

Have you ever been loved like this?

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Father this morning we come to You, we come to You because You are our Father, because Father You said, 'Son, give Me your heart, give Me your ear.' This morning Father we come to You, we give You our heart and our ears, speak to us. Let every day in our life be a revelation of who You are, how awesome You are, what You have done, what You are doing and what You're preparing for all those who love You. For truly the Word says, 'Eyes haven't seen, no ears heard.' We're yet to see, yet to hear so much of who You are. The Spirit of God, I commit this time into Thy hands. Let it not be time waste, but a time invested in the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom that is here and that is coming. I pray for open heavens, I pray for open ears and heart that receives. Speak to us, teach us, encourages us, lift us up, edify us, bring us closer to who You are, into Your very presence. We surrender ourselves, Lord, spirit, soul and body into Thy hands for in Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

We turn first to Genesis chapter 1 and verse 27 I said we have revival meeting today, this evening and I love going to that church, it is at the other end of the city but I love going to church because of the congregation.

Genesis 1:27

²⁷ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

And actually the message was for them, because the title he asked, and the Lord told me, 'The Image of God.' So this is the very first chapter before man has fallen, God created man in His own image in the image of God He created him, male and female He created them.

(I'll interrupt for a second, we have, I wouldn't say visitors, I would say, we have my mom's best friend is here, they came all the way from Kerala. Would you please stand up? Let's welcome them. That's Professor Ethan and his wife and his son, and daughter Betty, 'Please sit down.' I'm so happy you're here and more than that grateful that you came to visit mom, they both retired profs and the daughter is also teaching lecturer in a college so mom was very happy to see her. And they're my closest neighbour in Kerala and they watch over my house in which I don't live.)

So this is where it talks about man before the fall this is how God created us we were made in His image. In His image He made us, what it was like first man and first women? We probably would have had no clue what it was like until the son of God came until He took the human form and He walked among us we had no clue what man was originally like but then man sinned. You know what sin is in Greek, it's a word hamartia means to fall short of the mark that image; man fell from that image of God, what we were originally created in, that image of God, we fell from that. Man sinned, Adam sinned, mommy Eve sinned and in them we all fell, we lost the image and the likeness of God, we still retain parts of it, but we actually fell from it. In Genesis 5 verse 3 it says,

Genesis 5:3

³ And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.

And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, not God's. Every child that was born to Adam and Eve were born after they fell, so no child did they birth who was in the image of God, in Whose image they were birthed. So after that we all came with the fallen nature the image of the fallen man, Adam. What is that image? Why is it so important? Because we are all very image conscious, we are all trying to build an image, a fallen image. It doesn't matter what we do, the image is still fallen. What is this image, the likeness of Adam? What is this image? The revelation of what that image actually is, every child born is born not in the image of God, but in the image of Adam. Revelation comes with the Spirit of God, through David, we know that verse, through David when he looks back into his own life in horror, of what he has done? This godly man, this man who loved God with all his heart and he is actually standing there and he knows his hands have shed innocent blood. The blood of faithful man called Uriah, he's lied, deceived, murdered, committed adultery and is looking back and says, 'How could I be this?' This is the image of fallen man, what does it say?

Psalms 51:5

⁵ Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.

It's got nothing to do with mother. He's saying, 'This is my shape, this is my current image, this is the image of every child born into this world, the image is shaped in iniquity. Our natural propensity is towards sin, and not righteousness. That's our natural propensity. You don't have to do anything to a child just leave him/her alone, they are born that way. We were not born righteous, we are born sinners, we sin because that's our nature. This is image of every human; of where we were when God created Adam and where we are when the fall came.

I am telling you, the truth of the Scriptures. Nothing can change that, neither religion nor laws; the most stringent laws, the strongest laws called Sharia is not going to change the man. They can restrain sin outwardly, but they cannot stop sin; neither religion nor law has power to change to who we are, who are we? Shaped in iniquity, I would say, 'born to sin.' If we do not understand this we will not understand salvation, we will not appreciate what Jesus did, we will not be able to sing from our heart "How great Thou Art!" What a great God! What an awesome God! The fall of man and the salvation of man, everything is connected with who God is. The cry of the apostle is the cry of every man who tries to escape this web of sin, this trap of sin, Roman 7:23-24,

Romans 7: 23-24

²³ But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. ²⁴ O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

In my mind the old image is there, I know I am not suppose to do this. I know I am not supposed to do this but physically I am unable to stop myself. These two laws are working in my mind. I know what is good, but the good I know I do not do, the good I know I do not say, the good I know I do not speak. And then every day we say, 'I lost it.' ***and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.*** There are laws working. ***O wretched man that I am who will deliver me from this body of death?*** You know what this body is? It is a body of death. There is a law that is working, it is called the law of sin and death.

You need to understand laws, there are two kinds of laws. The laws that God has ordained which we call natural laws, you cannot change it. There are legislative laws; traffic laws are legislative laws; another government can come or the DCP can change it. But natural laws cannot be changed, you cannot change it. God had said, 'If you eat you will die.' When He said it, the law was there, it was there, the minute they ate they died, the law came into effect. All I have to do is keep on walking, I will fall. You know why, because that's the law. There is a law called gravity. No government in the world can legislate it and change it, because it is not a legislative law, it is a natural law instituted by God. So, there is a law which God has instituted, the soul that sins will die. The problem is we were shaped in iniquity and born in sin, so actually we were born dead. We have this misconception in our mind, we are living and going to die. No, salvation is that we are dying and going to live. We are not living, we are dying. When Adam ate mankind died. In Adam every one died, in Christ everyone who believes lives. That's the truth.

That's the truth. So there is the law, it's a law, you cannot change it. And the only solution is an absolutely radical new birth, new birth and Nicodemus was actually a godly man. He realizes something else when he looks at Jesus. You see, until you encounter a living Person you don't realize that you are dead. Because until Jesus came into this world it was dead men walking and they looked at Jesus and Nicodemus comes in the night and says, 'What's the difference between You and me?' Jesus looks at him and says, 'Unless you born from above., flesh gives birth to flesh, spirit gives birth to Spirit. Flesh and blood will not inherit the Kingdom of God.' It will not, because it cannot, it's a new birth. So there are these laws working and the Spirit of God, through Apostle Paul, puts it so beautifully in Romans chapter 8 and verse 1 and 2

Romans 8: 1-2

¹There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. That is what the Spirit of God does; when you are born again the Spirit of God takes us and puts us in Christ. And if you are in Christ you cannot die because you overcame death. There's no other way. There is no condemnation, there's no death sentence. The ultimate condemnation is that you are condemned to the gallows, you are condemned to death. ***There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit,*** because there are two different laws working; ***for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.*** There are two laws working. It's only one law that can overcome the other law. Like the common

example we use the law of gravity can be overcome by only the law of aerodynamics. When you go into the airplane the gravity is working while still on the ground but at some point, at a certain power it takes off. What has happened? One law has overcome the other law. So the only way you and I will escape the law of sin and death is by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Nothing can religion do, nothing can law do to cancel this. There's no other way for man. That's what the Bible says, there is no other name given under the heavens for salvation, other than the Name of Jesus. And it is receiving a person. The Bible says, as many as who received Him, His life, His work, His atonement, everything in Him, what He did into your life, **He gave them the authority to be the sons and daughters of the living God**, that's salvation. It's got nothing to do with us; we cannot save ourselves, He has to save us, because there are two laws working and this is the law of the Spirit. Do you know what *1 John 3:9* says?

