whether it's a place of business or a restaurant or wherever it might be you'll see a sign in all likelihood or someone will cordially kindly caringly greet you at the door wear a mask wear a mask but in this text the inspired writer paul declares don't wear a mask we like paul today don't we don't wear a mask you might say well where in the world do you come up with that well he uses a word that we translate hypocrisy that word that he uses comes from the idea of play actors in ancient times known as the Hippocrates where we get the word hypocrites they wore masks they played a part they pretended to be someone they were not that was their livelihood

that was their profession to put on a mask so no wonder the apostle paul

says let love be without a mask let love be without a mask don't be a play actor don't be one who hides behind a mask and attempts to be someone that they are not what a powerful word

what a powerful word to enforce not only the idea of this text but the ideal of holy love as the moral principle for every christian's heart the quality or kind of love that paul speaks of is found in another word in this text and that word i don't think it will be unfamiliar to us but one of the words for love used in the new testament is found here and it is the word agape i want us to note that this word used for love is not a sentimental word or a word that speaks of a lot of feelings it certainly isn't romantic love rather it is founded in the notion that every one of us will at some point or another make a choice so this love comes out of or is filtered out of the idea of love love that acts willfully love that makes a decisive choice and that the rest of life gets lived out of that choice okay so let me give that to you again this is not sentimentalism this isn't how you're feeling today this certainly isn't romanticism this isn't whether or not you have warm fuzzy feelings for someone that you're looking at eye to eye this has everything to do with a decisive life choice that everything else about your life will conform to that choice everything else will yield to that choice and it will become the decisive factor that propels you sends you down certain paths directs you towards certain ends but that singular life choice that we have the capacity to give we have the capacity to offer can be either offered well or it can be offered poorly and when i say offered well or offered poorly i want us to note this it is the object that determines whether or not it's a good choice or a bad one in fact if we choose god this is the loving god with all of our being choice you following this is i love god supremely preferentially and therefore all of my life as pastor jared mentioned is lived with one singular exclusive purpose and that is to bring glory and honor to god to live for him to do everything in our power with the aid of the holy spirit's power and strength to live a life pleasing unto the lord in all things that singular choice you and i will render in this life did you get that you might say well what about the people that don't choose to love god i'm not talking about loving god i'm talking about agape you might say well wait a minute agape is just god's love no it's not no it's not agape

is that singular choice that then governs all of your life and you might say wait a minute i'm confused well let me try to clear up the confusion this singular choice that governs all of life can and should be made as god being the object that's a good choice that's the right choice but agape that singular choice that then defines all of your life and everything about your life will fall in line with it and yield to it can also be offered to the world here's case in point demas paul will say has left us demas has departed from the scene demas has decided we're he's done with being a missionary and done with the things of having loved this present world that word is agap that's the agape word so don't think that agape only speaks of god loving me and me loving him back agape is that singular decisive will choice that sets us on a path that corresponds with it do we get that hope we understand that so what paul is saying is this for those who choose to love god and respond to all the overtures of god who respond to all of the workings of god and the pursuits of god to come to us for all of those who respond favorably and exercise their human singular decisive choice for those who do that then he says here's the principle i want us to note and here is what i want us to understand about this life choice so the first thing that we want to look at is the principle of love the principle of holy love this love without question is designed to govern everything about our lives everything that corresponds to our lives our relationships everything is to fall into place with this critical life choice to love god if we indeed love god in this all-shaping way if we prefer him in every in every way and in everything this love then will at least have three major components to it let's look at the principle of love the people of love the principle of love will have three sides to it or at least three factors to it that i want us to be aware of today first of all as we said in our title it doesn't wear a mask it's never fake it's always genuine it is always sincere it's all in for god it is all in for god so that's what he says when he says let love be without hypocrisy it should never be pretend it should never be phony it should never be fake it should not be play acting this choice should be singular and as david would

pray even when he was writing the psalms unite my heart it is a united heart it is a heart that doesn't have ulterior ulterior motives or other competing affections it is a heart that is singularly devoted to god no [Music] mask you can say amen second this is something that i think christians struggle with and especially in a world that comes at us so vocally so militantly today paul says not only is this maskless love but it is also a love that powerfully hates hmm it is a love that powerfully hates you know i've been the pastor a long time i've heard parents even say to

