



The Fellowship Digest

Edition 27, Volume 3

July

Christian Love

www.fellowship-pca.org

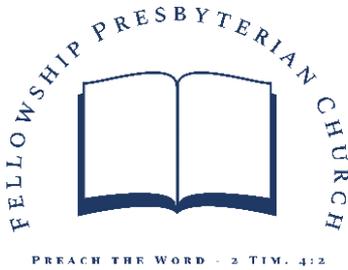


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WHAT IS LOVE?

By Dr. R.C. Sproul

How many people do you know that have made it to the hall of fame in music, art, literature, or sports because of their love? We elevate people to the status of heroes because of their gifts, their talents, and their power, but not because of their love. Yet, from God's perspective, love is the chief of all virtues. But what is love?

Love is said to make the world go round, and romantic love certainly makes the culture go round in terms of advertising and entertainment. We never seem to tire of stories that focus on romance. But we're not referring to romantic love when we speak of the Christian virtue of love. We're talking about a much deeper dimension of love, a virtue so paramount that it is to distinguish Christians from all other people. Moreover, love is so important to the Bible's teachings that John tells us, "God is love" (1 John 4:7–8). Whatever else we say about the Christian virtue of love, we must be clear that the love God commands is a love that imitates His own. The love of God is utterly perfect. And we are called to reflect and mirror that love to perfection, to be perfect as He is perfect (Matt. 5:48). Now, of course, none of us loves perfectly, which is why we must be covered with the perfect righteousness of Christ by faith in Him alone. Nevertheless, it's important for us to return time and again to Scripture to find out what love is supposed to look like, for we're so easily satisfied with a sentimental, maudlin, romantic, or superficial understanding of love.

First Corinthians 13 plumbs the depths of what love really means. It's a measuring rod by which we can examine ourselves carefully to see whether this love resides in our hearts and is manifested in our lives. Given that truth, I'm surprised that 1 Corinthians 13 is one of the most popular passages in all of Scripture instead of being one of the most despised. I can't think of any chapter in Scripture that more quickly reveals our sins than this chapter. It's popularity may be due to its being one of the most misunderstood and least applied chapters in the Bible. There's a sense in which we're ambivalent toward it. We're drawn to it because of the grandeur of its theme and the eloquence of its language, yet at the same time we're repulsed by this chapter because it reveals our shortcomings. We want to keep some safe distance from it because it so clearly demonstrates to us our lack of real love.

This chapter is part of an Apostolic admonition to Christians who were torn apart by contentions in the church. They were behaving in an immature, fleshly manner, and at the heart of this ungodly behavior was a manifestation of certain talents, abilities, and gifts without the presence of love in their lives. In the opening verses, Paul speaks of love as the *sine qua non* of Christian virtue (1 Cor. 13:1–3). He's speaking with hyperbole, intentionally exaggerating things to make his point. He starts off comparing love to the gift of tongues. Paul says, in effect, "I don't care if you are fluent in fifty languages or if you have the gift to speak foreign languages miraculously. I don't care if God has endowed you with the ability to speak the language of the heavenly host. If you don't have love, the eloquence of your speech becomes

noise. It becomes dissonance, an irritating and annoying racket.” He says here that if we speak in the tongues of men and of angels but have not love, we become a sounding brass or a clanging symbol—mere noise. All the beauty of speech is lost when love is absent.

Paul then compares love to the gifts of prophecy and understanding, miraculous endowments that God gave to people during the Apostolic era. These tremendous gifts were nothing compared to love. The Apostle says that you can have a miraculous endowment, you can receive power from God the Holy Spirit, but it is to be used in the context of the grace of love. And without that love, the use of the divine power is a charade. Jesus had to warn even His own disciples about the danger of using a God-given gift without love. Jesus empowered His disciples to participate in His ministry of exorcism, and they went out on their mission and came back clicking their heels. They were so excited at the effectiveness of their ministry that they were rejoicing in the power Christ had given them. But what did Jesus say? Don’t rejoice because you have been given power over Satan, but rejoice that your names have been written in heaven (Luke 10:1–20). The disciples were caught up with the power instead of the grace that was underlying that power. They were intoxicated with the gift, and were forgetting the One who gave it.

