

Articles and Sermons :: God Loves you

God Loves you - posted by proudpapa, on: 2013/10/17 20:19

By Larry Rice

Dear Friend,

God's special message to you at this hour is, "I love you." For many who have been brought up in the church or religious families the response may be a big yawn and the phrase, "what else is new." They may have heard over and over that God loves them but because they have not received this message in the depths of their soul, life has taken the form of one disaster after another. As a result passages like John 3:16 seem to apply to the rest of the world but not to us in the midst of our present problems.

It's a fact God wants us to be a part of His family. He desires that so much that He sent His Son into the world to die for our sins which have prevented us from accepting in the core of our being the reality of His love. God desires for us to depend on Him, rely on Him, lean on Him, love Him and let Him love us. Right now in those areas of our life where it seems every thing is crumbling into the valley of hopelessness God who is love, wants us to reach out to Him in prayer, trusting that He will meet our needs. "Hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us." God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:5,8).

For those who felt they have never experienced the fullness of the love of their father or mother He is now saying, "you are the apple of my eye. The one I desire to hide in the shadows of my wings of love" (see Ps.17:8). That craving, longing and desire in your heart to be loved is a desire placed there by God. God can only fill this desire.

Everyday God does so many things for us and we don't even recognize it as a manifestation of His love. Take for example the rising of the sun. If it did not rise after a few days all life as we know it

would start to die on planet earth. God has the sunrise each day for you. But even more important than that He had His Son die on that cross for you in order that the full price of your sins might be paid for. As we accept the fact presented in Romans 5:8 that "while we were still sinners, Christ died for us," life as we now know it will change. Oh the liberty that awaits us, from all in life that is wearing us down and out, once we also are convinced as Paul was of God's love. He declared, "in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:37-39).

The love that God has for you is the very foundation of the faith. The question is will you receive this love He has for you? Satan is constantly trying to offer cheap substitutes for this eternal love that God provides. When one becomes sick and tired of such and desires God's love then the enemy tries to make them feel they are not worthy of such. In order to combat Satan's lies and feeling of condemnation we must know the Word of God. For example in Romans 8:1 we read, "there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." I must stand on God's Word, in God's love, knowing that while I was a sinner God's deep love for me caused Jesus to die for my sins on the cross. Now He is also telling you the same thing. God wants you free from condemnation and the daily rat race it throws you into where Satan tries to get you to believe that if you are just good enough or work hard enough you will be set free. Stop letting the devil beat on you with thoughts about how bad, nasty or irresponsible you are. You need to rise up now in the boldness and the assurance God's love gives you and declare, "devil you are a liar. I am sick and tired of the condemnation you have placed upon me. I am tired of the rat race of hopelessness you have placed me in. I am accepting according to the word of God, God's love for me and the peace it provides above all understanding. I am a child of God liberated through the blood of Jesus Christ from condemnation and hopelessness. I am through the love of God as Romans 8:37

says, in all these things more than a conqueror through God who loves me.

Sometimes I must admit I have a hard time accepting this fact because of all the loss, hurts and disappointments I have experienced in life. There have been many times when I have felt like anything but a conqueror. That is why we are told in Hebrews 10:35, 36, "do not throw away your confidence, it will be richly rewarded. You need to preserve so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what He has promised." God's will is that we accept the fact He loves us. When discouragement, depression and despair came knocking at the door of our hearts we must respond with praise resulting from the reality God loves us and has a plan for our lives. As we think about the blessings God has provided which are demonstrating His love on a daily bases we will find thanking and praising God is the result. This awakes

ing of an attitude of gratitude within us allows the perfect love of God to come forth and cast out the fear, which would hold us in bondage. As 1 John 4:18 says, "perfect love casts out fear." It is the awakening to the reality of this perfect love of God, which causes us to respond with praise and worship to God.

