

## Show Me The Love

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The American Heritage Dictionary defines love as: a deep, tender, ineffable feeling of affection and solitude toward a person, such as that arising from kinship, recognition, of attractive qualities, or a sense of underlying oneness. To one extent or another, many people would agree with this definition. Yet, seldom do we stop to consider that love is not so much a *want* in our life as it is a *need*. To say we *want* to feel love isn't entirely accurate. It's not so much that we want to feel loved; rather, we *need* to feel that we are loved.

Where does our need for love come from? To find the answer let's look at the second chapter of Genesis; wherein, God creates Adam and places him in the Garden of Eden with a charge to manage its ecology. It must have been so fulfilling for Adam to be created with such purpose, and given everything needed to fulfill that purpose in the way of

knowledge and authority (see Genesis 2:15). Yet, in verse 18 we find Adam in need. But what more could he have possibly needed? After all, there he was in the Garden, charged with managing its ecology *and* given the brilliance of mind and capability to carry-out God's purpose. More specifically, where did this need come from? The answers these questions are one-in-the-same: Adam needed Eve because God placed the need there.

So we come to find that God hard-wires us (so-to-speak) with essential needs like: love, security, etc. When these needs go unmet, we end-up facing all sorts of trials in life. It is out of an unmet need for love that the personality styles of: psychopathy, obsessiveness and hysteria develop. In his book: *Will & Spirit* (HarperCollins, 1982), Dr. Gerald May states that psychopaths' reject conditional love with anger, and ulti-

mately fear being vulnerable; obsessive people believe that love can only be gained on the basis of performance and acceptance; while those with a hysterical personality style believe that love is contingent on being: attractive, interesting, entertaining, and emotionally stimulating.

Dr. May uses these three personality styles as extreme examples of what comes of our unmet need for love. Again, it is not that we want love—we need it. When this need goes unmet, we can (and often do) develop dysfunctional modes of coping.

Learning to cope with the issue of unmet love first requires the understanding that God is our ultimate source for love (1 John 4:8). Once we come to accept this fact; we can then work on extending grace to those who fall short when it comes to loving us.

## Love Is...

*Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails...*

- 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, NIV



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## Christ and The Church—A Love Relationship

Love is the most powerful force in all the cosmos. I John 4:8 tells us that “God is love.” Therefore, if God is the Creator of the cosmos, and God is love; then love is also understood to be the most powerful force as well. One of the greatest examples of God’s love for humanity can be seen in the relationship between Christ and the Church.

Seven examples are given in Scripture with respect to this love. First, Christ as our *Shepherd* exemplifies the warm leadership and protection of Christ in light of our dependency as His flock (see John 10:1-18). Second, Christ as our *Vine* illus-

trates our reliance upon Him for our sustenance and strength (see John 15:1-8). Third, Christ as *High Priest* points to the opportunity we each have to join Him in joyful worship of the Father (see Hebrews 5:1-10). Forth, Christ as the *Cornerstone* reflects His foundational value to the Church; as well as, His unity with believers (see Ephesians 2:19-21; I Corinthians 3:9). Fifth, Christ as the *Head* of the Church body signifies His leadership of a living organism (see I Corinthians 12:12, 13, 27). Sixth, Christ as the *last Adam*, demonstrates the formation of a new creation in Him (see I Corinthians 15:22, 45). Finally, the

seventh example of love that exists between Christ and the Church can be seen in Christ as the *Bridegroom*; specifically, the level of intimacy present in this relationship (see Ephesians 5:25-33).

In all of these examples, we come to see the significance of love with respect to Christ and the Church. The Bride of Christ radiates His love into this darkened world; bringing hope where none previously existed.

Outline excerpted from: The Open Bible, Expanded Edition: The Christian’s Guide to New Life. Thomas Nelson (1985).



“But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions...”