The bottom line is that the gifts of God can be used without love. When that happens, their value is destroyed. The essence of love, 1 Corinthians 13 tells us, is to seek the welfare of others. A person who reflects God’s love is driven to give of himself for others, not to wield his power for his own benefit. But we are people who are more interested in power, in doing rather than being. We’re more

concerned to seize the supernatural power that God can give rather than the supernatural love that is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5). We have misplaced priorities. Thanks be to God that His love for us is greater than our love for Him. May He strengthen us to pursue love above all else, a love that reflects His love for us in Christ (5:8).

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<https://www.ligonier.org/blog/what-love/>



~Preaching Schedule for July 2020~

July 5	AM: Romans 12:18-20 PM: Judges 6:11-27
July 12	AM: Romans 12:21 PM: Judges 6:28-40
July 19	AM: Romans 13:1-7 PM: Judges 7:1-18
July 26	AM: Romans 13:8-10 PM: Judges 7:19-25



~Announcements~

- **Reminder:** The Session is asking that all members attend all stated meetings of the church unless providentially hindered.
- The **pulpit ministry of Fellowship** is on **SermonAudio**. You can access the sermons preached by our pastor on the Fellowship website at www.fellowship-pca.org or go to <http://www.sermonaudio.com/fellowship-pca>
- **The bulletins** for the services of the church are now available on the church website.
- The pastor can be heard **on the radio** each **Tuesday from 10-10:30 AM on WLIK**. You can listen locally at **97.9 FM, 1270 AM** or **stream** it over the internet at www.wlik.net.
- **The church library is now open. Please take a look!**
- Please secure your copy of the **July prayer calendar**. It is available on the table in the lyhallway.
- **We will celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper** on July 5, 2020, in the AM worship service.

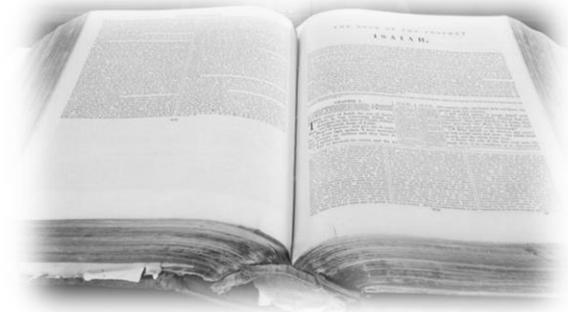
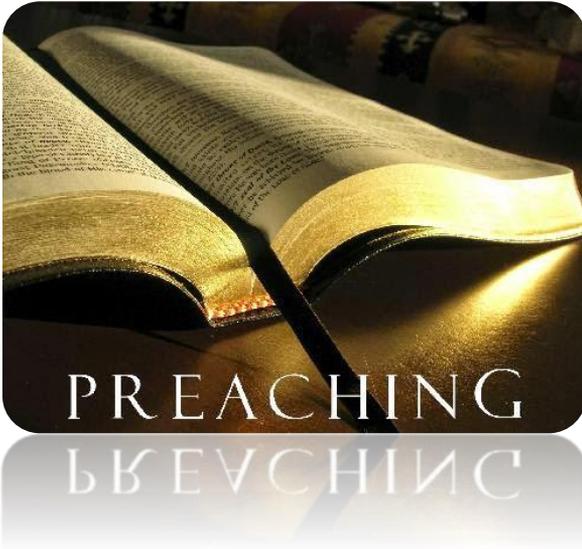
~The Preaching of the Word of God~

Westminster Larger Catechism – Q160

Q. 160. What is required of those that hear the word preached?

A. It is required of those that hear the Word preached, that they attend upon it with **diligence, preparation, and prayer; examine** what they hear by the Scriptures; **receive the truth** with faith, love, meekness, and readiness of mind as the Word of God; **meditate, and confer** of it; **hide** it in their hearts, and bring forth the **fruit** of it in their lives.





Note: Each month, to help us prepare for worship and the preaching of God's Word, the pastor will be offering a summary of the upcoming sermons. These will include discussion questions that can be used for family or personal worship.

~July 5 – AM Worship~

Sermon Text: Romans 12:18-20

Main Point: God's people are to strive to be at peace with others, never taking revenge and seeking to do good to our enemies.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does Paul qualify the admonition regarding being at peace with all people? What does this look like on a practical, day-to-day level?
2. What should you do if you find yourself at odds with someone in the world? In the church?
3. Why should you never seek to avenge yourself? What examples are there in the Bible of men who did not avenge themselves?
4. Instead of vengeance, what should be the response of the child of God towards his enemies? Why?