1 John 3:9

⁹ Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.

Whoever has been born of God we were born of a human parents, and the second birth you are born of God, and whoever is born of God does not sin. Why? It is because His seed remains in him and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. There two people inside all of us who are born again; there is one who has been born of our father and mother, that's the one outwardly you see and there is person who is born of God; the person is born of God cannot sin. The one who sins is the other man. The one who is born of God cannot sin. It is impossible for that person to sin because he or she is born of God. The seed; it is not the human seed, it is divine seed.

Peter puts it this way in 1 Peter 1:23,

1 Peter 1:23

²³ having been born again, not of corruptible seed but [b]incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,

Having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, that seed cannot be incorruptible, it cannot be corrupted because it is of God, incorruptible seed because it is of God. Incorruptible seed through the Word of God which lives and abides forever. I was giving an illustration in last night's Q and A. You take a seed of a big tree, any one of the large trees you take a seed and it has happened okay, if you go into your terrace and this thing you will see the doves have put seeds over there, and in the crack you will see a plant growing. Supposing on a pavement, in the crack a seedling of any big tree falls and it starts growing, nobody does anything to it. If it meets the right condition and nobody touches it, and allows it to grow, it will break the concrete and everything in its path and come up. Why? Because there was another law working in it, Law of life that broke the law of sin and death.

The condition is this, the Seed is there, you've been born again, life is there you have to allow the right environment, the condition for it to grow to the fullness, as the Bible says, of Christ Jesus. You know what, at every stage you will see you're overcoming this other law of sin and death. You have to grow. And much of the struggles of people are because they refuse to grow, not that they are not born again, but they refuse to grow. Like I said yesterday, the thing is that everyone who enters into the Kingdom of God will be perfect, there will be no imperfect people in the Kingdom of God, the only thing that matters is at what age do you enter? Not your physical age, your spiritual age, you could be eight years old and enter as a child and it will be a perfect child because you didn't grow. You could be 90 years old and enter in as a youth and you could be a perfect youth or you could be 30 years old and enter as a father and be a perfect father, spiritual. Like I said, at the age of 40 Joseph was a father to his father and a father to his entire household, his brothers, he is taking care of them, the spiritual example. It's not whether you enter and you remember how you enter is going to determine your eternity.

We put some much stress on academics and careers and distinction and all okay and Paul says, 'That's all for a perishable crown,' it is gone. You retired and after that it's over, it's done, your career is over. But your career hasn't really began, it's on the other side. Paul says, we are running for an imperishable crown. So the question is, every day we chose. ***'I set before you life and death, blessing and curses you choose,'*** God says. God will show us everything, He will teach us through His servants. He will teach us through His Spirit, but He says, 'You have to choose.' If you choose right you will grow, you will grow and for those who are born again, when you are born again, turn to *Romans 8:28-29*, look at this, you need to understand from what perspective God is talking about; He's not talking from our earthly secular perspective, He's is looking from Heaven and looking at our spiritual, eternal perspective.

Romans 8:28-29

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.²⁹ For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. He says, 'Everything that is happening in your life, everything that's happening in your life. If you're my child, it is working for your good.' But, what is the good? According to My purpose, My (God's) purpose not your purpose. He says, 'It is all working for your good, according to My purpose.' What is His purpose? What is His eternal purpose with every son and daughter? What is His purpose? The purpose is what was there in **Genesis 1:27. That for whom He foreknew He also predestined to be confirmed to the image of His Son.**

We're back to the image, that's what He is working. **So that He may be the firstborn among many brethren.** He says, you know what I'm working, you may say, 'What I am going through, why is this happening?' He says, 'I'm conforming you, I'm changing you, the new man, changing, changing, so that when you end up there, you'll be like your eldest Brother (Jesus).' Not in looks, but in nature; we all look different. God is in an actual image building exercise and you cannot fight Him, you cannot fight Him. That's why the Bible says, everything, everything. How did a 17 year old boy, at the age of 40 become a father? Because of 13 years of slavery and imprisonment. Diamonds are not found on the surface, they are found in the depths of the earth, forged and framed under an enormous pressure. Not that pressure itself will make it into a diamond, no! It's how you will respond to this pressures of life. You have to ultimately know, 'My God is good and everything my Father is working for my good and this is what He is planning, this is what He's trying to do, He's changing my image. He is restoring me back to that original image.' I was made in the image of God, and I fell. Now He has birthed me again and He is conforming me to the image of His Son. That's when I said until the Son came, we did not know what God is really like in John 1:14,

John 1:14

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Looked at, that's why Jesus said, if you have seen me you have seen the Father. Look at what Colossians says, in 1:15,

Colossians 1:15

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

He is the image. Meaning, if you want to know what God would look like as a human being, it is Jesus Christ. He says, 'I'm restoring that image in your lives.' What are You doing with me, Oh Lord? I'm praying for my career, instead of losing my job. He says, 'I'm making you like My Son, because the career you are asking for will not make you like My Son; it will make you more like the devil. So, I will pick a career for you where you will look more like My Son and not like the other fellow.'

That's why Bible says - *you ask, but you do not receive because you ask amiss.* The image of God. So we need to be very careful. We are so image conscious, right? Did we wake up and just come in your pajamas to Church? No. You spend more time before the mirror than before the Word. You probably did not spend any time in your prayer closet, but spent much time in your clothes closet - which one? which one? which one? and God is looking from Heaven and saying, 'Which one, which one?' but God's image cannot be caught in one frame, none of your images can be caught in one frame and every image is wrong because you are upside down or wrong side up. Nobody has really seen himself or herself, do you know that? because when you look in the mirror it is inverted. So, our image, God's image but we have to prioritize, priorities matter. In the multi-faceted image of God there are so many aspects.

Today, we're going look at the most important aspect, the most important aspect of God's image, because the Word of God says so. Most important for us human beings of all of God's creation for human beings, this is the most important aspect of God's image. If you go to most well known Scripture in the Bible, John 3:16

John 3:16

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

The simple question, why did God do all this? Because He loved. You need to understand, why is God doing everything that He does, towards us to the very act of sacrificing His own Son on the cross why? Because God loved us and loves us.

1 John 4:7-8

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.⁸ He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

You need to understand what is behind the Cross; it is because God is love.

