

## In Love (vv.22-25)

**VERSE 22** **Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls** (Τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν ἡγνικότες ἐν τῇ ὑπακοῇ τῆς ἀληθείας [*def.art.w/acc.f.p., psuche, soul, + pro.gen.m.p., su, you, + pf.act.pt.2.m.p., ἀγνίζω, hagnizo, purify; {ritual, as in Jn.11:55; Acts.21:24,26; 24:18; real, Jam.4:8; 1Jn.3:3}}*]) **for a sincere love of the brethren** (εἰς φιλαδελφίαν ἀνυπόκριτον [*prep.w/acc.f.s., φιλαδελφία, philadelphia, brotherly love; 6X: Rom.12:10; 1Thess.4:9; Heb.13:1; 1Pet.1:22; 2Pet.1:7; + adj.acc.f.s., ἀνυπόκριτος, anupokritos, sincere; genuine; 6X: Rom.12:9; 2Cor.6:6; 1Tim.1:5; 2Tim.1:5; Jam.3:17; 1Pet.1:22]*]), **ferverly love one another from the heart** (ἐκ καρδίας ἀλλήλους ἀγαπήσατε ἐκτενωῶς [*prep.w/abl.f.s, καρδία, kardia, heart, + pro.acc.m.p., ἀλλήλων, allelon, one another, + aor.act.imper.2.p., ἀγαπάω, agapao, love, + adv., ektenos, earnestly]*),

ANALYSIS: VERSE 22

1. Peter makes no attempt at a transition, but appears to change the subject rather abruptly.
2. Although there is no immediate or obvious connection between hope and purification, the principle expressed in 1Jn.3:3 that “everyone who has this hope in him (Christ and His appearing) purifies himself just as He (Christ) is pure”, illustrates how hope might have prompted Peter to speak on inner purification.
3. Peter uses the perfect participle of the verb “to purify” to signify something that has already occurred.
4. The purification of which Peter speaks is the product of orienting to “the truth”.
5. Obedience to the truth means that they were both hearers and doers of BD.
6. Intake of BD and the consistent use of Rebound result in the purification of the soul.
7. The soul is the “real you”, which is either under the influence of the STA or under the influence of the “new you”, that is, on those occasions when God the HS is in control.
8. As new converts they had been taught the things they needed in order to live righteously in the world and before one another.
9. Peter acknowledges their recent “obedience to the truth” that has resulted in “a sincere love of the brethren”.
10. This is the third time in this letter he made mention of their obedience (vv.2,14).
11. Here, he is definitely referring to their Ph2 positive volition.
12. The kind of love they have attained to is love without pretense.
13. The adjective “sincere” also means “genuine” or “without hypocrisy”.
14. In other words, it means a love that is not phony/fake.
15. The word occurs 6X: Rom.12:9 (“*Let love be without hypocrisy.*”); 2Cor.6:6 (“in genuine love”); 1Tim.1:5 (“sincere faith”); 2Tim.1:5 (“sincere faith”); Jam.3:17 (“without hypocrisy”); 1Pet.1:22 (“sincere love”).
16. As a body of positive believers scattered throughout northern Turkey, they had assimilated the doctrine (“truth”) that enabled them to love one another in a way that was free from pretense.

17. They, like the Thessalonians, knew the doctrine (1Thess.4:9,10).
18. The commands in First John to “love one another” and to “love the brethren” parallel Peter’s concern here (1Jn.2:10; 3:10,11,14,23; 4:7,20,21).
19. “Truth” encompasses all the pertinent doctrine to fulfill the imperative to “love the brethren”.
20. It is knowing what love is and what it isn’t (cf. 1Cor.13).
21. Based on their past accomplishments in this aspect of the CWL, Peter exhorts them to “fervently (earnestly) love one another from the heart”.
22. The words “from the heart” correspond to the adjective “sincere” in reference to the kind of love desired (cf. Rom.6:17).
23. The entire clause, with the exception of the adverb “fervently”, echoes the previous reference to genuine love among the Royal Family.
24. Peter’s point is that having purified their souls for the express purpose of displaying genuine affection and care for each other, they must do exactly that.
25. The adverb “fervently” can either refer to the intensity of love or its constancy.
26. The latter seems preferable (cp. the only other usage, Acts.12:5).
27. They should love each other from the heart “unremittingly”; their affection must be constant and enduring, unshaken by adversity or shifting circumstances.
28. In the current climate of persecution they need to support one another in word and deed.