~July 5 – PM Worship~

Sermon Text: Judges 6:11-27

Main Point: A Moses-like figure is called by God to mediate and deliver His people.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does the LORD commission and call Gideon to service?

2. What is his response? Why do you think he responded in that way?
3. What is the sign that Gideon requests, and how is it answered?
4. What kind of personality do you think Gideon possessed? See Judges 6:27.

~July 12 – AM Worship~

Sermon Text: Romans 12:21

Main Point: Evil should never dominate the good moral character of God’s people. Instead, it good should overcome evil.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is evil, and what does it mean to avoid being “overcome” by it? How can you avoid evil? See Mark 14:38.
2. How can a Christian overcome evil with good? What does that look like in conversation and interaction with other people?

~July 12 – PM Worship~

Sermon Text: Judges 6:28-40

Main Point: The Moses-like figure destroys the false gods of the land and seeks a sign from the LORD.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the reaction of the people when they learn their idol has been destroyed?

2. Why is Gideon called Jerubbaal?
3. What is the implication of Judges 6:34?

~July 19 – AM Worship~

Sermon Text: Romans 13:1-7

Main Point: The relationship of God's people to the civil authorities should be one of respect and honor.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the main way in which a leader ascends to the position of civil authority? What implication does that have on our attitude towards those in high positions?
2. Who is the Christian resisting when he resists the governing authorities?
3. What is the primary responsibility of the civil authorities, according to Paul, in 13:3-4?
4. What is the consequence for one who resists the lawful commands of the civil authority?
5. What must you do, as a Christian, if the civil authorities tell you to do something that violates God's law?
6. What must all Christians do for the civil authorities? See 1 Tim. 2:1, 2.

~July 19 – PM Worship~

Sermon Text: Judges 7:1-18

Main Point: The LORD demonstrates his power and ability to save His people.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why does the LORD require Gideon to reduce the number of men in his army?
2. How does the LORD show who will fight and who will leave?
3. What is the subject of the dream in Judges 7:13-14. What does it mean?
4. What was the response of Gideon to the telling of the dream?

~July 26 – AM Worship~

Sermon Text: Romans 13:8-10

Main Point: The fulfillment of the law begins and ends with love.

Discussion Questions:

1. What debt do we owe to all men?
2. If a Christian loves all men, what has been fulfilled? How does Paul support that position?
3. In what way should you love your neighbor? Who is your neighbor?

~July 26 – PM Worship~

Sermon Text: Judges 7:19-25

Main Point: The destruction of the enemies of the LORD's people at the hand of Gideon.

Discussion Questions:

1. How many men were with Gideon to attack Midian?
2. Who set every man's sword against the enemy?

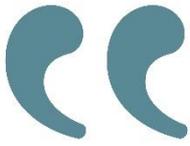


At **Fellowship Presbyterian Church**,

we believe that the **preached Word** is central to our worship.

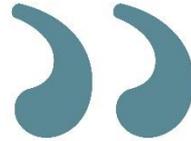
It is to be attended to

with diligence and care. The Word of God preached is the living and active voice of the Lord Jesus Christ to His people.



Q. 88. *What are the outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption?*

A. The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption, are his ordinances, especially the **word, sacraments, and prayer**; all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.
(*Westminster Shorter Catechism*)



Services

Wednesday

6 PM Prayer Meeting and Bible Study

Current Study: *One Lord, One Plan, One People: A Survey of the Bible: The book of Numbers.*

Lord's Day

~~9:45 AM Sunday School - Currently Suspended~~

11 AM Worship

Series: Romans 12-14

5 PM Worship

Series: The Book of Judges

~~6 PM @ Wellington Manner [2nd Sun. of the month] -
Currently suspended~~

~~2 PM [Final Sun. of the month] - Currently suspended~~



~Church Life~

~Recipes~

Do **you** have a recipe to share with the congregation?
PLEASE HELP our church family with a recipe or two
to share in the newsletter.

Send it to wfill@fellowship-pca.org

~Church & Community



- **Wednesday Bible Study – “One Lord, One Plan, One People: A Survey of the Bible” – Everyone is invited to this study!** Currently, we are examining the book of **Numbers**.
- Starting with the **AUGUST** Edition of the *Digest* will include **book reviews**. Some of them will be on books in our church library.
- **The pastor is seeking members** who would be willing to write a brief bio to be included in the *Fellowship Digest*.