1 John 4:9-10

⁹ In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

God is love and God loves man. God loves man, God loves man. This is something the angels cannot understand, they cannot understand. Now you need to understand the devil's hatred for mankind. Angels fell, and God didn't love them the way He loved us; He didn't become an Angel and die as an Angel to rescue the angels, no He didn't. But when man sinned He said, "I'll become a Man and I will live for them and I will die for them and I rise up. And all who believe in Me will rise up with Me," and the devil and their demonic cannot handle it; that God loves us. It cannot be said about any other creation of God that God loves them that same way, only man. Only man. In the light of Scripture there is no record of God loving anything of His creation the same way, except man. And therefore all those who are born of God needs to look at life differently. For, unless we understand God's priorities, what is important for God, We will not understand purpose. What is God eternal purpose? All things work for the good of those who love God? Why do you love God? We love Him because He first loved us, we love Him because He first loved us, left to us we would have never loved Him. It is impossible for us to even know Him and love Him, but He came, how did He love us? God so loved the world, He gave His only begotten Son. Why does God love us? Because he can't help it, God is love. That's what the Bible says - what manner of love! What manner of love God has bestowed upon us that we are called, we should be called (what?) children of God.

Statutory warning given by the Spirit of God, through His Apostle Paul, in *1 Corinthians 13:1-3*,

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

¹ Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.² And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.³ And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

Priorities! What's the most important thing in God's Kingdom? It's not knowledge, it's not faith that moves mountains, it's not to know the mysteries that are all hidden, all those have its own place, but that is not what is most important, the most important is love. And He says, 'If you don't have it, even if we have rest, you are nothing,' in verse 13,

1 Corinthians 13:13

¹³ And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but greatest of these is love.

You could be the smartest kid on the block, but if you don't have love you are nothing, you could have PHD in Astrophysics, but you have no love your nothing or you could be multi billionaire with resorts of your own, homes of your own in every unknown Island, but you don't have love you are nothing, you are nothing. It's important to know this to the point of how Jesus Himself pointed it, in Matthew 22,

Matthew 22:37-40

³⁷ Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind."³⁸ This is the first and great commandment.³⁹ And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

You want to sum the first 39 books of the Bible? Love God with all your heart with all your mind all your strength love your neighbor. Simple, concise, 39 books of the Bible. Love God, love your neighbor and if you don't do, God says that you are nothing. That's why for 24/7, 365 days a year the devil attacks love and perverts it. For he knows if he can pervert love he can destroy man. Devil comes to steal, to kill, to destroy. What does he steal? He takes the original out, so that you have no idea what the original is and substitutes with the duplicate and you run your life on the duplicate and at the end you realize that you were destroyed because you didn't know what the real thing was. That's the warning in the last days, in Matthew 24, when Jesus gives a whole list of warnings,

Matthew 24:12

¹² And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.¹³ But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

So what do you need till the end to be saved? What is the only thing that can make you endure till the last moment of your life in the midst of everything that is happening? It is love, it was love. Even the Church in Ephesus, remember the book of Revelation, who was fantastic in doctrine, discernment, labor, works everything but Jesus said, 'You have fallen somewhere, from that height. If you don't come back to that you are lost. You will not survive your age.' That's why if you do not know the truth, we will fall for the false, peddled by the devil and thousand arms of the media and today even more social media, movies, internet everything. And we swallow it and we die for he always comes with same purpose to steal, to kill, to destroy. Every time Christ comes He comes to give life, the devil kills lives, homes, churches, nations and in *1 Corinthians 13:8* there is something that is written ***love never fails***.

1 Corinthians 13: 8

⁸ Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away.

He is talking about God's kind of love, it never fail but everything else fails. If you believe your marriage is failing add love, it will not fail, if you believe your career is failing add love it will not fail, if you believe your business is failing add love it will not fail because it is written it never fails. One necessary ingredient to add to your life that you don't end up as a failure is love because it never fails. There is no guarantee about faith, it's very powerful, there's no guarantee about hope, there's no guarantee for knowledge, the only guarantee that is given that will never fail is love because only two things are written in the Bible - *God never fails and love never fails*. Because God is love, love is not God but God is love. Get these pictures.

So you have to confess proclaim and ask God, 'If I love God with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my strength I will not fail. I will endure and when the end comes I will be a over-comer and I will stand in the presence of God without shame. I cannot fail because it is written that if I love God and I love my neighbor I will not fail. So I help me, God.' And the simple question is this, if you love God with all your heart, why will you not fail? Because the very jealousy of God will protect you, God is a jealousy God, it's written in the Bible that's a jealousy connected with love, and the very jealousy of God will protect the man or the woman, in spite of his own follies or the attacks of the enemy God will protect him a uphold him. If you want to know, look into the life of David; how did he end up so well? It is because he was a man who loved God with all his heart. That's why God said, "He is a man after My own heart, after My own heart."

Paul, in his great revelation through the Holy Spirit about the love of God in the book of Ephesians, Ephesians like I keep saying it's an incredible intense book, it's not like Romans which is a doctrine intense and doctrine about the laying down the foundation of faith; how the work of Christ and then coming to chapter 12 and says in the light of God's mercy this should be our response I beseech you, beg you brethren, offer. But Ephesians is unbelievable; it is bringing Heaven and earth together; what God has done in Heaven and what Christ has done on earth, he brings it together and says, 'Live that life here.' Ephesians, and in the Ephesians chapter 3 it is the unbelievable revelation about the love of God.

Ephesians 3:17-19

¹⁷ that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—¹⁹ to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

He says, 'If you want to be filled with the fullness of God as Christ was filled with the fullness of God there is only one way, you have to comprehend, you have to understand the breath, the height, the depth, the width of God's love. It's a cube, He says, we have to understand, in *1 John 4:16* and we will come back here.

1 John 4:16

¹⁶ And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. You want to abide in God? You want God to abide in you? There is only one way, it's only one way. So going back to Ephesians chapter 3 and verse 18

Ephesians 3:18

¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height

We may be able to comprehend, meaning we have to understand. The Bible is full of concepts. That is why Peter's last words before he died, he wrote, grow in grace and in knowledge of God. We need to comprehend with all the saints, what is the width, what is the length, what is the depth and what is the height of God's Love? Four facets; the four dimensional figure, not three dimensional, we are used to three dimensional, but this is not that, it is four. We may have bits of pieces of all four, or we may not have any of the four, or we may have only one of the four but God says, 'You need to capture these four facets of God's love and grow in it so that you will not fail in God's Kingdom.' Because you can be absolute success in the world and absolute total failure in God's Kingdom and you can outwardly look like a total failure in the world and be an absolute success in God's Kingdom. What matters is, Kingdom.

So the first facet; the width; the first facet, do you know what it is? It is passion, it's feelings, it's emotions, it's very powerful, it's very powerful; passion is very powerful. Nobody starts with intellect, the kids at the back have no intellect but they have passion. When you look at a person, when you observe a person, one of the first things you notice is passion, or lack of passion. The proof of passion is a relentless pursuit of something. That's why God says, 'Do not love the world or the things of the world,' because you know what? You will become passionate about it, and you will lose your passion on things that are perishable, on those that have no eternal, lasting value and you will waste your time.

