these chapters in the Song of Solomon are all about a love story between Solomon and his bride to be, which I believe represents spiritually our Lord Jesus and his bride to be. Now, we're going to turn to Song of Solomon, and we're going to read a few verses here and then just outline what the chapters are about in song of Solomon.

One, verse one, verse one and two. Sister Elaine, you could read verse one and two there. Then we're going to skip down to verse 12, perhaps one and two, Sister Elaine of verse one. Song of Psalms. Yes, Song of Psalms.

Song Solomon 1, 1 and 2. Okay. The song of Songs, which is Solomon's. Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for they love is better than wine. Okay.

Now, whenever you see the word, well, that tells you that we're talking about a love story. That's all. That's all we want to have in mind. But whenever you look in the entire chapter, it entire book rather, and you see the word love as it refers to a person, think of the woman. Whenever you see the word beloved, think of the man.

So I'm going to read from here on because we're really short in time and I got to hurry this song of Solomon 1.

We're going to change over to chapter two, and we're going to look at verse seven. I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the rose and by the hinds of the field, that you stir, not up nor awake my love till she please. Now, in the King James I have he, and their different translations will put it different ways, but I'm going to suggest whenever you see the word love, always think feminine. Whenever you see the word beloved, always think masculine.

Now, what we have read here is the test that we're going to find again in the eighth chapter of Song of Solomon, and the test is whether or not she's going to be looking for her lover as he approaches

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and returns. Now, in the third chapter, in verses one through four, here's where the woman is on her bed at night, and it says, I sought him whom my soul loves. I sought him, but I found him not. She said, I know what I'll do.

I'm going to rise up now, go about the city, in the streets, and I will seek him whom my soul loveth, and I sought him, but I couldn't find him. But the watchmen of the city, they have. They were of no value. Verse 4.

But it was a little that I passed from that I found him and I held on to him. I wouldn't let him go. I brought him into my brother's home, and we lived happily ever after. That's wonderful. That's how the church should be looking for their Lord at his return, embracing him.

Now, we could go through chapter four and show all the attributes of this woman and how they are spiritually involved with our spiritual character. But time will not allow. So we're going to go to the fifth chapter and look at verse two. Here's the next four chapters where you find the same concern, but not as deeply held. Chapter five, verse two.

I sleep, but my heart wakes. It's the voice of my beloved that knocks, saying, open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled, and you know what she says? Sorry, I'm a little sleepy. I won't get up.

Says, I put off my shoes. How shall I put them on? I put off my coat, you know, I, and so she doesn't get up to meet him. So finally she says, you know, I really should get up.

And so she rises, she opens the door, and he's gone. Now her heart fails, and so she goes out looking for him. Have you seen my beloved? And the keepers of the city say, well, they.

They're treating her bad now. They're going to smite her or wound her and take her veil from her. So she goes on to the daughters of Jerusalem and says, have you seen the one I love? Daughters of Jerusalem? Is that Israel?

Maybe the last experience of the great company talking to Israel. The scriptures, I think, suggest that might be, and they say, well, what's special about him? Well, let me tell you about him, and she describes him in exquisite beauty.

And then they say, where is he that we may seek him with you? And then she says, I know where he is. He's in the bed of love, and I've missed it. He's with the bright flesh. Now you go to the eighth chapter.

We're almost finished here, into the eighth chapter, and she says again, well, let's see, verse number eight, and going forward, she says, we have a little sister, and she's not as well developed as I am. She says, says the bride, I won't tell you how words you can read it. It's a little bit sensitive.

You can read it yourself. But we have a sister, and she's not as well developed. What's going to happen to her? She says, well, there's two possibilities. Either she's like a wall, so she has put out sin from her.

In which case we're going to build on her a palace of silver. I think the great company, the spiritual class. Or maybe she's got Christian faith, but she really has been like a door. She hasn't really sealed her experiences. So in that case, we're going to enclose her with boards of cedar.

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I think she's going to have an earthly hope in the kingdom. Okay, now our time's up, so we have to stop here. But we're just going to say this. When you talk about the spirit of love, that is the most earnest quality that we want to develop. Now, there are three things a Christian has to do when they're consecrated.

They have to develop character. They have to serve. Then they have to study. Now, we all know the divine plan. We're pretty much there.

That doesn't mean you should stop studying. But the brethren know the divine plan. Are we serving? Well, sometimes when I come to a convention like this, I see people that are really, really serving. I appreciate the meals that are served and how much effort goes into this and how much effort goes on to prepare a place.

And yes, there's serving, but each individual should be attentive to that. But thirdly, of course, is character, and the chief element of character is love, and it's easy to love you because you're very lovable. But we have to even learn to love our enemies and be kindly disposed, not only outwardly, but to have that love in our hearts thinking about the time when we can bless them and turn them away towards godliness.

Thank you.