~Church Life~

~Birthdays and Anniversaries~

Birthdays

July 18 – Linda Woodall

July 26 – Gwen Hill

July 30 – Terry Rowekamp

Anniversaries

July 6 – Syndi Curtis-Jones



~The Pastor's Study~

"The Pastor's Study"

The radio ministry of Fellowship Presbyterian Church

Every Tuesday from 10-10:30 AM



Live stream on www.wlik.net

97.9 FM | 1270 AM

Fellowship Presbyterian Church

www.fellowship-pca.org

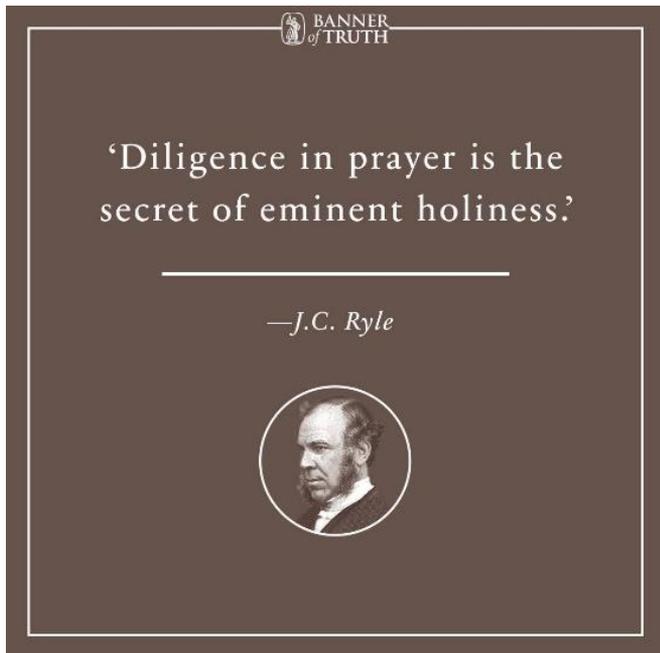
Tune in each Tuesday!

10 AM

~Prayer~

If you have any prayer needs that you would like included in the newsletter, please let one of the elders or the pastor know.

Please submit them by July 24, 2020, by 5 PM to be included in the February *Fellowship Digest*.



CHURCH

- **Worship on the Lord's Day**
 - Pray that the Lord would be pleased with our labors in worship.
 - Pray for God's people to be prepared and hungry to hear God's Word preached.
 - Pray for receptive hearts and minds and a zeal to worship the Lord.
 - Pray that we would worship the triune God in Spirit and truth.
- **Preaching**
 - Pray for the preached Word to be a demonstration of the Spirit of God.
 - Pray that the Word proclaimed would be the Word of the Lord.
 - Pray for the preaching to penetrate the hearts and minds of men.
 - Pray for fruit to come from the preaching of the Scriptures.
 - Pray for the pastor as he labors in the study.
- **Outreach and Evangelism**
 - Pray for the Lord to bless the radio ministry.
 - Pray for the Lord to bring us visitors.
 - Pray that the Lord would provide an opportunity to speak to others about Christ.
 - Pray that the Lord would grant boldness to our witness before the world.
- **The Session**
 - Pray for wisdom in dealing with various difficult matters.

- Pray that the elders would faithfully shepherd the flock of God.
- Pray for strength and protection from the efforts of the evil one.
- **The Diaconate**
 - Pray for grace and wisdom to handle various physical needs of the church body.
 - Pray for strength and protection from the evil one.
- **Building and Finances**
 - Pray that the Lord would protect our property from harm and unexpected expenses.
 - Pray that the Lord would give wisdom in handling the finances.
 - Pray that the Lord would bless the giving received each week.
- **Denomination**
 - Pray for the Lord to use the churches of Highlands Presbytery to advance the gospel.
 - Pray for protection of the ministers of our presbytery.
 - Pray for wisdom for the Teaching and Ruling Elders as they meet and conduct the business of the church.
 - Pray for the PCA as a whole.