Like I told you, there are three things God has given us to which we are accountable, the three T's - your Time, your Talent, and your Treasure. Your time, your ability, your resources. The problem is that people take all these three and put it into their passion. It is not that they are not passionate, but they are passionate for the wrong things. So you waste your years. We pray, 'Lord, restore the years the locust have taken.' How did the locust eat? You took your passion and ran after things which were never part of God's purpose in your life. Please understand this, why is it so important? God is very passionate about us. It has never waned in its intensity for 6000 years; He is very, very, passionate. The epitome of His passion is the Cross and the second climax of His passion is the Wedding of the Lamb.

The simple thing is that, are you passionate? Are you after the Person or possessions? God is after man, but what is man after? Are you passionate about Christ? About your marriage? About your home? About your children? About your church? I'm only using things which are connected with people. God and your neighbor in Psalm 139 verse 17 and 18

Psalms 139:17-18

¹⁷ How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! ¹⁸ If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand: When I awake, I am still with You.

Whose thoughts? God's. That is passion. David is saying, you know what, 'I can sense it in my spirit, You are thinking about me all the time.' Because, whatever or whoever you are passionate about is in your mind. God is very passionate and David realized, you know what, 'You are more passionate about me than I am about You.' God is passionate. Your passion can be found out in your thought life - what are you thinking about, even now? Your mind may be not here at all, body in the church mind may be somewhere where you are passionate about. Just check your thought trail, check your money trail, check your time trail, check your energy trail, it is all spent on whatever you're passionate about, even if it's sleep. What are you passionate about?

Now for the next few weeks, two weeks or whatever, all the young men will be lost, they are passionate about football. Their mothers will be trying to call them and they will get this message 'Aap ke beta Qatar mai hai. Thoda inthajar ki jihe.' (your son is in Qatar. Please wait). It's not bad to be passionate about football for a small season in your life, but then turn the passion towards God. You need to be passionate about something or little fellows someone the little ones over there Hreehan, Levi and all the little boys, they run around with their toy cars and trucks. Worship is going on, prayer is going on, Word is going on, and their passion is going on. You look at them and you know what their passion is. Passion in itself is not a bad thing. But as they grow let them not become addicts like the Korean, young boys always gaming, gaming, gaming, 48 hours on drugs gaming, gaming, gaming, gaming. What is that? Passion gone wrong; it's become an addiction leading to death.

We use that word 'craze' 'he is crazy about football'. Let somebody says, 'He is crazy about God,' because God is crazy about us. Are you crazy about God? Are you crazy about your spouse? We have to bring the neighbor in because that's close to the first commandment, are you crazy about your children? Or are you crazy about your career? Are you crazy about your work? What are you crazy about? Because love has passion and the passion is always directed to people, persons or a purpose that is connected with God. What are you passionate about? David was passionate about God, 'I was glad, very glad, when they said to me let us go to the house of God,' 'I would rather be doorkeeper in the house of God.' Passionate! the Psalmist's passion – '*as the deer panders for the water so my soul longs after You*'; passionate. And you see, in all the songs, songs which are populate are all love songs, and it is all passion – 'I cannot live without you,' 'my heart is broken into thousand pieces because...' they are true, they are not lies, because that is way we were made.

No dog goes to another dog and says, 'I cannot live without you.' No peacock goes and tells the peahen, 'I cannot live without you,' no creature on earth makes a response like it because they were not made in the image of God. We were made in the image of God, so we cannot help but react like God reacts because God is passionate, therefore we are passionate. The question is - what are we passionate about? What are we passionate about? Is it true? That's why angels are astounded in Heaven. They are looking down and says, 'What is man that You are mindful of him?' To see the glory of the angelic realm and to see these human beings. And it doesn't have to be any one of us it can be a beggar sitting on at paradise cross roads and God is passionate about him. And Pastor Ramesh is passionate for them. That's why God puts passion in the hearts of His servants for certain section of people, it is His passion in their hearts. Because we do not have it. What we have is for cricket and football and gaming, not for people, because the proof of passion is the pursuits; proof of the passion is the pursuit.

That's what I keep telling you, all young couples sitting over here, you have every gadget which mankind did not have for 6000 years. Why don't you text your wife? Why don't you call your wife? He told the church in Ephesus, remember the first love, go back and do the things which you did in the beginning. How do you restore the passion? Go back, start texting again, start calling again, start spending time together with God and man again, start, because there's only one way to go back; it's God's way. Restore that passion, restore otherwise you will die, your marriage will die, your spiritual life will die, only thing that can keep in alive is God's love. It will die, unashamed pursuit. I'll not be watching the football, but old days we have watched. You will see, when their team enters, before the team enters they have entered and they have entered in the colors of their team and some of the people have entered in the colors of the team. If you were to recognize them, you will be like, 'Hey! Isn't he the CEO of that company?' and when his team hits that goal he jumps around and screams, he is unashamed, unashamed. The proof of your passion is an unashamed pursuit of that person. Do you know what Hebrew 2 says?

Hebrews 2:11-12

¹¹ For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren ¹² saying: "I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You."

For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified *are* all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, "I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You." Jesus is saying, 'In the assembly in Heaven, in the congregation of the angelic hosts of archangels and cherubim. I am not ashamed to declare that they are My brothers, I am passionate about them.' Are we passionate about God? Sitting like this, with your hands folded, when worship is going on. Are we passionate just as He is passionate about us? Are we ashamed? But in the football field, you are not ashamed, in the cricket stadium you were not ashamed, even in the privacy of your room when your stand, sitting there and watching your favorite movie, you were not ashamed. So you knew where your passion was, it was not for God. Christ is not ashamed of us. He's not ashamed.

Hebrews 12:2

²looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

You know what He endured? He endured the Cross, despising the shame. We don't understand, it's not like the pictures we see, He didn't hang there covered, He hung there naked, a 33 year old Man hanging there naked because He was passionate about us; unashamed in His pursuit to save us. And we are ashamed of Him? We are ashamed to declare His name with our lips, we're ashamed to testify, we are ashamed to witness in our classrooms and colleges about Him. When He's is unashamed and declare to the whole angelic host that, 'These puny little worms they are My brothers, they are My sisters and I'm proud of them. I am not ashamed of them. Those sinners, those once who did all these things,' He says, 'they are Mine. I'm not ashamed of them.'

Do we have passion? Get that back into your life for God, 'God, You are not ashamed of me, I'll never be ashamed of You, but I'll never be ashamed of You.' Despising the shame. He endured the Cross, He was not enduring the shame, He despised the shame, 'I don't care,' He said. 'I don't care,' He says, 'if the devil and demonic realm is mocking Me, 'the Son of God hanging there naked, for what? These people? The ones who are shouting and screaming abuses at you?' He says, 'I am not ashamed. Because I love them. There's no shame in love.' Ask ourselves, have we loved God that way? When we courted your spouse in the beginning you were unashamed, what changed now? What went? Passion went.