their kids don't you ever hate well that would be going against a biblical maxim we just read hello scripture tells us the inspired paul tells us equal to the love is an equal hatred and that hatred is essential\ to the purifying and the maintaining and the keeping clean and keeping focused love i hope some lights are coming on the word the apostle paul uses here in this text is one of the strongest words he could use for abhor hate or loathe it is as potent and as forceful as it can possibly be and jesus himself is the best model of this jesus loved righteousness and hated iniquity loved righteousness hated iniquity one of the underlying\ definitions of the word that the apoll the apostle paul uses is not only be abhorrent you know have abhorrence for it hate it loathe it but included in that definition or list of defining words is horrified horrified let me try to put that into just a term or a setting that makes sense today one of the greatest impacts of sin is\ just the war of attrition it just steadily wears against steadily comes at us steadily bombards us to the point where if we are not careful\ our senses that were so shocked when it first showed up soon learned to be numbed to it and are no longer shocked do you understand what i'm saying we see

evil long enough we see evil consistently enough and the sad thing is if we're not careful and if we're not intentional we get used to it so one of the powerful forces it's kind of hydraulic pressure one of the powerful forces of sin is just to keep coming out of keep coming at us keep coming at us to where as if if we don't keep an intentional vigorous rebuttal to it and rebuking of it we will soon just sit down quiet ourselves no longer say anything and no longer hate and pretty soon the battle will be won not because there was one decisive blow but because it's the accumulative impact the cumulative effect of that which is just steadily steadily bombarded us what do we look at today what do we consider today what do we hear today that no longer has shock value for us that's what paul is saying keep a robust hatred of evil oh how we need that today we ought to hate evil we must hate evil why because at its core note this at its core it is sponsored by the devil doesn't come from god it comes from his wicked counterpart it comes] from god's enemy evil is also the militant opposite of everything that god ever calls good it's destructive it ruins it destroys it separates it depraves so anything that would attack the goodness of god should be hated by us we need a rekindling of that today we've been so beaten into submission by the culture that we live in today the only thing is they say we're not supposed to hate anybody and we're supposed to be tolerant or you know tolerant of everything and don't hate what somebody does and don't hate this don't hate that but i'll tell you what they're pretty good haters they're pretty violent haters i'd like to say to them practice i don't like what you preach

but practice it at least be consistent with your own maxims third in this principle maskless hate what is evil and be stuck on what is good be glued to good now i know that's that's pretty surprising for me isn't it um be glued to good so everything that god does and everything that god has planned and everything that's a part of his creation is good we looked last week that even his will for us is good right when god created everything he said it's good they said very good so everything that god touches everything that god plans everything that god orchestrates everything that his grace makes possible in your life and in my life everything is good it is good you and i brothers and sisters are to be glued to what is good glued to what is good hate evil be glued to good this is the principle of agape when it is rendered unto god love that is never pretending love that faithfully consistently unyieldingly never condones sin and i don't care where the sin shows up\ even if it shows up in your family even if it shows up in one of your family members sin is sin and is never to be condoned even if it surfaces in one of your dearest loved ones don't change your theology i wish i could say this a thousand times don't change your theology and don't make god conform all the sudden to someone's sinful whims we are to conform to god do we understand that god does not come along and say oh so you've decided this is okay even though i pronounced anathema\ on it even though i have said this as wickedness all of a sudden decides good so i'll just come around to your terms i'll accept your new definitions and i'll say it's okay and i'll clap for you i'll celebrate it because after all all that matters is your god of your own life well god won't compete with any other gods so i just want to remind us today sin is to be hated even if it shows up in your closest relationships now i do not mean and don't go out say that i said this i do not mean that you hate the individual no you love them enough to hate the sin you love them faithfully you love them consistently you pray for their redemption after all if we all of a sudden conform to their aberration and conform to their wickedness and their sin how will they ever be saved if we pronounce some kind of approval we put a stamp of approval on their wickedness how will they ever be redeemed that will never redeem them but hating evil will have at his great as the greatest opportunity the potency to turn them from their evil ways the principle of love let's talk about the practices of love love shows up in the routines and relationships of life the relationships we enjoy the relationships that we welcome those that we seek earnestly to cultivate love this love] shows up in those relationships it surfaces can't help but do i but even in those relationships that are unwelcome and in those situations that at least at the first we don't enjoy it all by the way we're aware aren't we that we have relationships in life that we welcome and we have relationships in life we don't welcome right there are some things you say yippee there are others that say ouch i'm grieved that wounded unfairly so that harmed me whether the relationship is a blessing or if it's injurious love shows up love shows up in all these agape shows up and it shocks the world now here's what I want to say though it is a shock absorber sometimes it's a shock waver but it shows up and when it does it's so rare to the world it's so rare that it seems strange and odd and almost impossible to believe but frankly that's one of its greatest powerful appeals is that it's so different it's so unexpected this love can only be produced so by god's presence filling us beyond our natural selves this is divinely wrought this comes from god not from us it's obviously divine in origin it's present in us because of the transforming grace of god it's because god's grace prepares a space

in us for his abiding and his presiding and the full cooperation with his will becomes possible because he lives in us…