OTHER MATTERS

- **Church members**
 - Pray for the chronically ill and those who suffer from chronic pain.
 - Pray for the Lord to protect the membership from illness

- Pray for those who have upcoming medical procedures.
- Pray for the Lord to sustain the marriages in our church.
- Pray for the Lord to save the lost relatives of the members.
- Pray for the needs mentioned at the meeting.
- **Country**
 - Pray for the Lord to pour out his Spirit on the nation.
 - Pray for the Lord to save the souls of men.
 - Pray for the leaders of the nation. Pray that God would save them. Pray that God would prevent them from any wicked act.
 - Pray about the public sins of the country: abortion, homosexuality, etc.
- **Missions**
 - Pray for Matt Lamos as he labors to plant a church in Belgium. Pray for his financial needs. Pray for protection from the evil one and other hostile people.
 - Pray for Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Pray for financial growth. Pray for the professors, staff, and students.
 - Pray for the persecuted church in areas of the Middle East, China, Pakistan, etc.

~Hymn of the Month~

All Praise to God, Who Reigns Above

Trinity Hymnal #4

This hymn will be used in worship throughout **July**.

1 All praise to God, who reigns above,
the God of all creation,
the God of wonders, pow'r, and love,
the God of our salvation!
With healing balm my soul he fills,
the God who every sorrow stills.
To God all praise and glory!

2 What God's almighty pow'r hath made
his gracious mercy keepeth;
by morning dawn or evening shade
his watchful eye ne'er sleepeth;
within the kingdom of his might,
lo, all is just and all is right.
To God all praise and glory!

3 I cried to him in time of need:
Lord God, O hear my calling!
For death he gave me life indeed
and kept my feet from falling.
For this my thanks shall endless be;
O thank him, thank our God, with me.
To God all praise and glory!

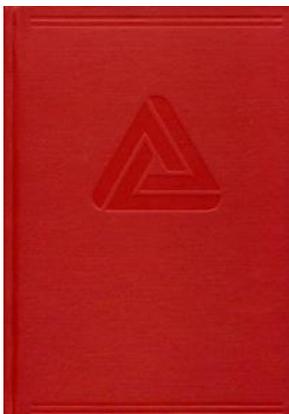
4 The Lord forsaketh not his flock,
his chosen generation;
he is their refuge and their rock,
their peace and their salvation.
As with a mother's tender hand
he leads his own, his chosen band.
To God all praise and glory!

5 Ye who confess Christ's holy name,
to God give praise and glory!
Ye who the Father's pow'r proclaim,
to God give praise and glory!
All idols underfoot be trod,
the Lord is God! The Lord is God!
To God all praise and glory!

6 Then come before his presence now
and banish fear and sadness;
to your Redeemer pay your vow
and sing with joy and gladness:
Though great distress my soul befell,
the Lord, my God, did all things well,
To God all praise and glory!



~Hymns for July 2020~



Note: These hymns will be used in worship throughout **July**. Please review them. You are encouraged to ask the pastor for a **free *Trinity Hymnal*** for your personal use at home and in family worship.

Hymn of the month: #4

July 5

AM Worship: #4, #460, #608

PM Worship: #1, #32, #168

July 12

AM Worship: #4, #598, #92

PM Worship: #100, #693, #318

July 19

AM Worship: #4, #252, #108

PM Worship: #5, #76, #119

July 26

AM Worship: #4, #168, #642

PM Worship: #2, #246, #92

~Shepherding Visits~



July 2020

Lois Johnson
Terry and Cathy Rowekamp

~Article~

Christian Love Defined

“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.”

- John 15:12–13

In an age when love is frequently lauded but often misunderstood, we must have a proper view of love. Modern culture bombards us with messages telling us that love is a mere feeling, that we will never disapprove of those whom we truly love, and that everything done in the name of love is right. But the Scriptures instruct us otherwise. God’s Word makes it clear that true love is costly.

Jesus, in today’s passage, emphasizes the cost of love. Having told us to abide in His love (John 15:1–11), Jesus begins to unfold what abiding in His love looks like. Love means loving others as Jesus has loved us, particularly in laying down our lives for our friends (vv. 12–13). Our Savior obviously makes an allusion here to His atoning death on the cross that turns away the wrath of God (Rom. 3:21–26), and this means we must first consider what laying down our lives for our friends does not entail. After all, none of us is the spotless Lamb of God sent to save sinners, so none of us can lay down our lives in exactly the same manner as Jesus. Christian theologians have long recognized this truth. Augustine of Hippo, for example, comments on it at length in a sermon on today’s passage.

We cannot love others as Jesus has loved us in the sense of atoning for their sin; however, there are other ways in which we

can imitate the love of Christ. For example, Christ loved us so much that He was willing to leave His place of glory with the Father in order to pay for our sins on the cross (Phil. 2:5–11). We, likewise, can refuse to exploit our privileges in order to meet the needs of others. Furthermore, Jesus spent His life in service to others, healing the sick and teaching God’s truth. Similarly, we can spend our lives in service to others, helping even those who seem the least deserving of our assistance and pointing people to Christ.