Second facet of God's love. It is not just about expressing in passion, because some people have passion, they don't have the second one which is called committed. Passion is an expression of your emotions, commitment is an expression of your will. Life will be full of trails and challenges, if your single with God, if you are married, with God and with one another. There will be testing, there will be trials, there will be tension, there will be time there is seems to be no passion at all. But at that time what keeps you with God, what keeps you two together is commitment. Are you committed in your love? Are you committed? Because lot of people have passion, but they have no commitment. It is not that God says, 'I have loved you,' He says, 'I have loved you with an everlasting love. I am committed to you forever. It is not that I have loved you, I have committed to you in My love forever. Even if you're unfaithful I'm still faithful because I cannot deny Myself; that is who I AM the true and the faithful committed One.'

The second facet of God's love, we have to capture this in our lives. Am I committed to God? To my home? To my church? To get people to be faithful to church two weeks in a row is difficult. To expect people to come to Church at same time two weeks in a row? Same time? Yes, if it is late. Where is your commitment? You need to ask, these are things that matter to God. God says, 'His eyes are roaming all around the world to look for one person whose heart is stayed on Him,' who's committed to Him. One person! Passionate! Committed! Walk with God and your walk with one another. It is because seasons will change in life after summer, after winter comes summer, spring then comes summer, then comes autumn, why have these seasons been put over there? It's because it reflects a seasons of man. Everything was created for man. Man was not created for them, they were created for us. So everything in the seasons reflects something about us; seasons will come and go in life. But will you be committed? Will you stay committed?

God is committed and His commitment is called a covenant. When Abraham asks Him in *Genesis 15*, 'How will I know all this He said, 'Let us make a covenant, a blood covenant, I will not let you walk through it. I'll walk alone because I know you, you are not committed, you're not even committed to your wife. When you went to Egypt you told her to tell that she is your sister. I know you but I will make a commitment with you, a covenant with you by Myself and I will walk so that when you fail I will die. You don't have to die.'

1 Corinthians 11:23-25

²³For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

He says, 'Take My body. You have this body, you have seen for 33 years, this body is committed to you, it was just for you. Partake of it, receive that same kind of commitment into your lives,' and the next ***and when he had the same***

manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. I'm not making a verbal covenant with you. I'm making a blood, the strongest covenant made is a blood covenant. I'm making a blood covenant with you, committed.' Are we committed to Him? To one another as the body of Christ, are we committed? It doesn't matter, what seasons come, better or worse, sickness or health, riches or poverty, for all of eternity. What a Moabite girl told her mother-in-law will be written. 'Go, why are you following me? You have no future in Israel. You are a widow, I am a widow, go back tomorrow may be your parents will marry you off to somebody else.' She said, 'No, where you go I go, where you live I live, your people my people, your God my God, where you die I will die.'

The only book in Bible named after a Gentile 'Ruth' Why is her name in the Bible? Because she had a covenanted love towards God and the only God she could see was in her bitter mother-in-law; a flickering flame of the light of Yahweh in a woman who was so bitter but that little flicker was enough for her to covenant herself to that light and say, 'I will not go back to Moab. I'll go with you into Israel,' and God says, 'that will be My grandmother. I'll redeem her because I see in her heart a reflection of My love for Israel,' covenanted, committed.

David's own son has turned against him and has chased out of the city and he's running out of the city. When he is leaving people are weeping people are crying along with it goes a Gittite called Hittite, and he says, 'Why are you and your men following me? You have no future with me, go back to your own people.' Do you what the Hittite the Gittite said? In our language modern language 'over my dead body. Where you go I go? Where the king lives or dies I am with him.' These are all gentiles, committed. This is what separates the man from the child. Children can be passionate, children even in married children, grown up children, married children can be very passionate; it goes up and down. But they are not committed.

Psalms 15:4

'In whose eyes a vile person is despised, But he honors those who fear the LORD He who swears to his own hurt and does not change; He who swears to his own hurt and does not change.

He who swears to his own hurt and does not change. When God made a covenant with Abraham He swore to His own hurt. When He made that covenant He knew that His Son has die and He refused to change. Hundreds and thousands of years are passing by, Israel is getting wicked, evil, demonic, going down into the pits to the point where God cannot even speak to them. Because there is nobody left to speak through, 400 years of silence but God did not change because He had made a covenant to His own hurt. A covenant keeping God, are you such a person? Job was such a person; in one day he lost everything, he lost his children, he lost everything, all his property, he was struck from head to toe with sores, he was a wreck that when his friend saw him they couldn't recognize him. Do you know what he says? 'Even if You slay me, I will yet serve You.' He says, 'I'm not here for the blessings I'm in here for You.' Committed!

Because we live in a generation where there is a generation that is committed to nothing and passionate about wrong things. If you look in the Bible, the greats in the Bible, they were passionate for God and they were committed to God. Passionate about God, absolutely passionate about God and that passion comes out of his lips. He's not sent to fight he's send with bread and cheese for his brother, he comes on the 40th day, not on the first day. When he comes on the 40th day, he comes and hears, Goliath comes and says, 'Come and challenge me!' And his first response is, 'Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he dare defy the armies of the living God?' His brothers mock him and said, 'Why have you come here? You fellow full of pride, leaving our little sheep.' He says, 'Is there not a cause?'

So there was a cause he was passionate about - the name of Yahweh. And he goes to the king and says, 'I will fight. There are no warriors in your army, no great men in your army. I will fight, because the name of my God is at stake. This man has insulted my God.' Committed and passionate for God. We pray every day, 'Hallowed be Thy name.' He lived it. As king, he goofed up the first time while bringing the ark, second time when the Ark is being brought, boy! He couldn't hold it anymore. He just took his royal ropes off and just dressed in an ephod, he started dancing before the Ark, unashamed, unrestricted in his passion for God and the king's wife, the king's daughter looked at him and she had condemned in her heart. He said, 'I am not ashamed because I know where I came from.'

Do you know where you came from? We all think we came from some place great no. We are coming from the jaws of death and destruction. Do you know where you came from? He says, 'I will be unrestrained in my worship, I am not a ashamed, I am committed and passionate, committed and passionate about my God.' Are we?

2 Corinthians 5:14

¹⁴ For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died;

The love of God, what does it do? Compels us. KJV will use other term, 'constrains us.' Does the love of constrain you? Does the love of your wife constrain you? Because love brings passion, it also brings restraints. Does the love of your children compel you? Of course, if you sit till 12 in your mid night in your office you will get a promotion, but the children are waiting, they are waiting, 'When is daddy coming home?' 'When is mommy coming home?' 'When is my husband coming home?' does it compel you? Think on these things, because you need to understand when we stand before God, if we don't understand the yardsticks on which we are going to be judged we will be deceived on that day. We are not going to be judged on our accomplishments on Earth. The first yardstick God is going to judge is, did you love? Did you love? Love God, love your neighbor. And your closest neighbour is in your own home.

