

SCRIPTURE READINGS: John 21:15-17.

INTRODUCTION:

1. What do you say to someone who has just lost a child, a spouse, or a parent?
2. While many things may be appropriate, above all you tell them that you love them.
3. "Beloved." When I've studied about love in the past, I've tended to gloss over this word, but it appears 69 times in the New Testament and the way the Holy Spirit uses the word teaches us much about how we should use the word. I want to share three of those lessons with you this morning.

APPLICATIONS:

1. **Tell people you love them.**

A. We should do it.

- 1) The Father tells the Son He loves Him. Mark 1:9-11; Matthew 17:1-5.
- 2) God tells us He loves us. Colossians 3:12; 2 Thessalonians 2:13.
- 3) Paul told the brethren He loved them. 1 Corinthians 10:14; 15:58; Romans 16:5B, 8-9, 12B; etc.
- 4) James told the brethren He loved them. James 1:16, 19A; 2:5A; etc.
- 5) Peter told the brethren He loved them. 1 Peter 2:11; 4:12; etc.
- 6) John told the brethren He loved them. 1 John 2:7A; 3:2; etc.
- 7) Jude told the brethren He loved them. Jude 3, 17, 20-21.

B. We should always do it. 1 Corinthians 4:14, 17. Even if they don't reciprocate! 2 Corinthians 12:15. People will leave you hanging, but don't leave them hanging!

C. When we do it, we should clearly understand what we are saying and clearly communicate our meaning. *Phileo* and/or *agapeo*. *Phileo* is warm, tender feelings of affection. *Agape* is an unconditional devotion to a person or thing's highest good. At least 62 of the 69 times it appears, "beloved" is *agapetos*.

2. **Love people.**

A. Some people don't tell people they love them when they do love them. Repent! Stretch!

B. Some people don't tell people they love them because they don't love them. 1 John 4:7-11. We should love all people. 1 Timothy 6:1-2. We must open our arms of love as wide as possible!

C. Some people tell people they love them when they don't really love them. Romans 12:9A.

3. **Show people you love them.**

A. 1 John 3:16-18.

B. But, this is not a substitute for telling people you love them!

CONCLUSION:

1. Three times Jesus asked Peter, "Do you love Me?"
2. Peter shouldn't have waited to be asked.
3. Beloved, let's tell people we love them. We need to say it now. They need to hear it now. "On 9-11-01, hundreds of people who were not killed by the initial impact at the World Trade Center were trapped, but they still had access to cell phones. Others were passengers on what they knew to be a doomed flight over Pennsylvania. What was the message repeated again and again from those who were able to make connections with home? Was it directions about where to find wills or life insurance papers? Did they tell their husbands and wives what to do about selling the houses? No, those were the last things on their minds. Instead, they said again and again, 'Honey, remember I love you,' or 'Please tell the kids over and over how much I love them.' And if there was time, some said, 'Please call Mom and tell her I love her.' When one distills the essence of our existence, it has almost nothing to do with houses or bank accounts or business achievements. It is all about love" (Alan Loy McGinnis).