- Ephesians 2:4, 5—NIV

## The Love of God

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in

mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so

that no one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

- Ephesians 2:1-10, NIV



## Lovingkindness

According to the Random House Dictionary, *lovingkindness* is defined as: tender kindness motivated by or expressing affection. King David wrote, “...I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation.” (Ps. 13:5, NIV). While we live in a fallen, broken world, God’s word tells us that we can trust in His lovingkindness. Because God’s nature is love, we

can rest assure that it is unfailing. Proof of this fact is found in God’s act of salvation. At a time when we could do nothing to change our sin-nature; our Heavenly Father made a way through the ministry of His Son—Christ Jesus. Salvation (i.e. deliverance from destruction), is God’s greatest act of love towards us. Perhaps this is why David also wrote, “I will be

glad and rejoice in your love, for you saw my affliction and knew the anguish of my soul.” (Ps. 31:7, NIV). Through Christ, we can see that God knows exactly what it is we’re feeling, and He knows just what to do. Put your hope in His unfailing love—you won’t be let down!

# Seasons

Solomon wrote, “There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven.” (Ecclesiastes 3:1, NIV). On the surface, we like this notion—that God is orderly and has everything under control. However, we tend to struggle with the flip-side of this matter—namely, that God allows for a time of evil. How is it that an all-knowing, all-powerful, ever-loving Creator could permit the existence of evil? Furthermore, how is it that He allows it to rain (so-to-speak) on those who are just, as well as those who are unjust (see Matthew 5:45)? Epicurus, the Greek philosopher (341 B.C.—270 B.C.) pondered: Either God wants to abolish

evil, and cannot; or He can, and does not want to; or He cannot and does not want to. If He wants to, but cannot, He



is impotent. If He can, but does not want to, He is wicked. But, if God both can and wants to abolish evil, then how

come evil is in the world?

The answer is found in the fact that God allows for seasons. Since the Fall of mankind, a season wherein evil exists has been permitted by God. But one day, we will view this matter from the other side of eternity and come to understand that; indeed, God *has* taken care of the issue of evil—He did so in *His* time, and in *His* season. Thus, we place our faith in His promise, “For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay.” (Habakkuk 2:3, NIV).

## Good News

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria). And everyone went to his own town to register.

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for

all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.”



When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him,

they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

- Luke 2:1-20, NIV

**“Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people...”**  
 (Luke 2:10, NIV)



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Kingdom Community Ministries (KCM) exists to serve the Body of Christ by offering biblically-based, Christ-centered counseling services. Our mission is to develop fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ by bringing counselees into a closer relationship with the Lord; and helping them to overcome the crippling effects of sin and guilt. KCM counselors are licensed ministers with graduate level degrees in Ministry with emphasis in Christian Counseling; however, we are not licensed psychotherapists. We offer evening appointments, and a sliding scale payment plan for those who qualify. Your prayerful consideration of our services is greatly appreciated. Thank you!

# Thanksgiving

As we approach the close of 2008, let us each take the time to count our blessings and express our thankfulness to God. In one respect, offering-up thanks to our Creator is considered to be part of our spiritual sacrifice, "I will sacrifice a thank offering to you and call on the name of the LORD." (Psalm 116:17, NIV). When we give thanks to our Heavenly Father, we're actually expressing our gratitude—our warm and deep appreciation for His kindness and the blessings He has bestowed upon us.

The apostle Paul noted that giving thanks to God is our duty: "But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth." (II Thess. 2:13, NIV). The Greek word Paul used here for "chose" is—*haireomai* (hahee-reh'-om-ah-ee); meaning: to take for oneself. In other

words, God adopts us into His heavenly family through the blood of Christ.

And what an adoption indeed! "How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him." (1 John 3:1, NIV). God *lavishes* His love on us! And His love conquers all; it conquers fear, heals past wounds, it even renews our mind.

Paul said this about our adoption: "Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us." (Romans 8:17, 18, NIV). Wow! Our present sufferings; which of course matter greatly to us, are not even

worth comparing with the glory that will one day be revealed in us. The *doxa* (Greek for—glory), that will be revealed in us pertains to the dignity (i.e. inherent worth) within us as children of God. We will then feel the honor of such a position; we will no longer live in a state of impaired moral character. We will finally be whole with God. And we will praise our Lord as never before! No longer will our praises be offered as a sacrifice with respect to our dichotomous nature; rather, our praises will be offered-up as free-will offerings with no inhibitions.

But until then—praise the Lord Most High! Praise Him while in the valley and on the mountain top; praise Him now and forever!

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