All the fathers out here when is the last time you took your little children out and played with them? And when is the last time you took your wife out and spend 30 minute talking to her, looking in the eye? You're so busy? For what? A career which will be rolled up and put into the dustbin of history one day and burned when the earth is burned? Even the world's largest church ever, Paul Yonggi Cho's church. When he was doing well and at one point in his life everything came to a standstill, he fasted, he prayed he did everything, no answer from God. Then finally he cried out to God and said, 'Lord' why is that I'm in a spiritual block?' God said, 'Because your wife is grieving at home. Go back! Go back!' Constraints! The love of God should constrain us, the love of our spouse should constrain us, the love of our children should constrain us. What are we living for? Or rather who are we living for? For what, everybody has an answer, 'I'm living for cricket' 'I eat, drink, dream, sleep, wake up cricket.' No! What a waste! 'I'm pursuing my passion.' Is it a person or a thing? Does it have anything to do with God's eternal purpose in your life on earth? if yes then it's okay, you should be passionate about it.

I keep telling parents, including Pastor Vijay, I said, 'People should never do a job they are not passionate about. The miserable existence on earth. If you choose a job don't look at the salary, but are you passionate about it? The day I lose my passion for this, I will quit the pulpit and I keep telling you, every mission trip where I go back to the regular circuit and then people I know, at the end of the three day seminar, or four day seminar. I asked the Pastor and say, 'Pastor you saw me one year back, you saw me two years back, tell me I haven't lost my passion?' You should not be in something you're not passionate about. And be very sure what you're passionate about is exactly what God wants you to do, so that it is counted on that day. God is passionate about people, not about things.

Think on these things, because right before our eyes a generation is dying literally to drugs, to sex, minds, bodies being destroyed right before our eyes. They're swallowing in the false because they haven't seen the Real. Passion, commitment.
Oh! The width, the breadth, the height, the depth!

John 15:13

¹³ Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

Third component about a true love, the love of God is sacrifice, lay down. See, let me tell you the Scriptural truth. If you haven't laid it down here, you cannot pickup there. Jesus laid down His life for His Bride here therefore He picked up His life there. Ask yourself this question, what did I lay down? Because there are people who are passionate and you can be passionate, committed and have no sacrifice or very little sacrifice. Sacrifice means to give up something valuable for someone or for a higher cause. To lay down your life for your home, for the church, for the Kingdom of God, more than me or Pastor Vijay or even my wife, the church runs on Sammy and it's not a joke, he's there 24/7, 7 days a week, a church in India runs on a Nigerian shoulders. Why? Because he is willing to lay down. Today the broadcast was delayed by half an hour because he forgot the computer, so he rushed to get it back and connected.

You mean you can't volunteer, we heard on Friday, on the day of His power, His people will be willing, they'll be volunteers. The day of the power came 2000 years ago, it's still continuing but there are no volunteers. So you are not willing to lay down. In your home are you willing to lay down? You cannot take that element out, sacrificial love, the Cross is all about sacrificial love. He laid down His life, greater love has no one than this, the greatest love is to lay down. Then one day every marriage will be fixed if both people decide to lay down, instead of picking up, and children also decide to lay down. One day at a time, one day at a time, the next coming days all my siblings will be here from the eldest and the youngest is standing here, all in their respective careers, extremely successful,

extremely successful. Do you know why? It is because of the lady who is lying in the bed sick. If you want to describe her life in one word, it was sacrifice, one word sacrifice; more than my father it was she. Our lives are built on her. Even now, even last night, when I come back in the night, I rushed to her room, sit by her, hold her hand, she looks at me in that weakened glare she recognizes me and then she asked, 'Did you eat?' She hasn't stopped asking this question all the years of my life. You can't take that out, if take that out love has no meaning, it has no meaning.

Yes they will all come this week, they're coming now because they feel she is dying, but when we were small, when I was in class eighth, she came down, when I was in class nine, she came down, when I was in class ten she came down. When we were very small my father did not come down because he was a principle, she came down. Three trains, four trains alone, to take these five children for their vacation, she came down. Now that she is in her bed they better come down. She came, you have no idea what Indian railways was like; it took us five days to come down from Bhutan to Kerala, five days and she came down. Every year, once a year my father bought her five sarees and when she came to the first stop, in Calcutta where her two sisters were, they took three, you know why she never bought? So that her children could study. The woman you see is not a woman I know; you don't know her life, you don't know what she has gone through. Do you know why she went through what she went through? It is or her children.

Today mothers with one child, half a child, are calling it a sacrifice. She, with five children, and the age difference between the eldest and the youngest is only five years. And a husband who did not know how to even boil water, and in a country three thousand miles away in that time wanted food exactly the way his mother cooked him when he grew up and she did. She taught, she cooked, she took care of her children and saw that the children had an awesome education, settled in life. What are our complaints? She had no mixie, she had no refrigerator, she had no gas, she had no pressure cooker, but 50 years ago when she went to that country, she took the stone and the pestle in sacks, five days there, so that her husband could have dosa and have this coconut filled curries. She did it. Do we have those elements in our life? What did we lay down? Or are we only picking up? That's why David said in 2 Samuel, when Araunah offered him, he said,

2 Samuel 24:24

²⁴Then the king said to Araunah, "No, but I will surely buy it from you for a price; nor will I offer burnt offerings to the LORD my God with that which costs me nothing." So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.

He says, 'King, take it! Take it all! Please offer the sacrifice.' He says, 'No, I will not take it for free. I will never offer to my God anything that has not cost me.' What did it cost you to serve God? What did it cost you to serve God? This is David and this has always been his life, even when he's dying and he calls Solomon and he says, 'I have received even in this last days, through the Spirit, all the plans for the temple, my son. This is the way you have to build,' and he says, 'My own personal treasury, this is what I have kept for the God's temple.' He was a life of sacrifice. Why has for 2000 years the Gospel gone relentlessly to the ends of the world? Why? Because men and women were willing to lay down their lives. The missionaries of the past are not the missionaries of today. Those missionaries, when they left, they said, 'goodbye' to their families, because they did not know if they would ever come back. Most of them did not go back.

You haven't been to the places, even in India where I have been, remote, remote places in India, where even today it is difficult to live and find little churches, old churches and a cemetery and in those cemetery you will see, 'So and so came to India, lived here, worked among us and died here.' I've been to these places. They left everything, why? Because the love of God compelled them – 'I will not offer God anything that has not cost me.' And you should not offer anything to your spouse, to your children what has not cost you. What did it cost you? What did it cost you? Get this in, because if you want your life to be successful in God's eye, it will cost you. There has to be passion, there has to be commitment and there has to be this incredible element called sacrifice, 'I am willing to lay down,' 'I am willing to give up, I am willing to give up.'

One of the most powerful stories of the Nazi Holocaust or the Jews who are slaughter like pigs in those, what do you call it, gas chambers or the story of that family of, I forgot their names, husband, wife and the four children of which the youngest one, let's call him Tommy, if I'm right Thomas or Tommy or whatever his name was. He was sickly. So what they did was that the families were all healthy were sent into different, different, groups to for labor and when they come back, the first thing they do is to look around and then they all hold their hands and thank God, thank You Lord, we are still alive.' Every night it was the same ritual, this thing, 'Oh! We are alive! We are alive!' Thanking God.