When we receive in the depths of our soul the reality that God does indeed love us, we start to relax. As this realization of God's deep love takes hold in my life I am realizing that my busyness is not what saves me nor provides the fulfillment that I long for. Henri Nouwen in his book "With Open Hands" explains how prayer frees us to experience in a new way the reality of this love of God. Nouwen stated, "Praying is no easy matter. It demands a relationship in which you allow someone other than yourself to enter into the very center of your being, to see there what you would rather leave in darkness, and to touch there what you would rather leave untouched. The resistance to praying is like the resistance of tightly clenched fists. The image shows a tension, a desire to cling tightly to yourself, a greediness which betrays fear. When you want to pray, then the first question is: How do I open my closed hands? Perhaps you can find your way to prayer by carefully listening to the words of the angel to

Zechariah, Mary, the frightened shepherds, and the woman at the tomb: "Don't be afraid." Don't be afraid of the One who wants to enter your most intimate space and invite you to let go of what you are clinging to so anxiously. Each time you dare to let go and surrender one of those many fears, your hand opens a little and your palms spread out in a gesture of receiving. It is a long spiritual journey of trust, for behind each fist, another is hiding and sometimes the process seems endless. Much has happened in your life to make all those fists, and any hour of the day or night you might find yourself clenching your fists again out of fear. Maybe someone will say to you, "You have to forgive yourself." But that isn't possible. What is possible is to open your hands without fear, so the One who loves you can blow your sins away. With Nouwen's words in mind I would like to return to 1 John 4:16 & 18, which declares, "And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in Him. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear." We must be consistently conscious of God's love revealed not only in His wonderful works of creation but in the fact declared in John 3:16 that "God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."

It is the realization of God's love for us which triggers within us a love and compassion for others as explained in 1 John 4:19-21. "We love because He first loved us. If anyone says, 'I love God,' yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And He has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother." Realizing God loves us triggers within us a response of loving Him demonstrated by our love for others. Whether it's the poor, the fatherless, the elderly, the lonely or the hurting we are commanded to love others as evidence of our love of God. As we let the love of God flow in us and through us into a hurting world we will be living instruments proclaiming His love in word and deed. As 1 John 4:7-10 declares, "Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us;

He sent His one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him. This is love; not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins."

God's love inside of you sets you free from fear to the extent you aren't afraid to love others as Christ has loved you. "Do you think anyone is going to be able to drive a wedge between us and Christ's love for us? There is no way! Not trouble, not hard times, not hatred, not hunger, not homelessness, not bullying threats, not backstabbing, not even the worst sins listed in Scripture: "They kill us in cold blood because they hate you. We're sitting ducks; they pick us off one by one. None of this fazes us because Jesus loves us. I'm absolutely convinced that nothing's nothing living or dead, angelic or demonic, today or tomorrow, high or low, thinkable or unthinkable" absolutely nothing can get between us and God's love because of the way that Jesus our Master has embraced us" (Romans 8:35-39 The Message Bible).

This knowledge that God loves you enables you to boldly face life by praying with power and living a life of faith. When you know God loves you, you don't have to worry about failure because He has promised to never leave you nor forsake you. Now as you grasp hold of the fact God loves you, your healing can begin. The main reason God can't give us all the blessings He has for us is because we are so busy trying to get them ourselves and if we did get them we would not recognize them as His gifts and these "blessings" would only drive us further from Him. He loves us too much for that. When we realize that every good thing comes from God we are free to receive His love and His blessings.

It is the love of God, which gives us the ability to love others. It is His love dwelling in us that gives us the strength to love the unlovable. It causes us to press in and keep loving them and loving them and loving them because that is what God is doing to us. The love of God you extend to others over and over will ultimately change them. It may take a year, five years or even longer but it's worth it. How long did Jesus wait for you? God loves you and the lost sinner. Now He wants to use you as His channel of love to them.

Now don't be afraid to step out in faith. God's love is setting you free from fear and condemnation and He is giving you the ability to love. Determine in your heart that you are going to spread that love. Make it your business to be friendly to others. Smile. God is working through you. Stop making excuses for being so grouchy, complaining and demanding. Let the love of God flow. He wants to use you in ways that He can't use any other creatures on earth. There are people only you can minister His love to. Ask Him to show you how to do it. Spend time with the Lord daily praying, reading the Bible, and observing creation. Let His love flow in you and through you. Just let God love you as you enter into His rest that He has everything under control and will take care of you.

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