Some of us may literally have to die in order to save another person’s life, but that will be rare. More likely, we will lay down our lives in a multitude of smaller ways. Parents can set aside their right to rest quietly after a hard day of work in order to spend time with their children. Employers, when appropriate, can refrain from giving overly harsh but deserved criticism of employees in order to work alongside them and help them improve. Retirees can give up part of the spare time they labored years to earn in order to volunteer at their churches. Whatever our station in life, we should look for ways to spend our lives for the sake of others.

Coram Deo

Christian love is costly, and it looks for ways to give of itself to others. Every day, there are little ways we can sacrifice some of our rights and privileges in order to love others, especially those in the body of Christ. Let us look this day to give up something in order to do good to another person.

Passages for Further Study

Ruth 4

Song of Solomon 8:6

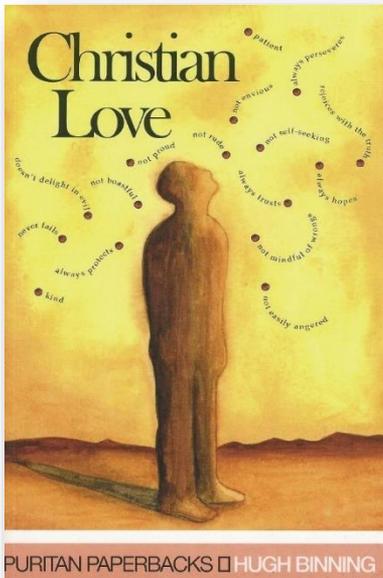
Mark 14:3–9

1 John 3:16–18

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<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/christian-love-defined/>

~Book Recommendation~



BOOK DESCRIPTION

In this Treatise of Christian Love, the Scottish Covenanting minister Hugh Binning movingly presents the need for Christians to show by their love for one another that they belong to Christ. Basing his remarks on John 13:35, By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another, he argues,

‘This badge that Christ left to his disciples: if we cast this away on every disagreement, we disown our Master, and disclaim his token and badge.’

Binning describes the excellence of Christian love, demonstrating its nature from 1 Corinthians 13. He gives strong reasons why Christians should love one another, and shows that love is rooted in Christian humility and meekness, after the pattern of Christ himself.

Also included in this edition are three sermons from Binning's work *The Sinner's Sanctuary*, an exposition of Romans 8:1-15.

NOTE: Description taken from the Banner of Truth website.

The pastor has a copy of this book in his study and is willing to loan it out.



“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

John 13:34-35, ESV

~Future Editions of *The Digest*~

August: The Civil Magistrate

September: The Church

October: The Lord's Day

November: Church History

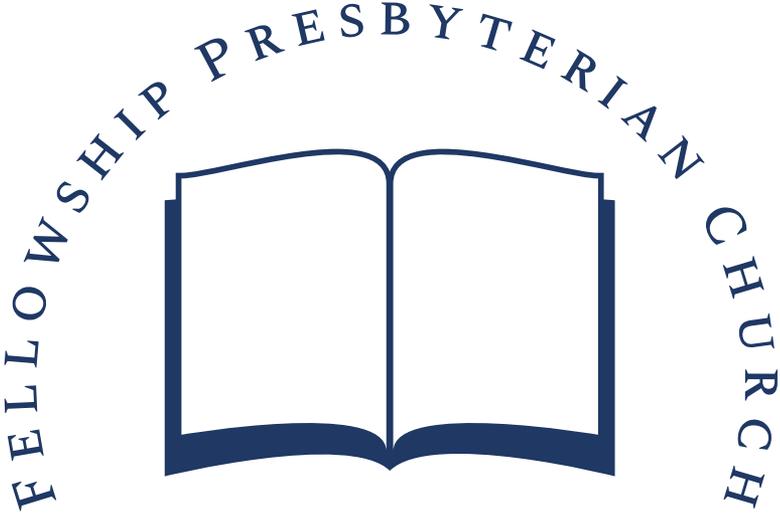
December: The Bible

Note: if you have suggestions for topics for *The Digest*, please see the pastor.



~Notes~

~Notes~



PREACH THE WORD - 2 TIM. 4:2