They were always worried about little Tommy because he was sickly and so they knew the Nazi's would take him first because he's a burden. Do you what happened? One day when they came back they couldn't find Tommy and their father said, 'Where is Tommy? Where is Tommy? Where is Tommy?' And the other three children were there. Then he said, 'Where is mommy?' and daughter was crying, she said, 'They were coming to take Tommy and Tommy was afraid. So Tommy said, 'Mommy I am afraid to die,' mommy said, 'Don't be afraid I will come with you' and mommy went with Tommy and both haven't come back. That day mother died with the son because the son was afraid of death. Where will we stand before God in presence of people like that? Where will we stand? This is who God is. We cannot aim for something lesser than that, because the Word of God says, 'As He is so are we on earth.' That's why *John 3:16* is the most well known Scripture parallel to *1 John 3:16*,

1 John 3:16

¹⁶By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

Lay down, not pick up, lay down.

The width, the length, the depth, the heights of His love; Passionate, committed, sacrificial love of God.

And there is a fourth element don't let it miss,

Psalms 16:11

¹¹You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore. Oh! I thought at His right hand was Jesus, but what is at Your (God's) right hand? Pleasures forevermore. In love there is passion, there is commitment, there is sacrifice, but we miss this, the joy and the pleasure element. In simple words, 'fun' 'happiness' 'the gratification' 'the delight' part. I am trying to describe the love of God in terms we understand. Is your walk with God boring? Is home boring? The secular world understands it, that's why they have outing for your companies, because they know the happier you are, the more productive you bring. Of course their thing is commercial, but they understood the truth. Joy and laughter, open your mouth and I shall fill it with good things.' Do you know the Bible says, 'God laughs'? It's not like all the paintings where Jesus is always grim, He's not grim, He always laughed. And the Bible actually says,

Proverbs 17:22

²²A merry heart does good, like medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones.

You should laugh a lot, in your home, in your church and we give you every Sunday evening, 'Go! Eat! And be merry! But my question to you, all young couples with so many children, I mean so many children as a whole. What will be the memories your children will take, when they grow up and go out of your home? What will they take home is a fun place. Every memory of my childhood was fun, academically we did very well because home was fun. Home was fun. One day you have to sit with me and see the pictures of the 1960's 70's, black and white pictures, you'll be shocked. In a land where there is no TV, none in the family knows how to play musical instrument, it is like prodigal son's house when he comes back there's always singing and dancing in the evening. Almost every night when we five were together, and you will see my father with something tied around it, with two Amul Milk city tin, because there's no drums, nobody knows how to play that and sisters have to wear jungles and the men have to be dressed, seven malayalese dressed as Nepalis and singing and dancing. Life! It was really fun! Morning, the only thing to wake me up is, 'There is no wind! So do you want to play badminton?' It doesn't matter what the time was, 4 AM or 5 AM you are up and gone. Let me tell you, academically we didn't do bad at all. None of us, but home was a real happy place. Lots and lots of fun.

People will ask me, 'Where did you get sense of humor from?' From my father. It was a happy place, you see you can have everything in love, if you miss this fourth element, you still will be dreary, it will be dreary. Do you know the term called 'joy of salvation' or it is only 'salvation'?

David has lost that. He used to be dancing and singing, he's least bothered about what people think, his wife thinks, he doesn't bother. 'I am king, I just have to have fun with God' and now joy is gone. He said, 'Lord I want to dance like before. Please restore unto me the joy of my salvation.' You know why we buy our children so many toys today? It is because we don't have the guts to give our time to them. My father and my mother did not buy me toys, they gave me themselves. Every game I know how to play till today he taught me; badminton, foot ball, chess, cards

everything he taught me. They were hand-on parents and they were busy. Are you hand-on parents? Is there that fun part in your life, where the children can always say, 'You know home is really fun'? They don't need too many things. We had no things in our house. What do you expect in 1970's? What do you expect? When I got my first tricycle it was sensation in that town, the only tricycle. Every student in the school wanted to take a ride in it till the wheels came off. Think! You think our children need things? They don't need things. We didn't think about things. We didn't think about toys, we didn't think about clothes. We thought about home. That's why when they dropped me into Kerala, it was disaster hit me and every year you're waiting to go back and to go back and to go back but you're too small and who came to take you? She came to take us. And this was a problem the Pharisees had with Jesus.

Matthew 9:11

¹¹ And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, "Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

Other translations will use prostitute, 'Did you see him He's always sitting and joking with them.' How can you do that?

Luke 15:25-26

²⁵ "Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing."²⁶ So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant.

Now his older son was in the field. He is the actual Pharisee here, Okay. And as he came and drew near to the house he heard, music and dancing. He stopped, 'I'm not going inside. I have never factored this in the love of the father; music and dancing. No, only fasting and praying.' And he called them out and asked, 'What is happening inside? What's happening inside?' Jesus is just giving you a picture of what happens in Heaven every time a sinner is saved, let us music and dance, music like we have never heard and dancing like we have never seen; the joy of a child coming home. It is a lot of fun, 'Open your mouth wide I will fill it with good things.' But we have to balance it. Children you have to balance it. But it cannot be without pleasure, it will ruin their lives. It always has to be factored in.

Let me tell this, for all those who came for the retreat, those three days were the best three days of this year, right? Yes! See? What did you do? Had fun, all singing through the night, singing, singing in groups, what happened? What happened? You forgot the messages, you don't remember the menu but only thing if you were asked 'what did you all do?' 'Oh! It was so much fun!' right? What do you think, the Kingdom of God is boring? At His right hand there are pleasures forevermore. In a body you can never tire, you won't sweat, you won't sweat and you breaches won't split if you dance. You can do your splits there without worrying. You think you have seen dancing, you haven't seen dancing yet. Eyes have seen nor ears have heard what music and dancing is like. Heaven is a fun place! Bring a slice of it into your home, into the church, into our lives. Crack jokes at your dining table. Let it not be a very serious conversation. No, you don't need that. Jokes are permitted at dining table.

Like I told you, children remember that very well, remember breakfast no time rush to office, school. Lunch nobody is there, supper is long meal, that's why it's called 'the Lord's Supper' and not Lord's breakfast. It's a long meal, it should be a long meal. You don't have to rush, unless there's an emergency. You don't have anywhere to go and throw your phone off. Put that away, who is calling you? Wife is here, children are here, who is calling you? Let your children remember you, let your children remember that the home was a good place. We didn't have too many things, we didn't have great luxuries, but home was a happy place, okay. Home was a happy place.