**VERSE 23 for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable**

(ἀναγεγεννημένοι οὐκ ἐκ σπορᾶς φθαρτῆς [*pf.pass.pt.nom.m.p.*, ἀναγεννάω, *anagennao*, *born again*, + *neg.* + *prep.w/abl.f.s.*, σπορά, *spora*, *seed*, + *adj.abl.f.s.*, φθαρτός, *phthartos*, *subject to decay, perishable*]) **but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God** (ἀλλὰ ἀφθάρτου διὰ λόγου ζῶντος θεοῦ καὶ μένοντος [*conj./advers.*, *alla*, *but*, + *adj.abl.f.s.*, ἀφθαρτος, *aphthartos*, *imperishable*, + *prep.*, *dia*, *w/gen.m.s.*, λόγος, *logos*, *word*, + *pres.act.pt.gen.m.s.*, ζάω, *zao*, *live*, + *conj.*, *kai*, *and*, + *gen.m.s.*, *theos*, *God*, + *pres.act.pt.gen.m.s.*, μένω, *meno*, *abide*]).

**VERSE 24 For, "ALL FLESH IS LIKE GRASS** (διότι πᾶσα σὰρξ ὡς χόρτος [*conj.*, *dioti*, *because*, + *adj.f.s.*, *pas*, *all*, + *n.f.s.*, σὰρξ, *sarx*, *flesh*, + *conj./compar.*, *hos*, *as*, + *n.m.s.*, χόρτος, *chortos*, *grass*]), **AND ALL ITS GLORY LIKE THE FLOWER OF GRASS** (καὶ πᾶσα δόξα αὐτῆς ὡς ἄνθος χόρτου [*conj.* + *adj.n.f.s.*, *pas*, *all*, + *n.f.s.*, *doxa*, *glory*, + *pro.gen.f.s.*, *autos*, “its”, + *conj./compar.*, *hos*, *as*, + *n.nt.s.*, *anthos*, *flower*, + *gen.m.s.*, *chortos*, *grass*]). **THE GRASS WITHERS, AND THE FLOWER FALLS OFF** (ἐξηράνθη ὁ χόρτος καὶ τὸ ἄνθος ἐξέπεσεν· [*aor.pass.ind.3.s.*, *ξηραίνω*, *zeraino*, *wither*, + *def.art.w/n.m.s.*, *chortos*, *grass*, + *conj.*, *kai*, + *def.art.w/n.nt.s.*, *anthos*, *flower*, + *aor.act.ind.3.s.*, ἐκπίπτω, *ekpipto*, *fall off*]),

**VERSE 25 BUT THE WORD OF THE LORD ENDURES FOREVER** (τὸ [def.art.n.nt.s.] δὲ [conj., but] ῥῆμα [n.nt.s., herma, word] κυρίου [gen.m.s., kurios, lord] μένει [pres.act.ind.3.m.s., meno, abide] εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.[ prep.w/acc.m.s.def.art.w/acc.m.s., aion, age; idiom, forever])." **And this is the word which was preached to you** (τοῦτο [demon.pro.n.nt.s., autos, this] δέ [conj., and] ἐστίν [pres.act.ind.3.m.s., eimi] τὸ ῥῆμα [def.art.w/n.nt.s., hrema, word] τὸ εὐαγγελισθῆν [def.art.w/aor.pass.pt.n.nt.s., εὐαγγελίζω, euangelizo, proclaim good news] εἰς ὑμᾶς [prep.w/acc.m.p., su]).

