

God's Kind of Love

By: *Pastor Tracy Headley*

For the third time the Apostle John stresses love as a test of the Christian life. He clearly teaches that our knowledge and love of God will be evident by our obedience to His Word - and love for our 'brothers and sisters' in Christ. **We are not to simply talk about love, but to love practically by giving to and caring for those in need.** Simply put, if we 'know and love' Jesus, then we are to 'live and love' as he did.

Truly Understanding Love

Most of us *think* that we really understand *the* love of God, but our personal *experience* usually *proves* otherwise. We often *feel* lonely, depressed, discouraged, and defeated. Yet, every one of *these* negative emotions *would* be turned to positive *by a* proper revelation of God's love *for us*. And as for loving others, most of us would admit there are *some people* who are very difficult to love *sometimes* – and that may include myself.

Receiving God's Love

So, if we don't *fully* understand God's love for us, we will *fail* in loving others – because we *can't* give away - what we *don't* have. But, if we are *willing* to receive a full revelation of God's love for us, it *becomes* easy to love others with the love that we have received. When we *struggle* to believe what God's promises to us will come to pass, that's unbelief; but the *root* of that unbelief is a *lack* of love.

Galatians 5:6 says *faith works by love*. That means love is the driving force *behind* our faith. *Ephesians 2* tells us that we are *saved by faith, through grace and not by deeds*. So love for others and for God, is the response of *those* who have truly 'realized and received' God's forgiveness.

In Ephesians, chapter 3, Paul prayed that the Ephesians would get a *greater revelation* of God's *love* for them. *Eph. 3:14-19* He said, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God." *Notice in verse 18 that God's love isn't just one-dimensional*. There is height, depth, length, and breadth to it. Many times, Christians only seem to see God's love as they would see a painting, in one-dimension - They've never seen *the* multi-dimensional reality of God's love. *In verse 19, Paul said as we experience God's love, which is superior to mere knowledge of God's love we would be filled with all the fullness of God*. What a statement!

Fullness come from Love

When we are *lacking* in any area of our lives – we are *lacking* in revelation of God's love. Experiencing God's love *equals* fullness. As we get to know Christ better, we are *filled* with the *fullness* of life and power that comes from God. This "fullness" means that there is *nothing lacking* in our relationship to the Father. God pours his love and power into believers, making us complete for this life and readying us for the life to come. This "fullness" is *fully expressed* only in Christ. We need *not look* anywhere else. The ultimate goal is for believers to become Christ-like individuals, filled so totally with Christ that HE - is seen in us. So, a *deep* revelation of God's love *for us* is the most important thing we *can* receive. For it is God's *perfect love* that casts out all fear *and* never fails. And it is through God's Love, that we are *able* to 'see and choose' what is morally right.

That is why continue to pray from *Philippians 1:9-11*;

9 That *our* love for each other will overflow 'more and more' and that *we* will keep on growing in *our* 'knowledge and understanding'. 10 For God wants *us* to understand what really matters, so that *we* may live 'pure and blameless' lives until Christ returns. 11 And may *we always* be filled with the fruit of our salvation —those good things that are produced in *our* lives by Jesus Christ—for this will bring much 'glory and praise' to God, our Father, AMEN!