There is passion in love, there is commitment in love, there is sacrifice in love and there is pleasure in love. And God is love. So go back to Ephesians 3:18,

Ephesians 3:17-19

¹⁷ that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height ¹⁹ to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Did you see that? I want the worship team to come, because when people are happy they sing, I whistle, others sing. Come worship team, whole worship team come, everybody. I want to sing last song the last song we sang today. Yes, only when we start seeing different facets of who God is we will understand how great He is. I am telling you, angels every day are astounded by the love of God for man. They still can't figure this out. The glory of an angel, the might

of an angel; one angel can kill 130,000 soldiers in one night, the power of an angel, the glory of an angel. You look at them and they look at us, they look at us and wonder.

I remember the story of a Pastor. As they're getting ready. This Pastor was in Chennai, long time back. This Pastor was driving to his office and he as was driving to office there was this beggar lying on the side of the road, and the Spirit of God said, 'Stop and go to him and talk to him,' and he says, 'Lord I'm already late,' and the Spirit said, 'Stop and go talk to him.' So he stopped on the side, went to the beggar and he ministered to him and the beggar with tears running down his eyes he received Jesus and he prayed with him, thanked him and he gave him some money and said, 'When I come back in the evening I'll see you again.' But evening when he was coming back he went to there and he saw small crowd of people and he looked over there and see the beggar had died and gone home. How great is our God! If your heart is on man your spirit will be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit; you will be sensitive, because God is not interested in things He is interested in man. That's why God says, 'Do not love this world or the things of this world. If you do (what will not be in you?) the love of the Father will not be in you.' Without the love of the Father do you know what we are? Nothing! We may have everything else in this world but without the love of the Father in us we are nothing. But if we have the love of God and we don't know mysteries, we don't know knowledge, we don't prophesy, we don't speak in tongues you are still everything. I'm not saying that you don't need other things but not at the cost of what is important to God. So this morning, we will sing 'How Great Thou Art.'

Hallelujah, Hallelujah! In the light of what you have heard today I pray the eyes of your understanding will be open. As you read your Bible from today, see the heart of the Father in Jesus, Jesus about whom it is written early in the morning when it was still dark He would rise, go to a solitary place to pray, that's how His day began; early in the morning when it was still dark, the King of kings and Lord of lords and that same Lord would walk all through the day under the hot sun to meet one delinquent child of God, a Samaritan woman who was married and divorced five times now living with the sixth one, she could never go to Him so He came to her, the Father, the everlasting Father in the Son, looking for His lost child, that is who Jesus was.

The man crippled 38 years lying by the pool of Bethesda, 38 years he had been waiting but always somebody got into the pool before him when the angel came and stirred the waters. His hope was dying, his faith was wavering and then Jesus came, He looked him in the eye and asked him, 'Do you want to be made whole?' He didn't even know who it was, but God knows who you are? Jesus, who was tired, worn out, who would fall asleep in the midst of the storm but is braving the storm and catching a cat nap, for a demon possessed man on the other side who lived among the tombs, who broke chains. The passionate love of God, the committed love of God, the sacrificial love of God, yet in His love there was joy, it didn't matter how long the days was, it didn't matter how tired He was at the end of the day when the parents bought the children's the disciples stopped and said, 'Do not trouble the Master,' He said, 'Stop! Do not stop the children from coming to Me,' the King of kings and the Lord of lords, the Author of our salvation, at the end of a tired day, still had time for the children. The Word of God says that He took them in His arms and He blessed them.

Today make a decision - I will have time for my children. I will have time for my family. I don't want to pursue a career at the cost of my family. The reason I have a job is for my family. God, family and the family of God; get your priorities in order. Be passionate about it, be committed to it, be sacrificial in it, lay down your life, don't look at your spouse, don't look at the other, don't demand because the minute you demand or threaten, love goes out of the window because love can exist only where it is free and where the Spirit of God is Lord there is liberty. After everything God has done He doesn't demand, He says 'in the light of God's mercies I beg you brethren,' the Spirit of God through His servant begs us to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice holy and acceptable. He is not demanding, if the God of the universe does not demand from us, husbands and wives don't demand, but offer, offer, offer; lay down, don't pick up. There are too many in this world who are just picking up. God needs a few who will lay down.

At the end of his life before he can talk about the crown of righteousness that waits for him he says, 'My life is being poured out as a drink offering.' Apostle Paul when did it start? He said, 'On the road to Damascus when I saw my Saviour I laid down my life, I've never picked up after that and now it has come to the last moments of my life when I look back I know I left nothing out, for Him and for His people.' Therefore he would pick up the crown of righteousness on the other side because he had laid down.

Husband and wives, fathers and mother, employees and employers, wherever you are placed by God, lay down, lay down because that is who God is. That's why it says that it is more blessed to give than to receive. It is blessed to

receive, but it is more blessed to give. End up in eternity as a giver. Takers are miserable, givers are always happy, because for when they give there is an outflow from Heaven into their lives. Capture in an increasing measure every day, the four facets of the love of God that you have heard. It doesn't start tomorrow, it starts today. With God it is always starts today. 'Today if you hear My voice, 'God says, 'do not harden your heart. Today! Today!

Closing prayer:

Father this morning we stand before Thee. We thank You for Your mercy because every time we hear Your Word we know how far we have fallen short. Most of the time, most of the day we are takers, but You are a Giver. To You it didn't matter, Nicodemus could come in the night You were ready give him time, for a Samaritan woman You would go all the day to meet her, You are always willing. The Roman centurion says, 'My servant' You said, 'Let us go.'

I pray Father that we will value the time You have given us, the ability, the talents that You have given us, the resources, the treasure that You have given us so that one day we can look back at the end and say, 'Lord, all that You gave me I have given it over serving You and Your people.' Lord, my time has run out, my energy is depleted, my pockets are empty, all I had I have given Lord. I came with my hand empty, now coming back to You with my hand empty, everything that You gave I have given over for the King, for His glory, for His Kingdom, for His saints. And the Lord says, 'I will not forget your labour of love you have extended My saints.

Meet Your people today, Lord, refresh Your people today, strengthen Your people today, let there be a cutting away of the flesh today by the Spirit of God and a renewing of the inner man by the Spirit of God for the things of God, for the purpose of God, for the priorities of God and not of flesh. Baptize us with Your fire that everything that is not of You be burned away from us, O' Lord, that what remains is of You, for You and unto You O' Lord. For we love You, for no one, no one has loved us the way You have loved us. We love You, we love You, we love You, Lord. Nothing You ask us it's too little or too big. O what manner of love that God has bestowed upon us that we are called the children of the living God. We love You this morning, bless Your people, meet Your people at their point of need; healing for those who are infirm, peace for those who are restless, strength for those who are weak, resources for those who lack, for You are our everything. Besides You we need nothing. Meet us, Lord, meet us, help us to be like You.

Now by faith, believing, that the Spirit, the Blood, the faith and the Word has sanctified us, we lift up holy hands in Your presence and we bless Your holy name. We bless Your holy name, we bless Your holy name, we and declare Thy is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, forever and ever, and all God's people said, 'Amen'.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit rest and abide with each one of us Amen, Amen.

God bless you! Have a good, fun-filled fellowship.