ANALYSIS: VERSES 23-25

1. The connection between the kind of love we are to exhibit toward one another (v.22) and the reference to the new birth is this: the kind of love called for is based on a new order of existence.
2. That new order of existence is not based on the natural order of things.
3. The dynamic related to the kind of love specified in v.22 is possible only when understood in the light of our new order of existence.
4. The birth from above, or the new birth, brings us into a new dimension.
5. We are, by God's grace and power, a new species; therefore, by extension, we are empowered to function as a new species of humanity.
6. After all, it is the dynamic of our love for each other that marks us as Christ's disciples (Jn.13:35).
7. Regeneration is the first essential step that puts us in a position to engage in this dynamic.
8. Hence, verse 23.
9. Our birth into a new family (humanity) is not predicated upon "perishable" but "imperishable seed".
10. The natural birth results in people who find it hard, if not impossible, to love and associate with certain people.
11. The second, or new, birth opens the door to a dramatically superior experience of love toward fellow believers as well as the world in general.
12. Peter describes the new birth here in much the same way that he described the grounds for redemption in vv.18-19 – by means of a contrast between perishable and imperishable things.
13. Just as we were redeemed "not with perishable things such as silver and gold" (v.18), so we were born anew "not of the planting of perishable seed but imperishable".
14. The feminine form of "seed" (σπορά) occurs only here in the N.T., and appears to have been chosen because it focuses more on the process of sowing than on the seed as such.
15. The masculine noun is στέρμα and is used of plant and human generation.
16. The language of regeneration plainly suggests human procreation (Jn.1:13; 3:4).
17. The seed in this analogy is the WOG, which impregnates the soul with eternal life.
18. The "seed" is imperishable and so is the progeny, the born again Christian.
19. A logical deduction arising from this verse is that all that are born again are imperishable.
20. The natural birth produces perishable results, but the new birth results in a species that cannot perish (Jn.8:51; 11:25).
21. When the volition of the soul receives the message of salvation (the gospel), the power of God keeps His promise and regenerates the one who believes.
22. The seed is identified with "the living and abiding (enduring) word of God".
23. God's word is always "living" in that it is based on the divine attributes.
24. It is "abiding" in the sense that it is eternal, as God is eternal.
25. The "word" is the gospel message with its promise of eternal regeneration to all that believe (cf. v.25b).
26. James 1:18 speaks of God bringing us to salvation by the WOG.
27. In v.23 Peter's thought is that, as a result of accepting the gospel, the Asian Christians have been spiritually born into a new order of being of which the characteristic note is God's love.
28. In support of what Peter has just said about God's word, he appeals to Isa.40:6-8, which compares "ALL FLESH" (humanity) with "GRASS" and with "THE FLOWER OF GRASS".

29. James 1:10 also appeals indirectly to this text, but to illustrate the ephemerality of riches.
30. Isaiah's objective was to console the despondent Jews in captivity with the knowledge that their oppressors' glory and power would wane, and God's promise to restore and deliver His people would prevail.
31. The glory of man is likened to the green grass of spring and the wild flowers, which can be dramatic.
32. Man's glory fades like flowers due to his mortality.
33. By contrast, man's generational glory fades but the WOG keeps on enduring.
34. It is there for each generation and each individual, and it enables man to attain to what he cannot permanently achieve, and that is eternal glory beyond imagining.
35. Because the life cycle of plants is relatively short, and the perishability of plants is more obvious to humans than their own mortality, grass and flowers become appropriate metaphors for the human condition.
36. The outward splendor of civilization (likened to a grassy meadow with an abundance and variety of beautiful flowers) belies a hidden but universally recognized fact, and that is that the scene will soon fade to brown and death.
37. By extreme contrast, "THE WORD OF THE LORD ABIDES FOREVER".
38. The doctrine beginning with the gospel was what the Asian Christians had proclaimed to them so that they could overcome the transitoriness of human existence and attach themselves to that which is eternal and glorious.
39. They had been privileged to hear an eternal gospel which promises eternal life.
40. The focus here is on the message, whereas in 1:12 it was upon the messengers who first taught them.
41. The theme here is consistent with other Scriptures, such as Mt.24:35 and 1Jn.2:17.
42. Peter continues to build up their identity and call them to responsibility.

#### Summary of vv.22-25

1. The imperative of v.22 to "love one another unremittingly from the heart" is set in a strongly theological context.
2. The context is a reminder of the assured realities of spiritual purification (result of intake of BD) and the new birth.
3. This is contrasted with the ephemeral, in an appeal to Scripture (vv.24,25).
4. The reason can only be that Peter considers this theological context absolutely necessary to the understanding of the love command.
5. Without a frame of reference of these things it is impossible to be fond of other individuals and to have a commitment to a community or a cause.
6. What is always lacking is a constancy or steadfastness, which Peter sums up with the adverb "fervently", which is better rendered "unremittingly".
7. The love of which he speaks is an unremitting, imperishable love.
8. This love binds those who have become "believers in God" into a community distinct from the society around it.

**END: FIRST PETER CHAPTER ONE**

**JACK M. BALLINGER**