

The
Victory Voice

February 2016



".... but the greatest of these is charity."

I Cor. 13:13



Pastor Elmo Parker

God SO LOVED That He GAVE!

by Dr. Elmo Parker

Sometimes I think Christians could profit from a trip into the past! We would do well to detach ourselves for a moment and travel back through history. As we do, we must get rid of our pretensions, our prejudice, and our self-appreciations!

Let us travel back 2,000 years to a rocky hill side outside of Jerusalem. There we stand and observe the happenings on a day when time stopped—and started again with a new purpose.

With horror we see the Living Son of God executed by man. We see Him dying FOR THE SINS OF THE WHOLE WORLD!

As we look we ask our self, "Why would anyone die such a death?" And then we remember that it is Jesus upon whom we gaze! Why, why would Jesus suffer so in this awful death? Then the Spirit of God brings to memory the words of Isaiah:

"Surely he hath borne OUR griefs, and carried OUR sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted." (Isa. 53:4)

Still we cannot justify what we are seeing! We ask again, "Why has this awful burden of grief and sorrow come upon the holy, harmless Son of God?"

Regular contributors include:

Dr. Elmo Parker

—Senior Pastor of Victory Baptist Temple

Pastor Scott Miller

- Assistant Pastor of Victory Baptist Temple
- Principal of Victory Baptist Academy

Dr. Andy Tully

- Evangelist and President of Berean Bible College and Seminary

Dr. David W. Board Sr.

- Faculty member at Berean Bible College and Editor of The Victory Voice

You may contact the Victory Voice at:

VICTORY BAPTIST TEMPLE

Box 2577, Piedmont, MO—63957 Phone (573) 223-4198

**CURRENT ISSUES OF THE VICTORY VOICE MAY BE
READ AT victorybaptisttemple.com**

Again the Spirit of God opens our understanding with the words of Isaiah, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; AND THE LORD HATH LAID ON HIM THE INIQUITY OF US ALL." - (Isa. 53:6)

When, for a moment, we take our eyes off the One on the cross and look about us, we see that there are others observing this horrific happening.

Roman soldiers are there. They nailed Him to the cross! They cast lots for his garment! They sit and watch him suffer!

The Rulers of the Jew are there. They have already declared their thoughts about Him. They said, "We will not have this man to rule over us!" They don't realize the ruin and heartache that those words will bring upon them and their descendants!

The multitude is there. He had healed their sick, raised their dead, and had forgiven the sins of many of them! Surely they too are asking, "Why, why, why?"

His mother, Mary, is there. Now she knows how it is that her heart was to be pierced! She sees her Savior, yes, but she sees also her son!

Some of His disciples are there! They know the Master. They know that He is not worthy of such a death! Their hearts are broken and their expectations shattered. They now see all hope vanish!

Another is there. One who IS worthy of

death! His name is Barabbas! This man owes his physical life to Jesus. Jesus took his place; his cross! (We only hope that the heart of Barabbas was broken by what he saw and moved by the Spirit of God. Barabbas, accept Him___His death not only SAVED your body, it is sufficient to save your SOUL!)

Satan is there! His servant, Judas, has done his filthy deed! The Lord is betrayed and delivered to His enemies.

God the Father is there! It is His presence that gives us any hope of knowing, "Why?"

Could this be what Isaiah wrote about? Is this a tragedy or a triumph?

Being there at the cross, looking about at the various groups of onlookers, we see anew that there is One Who can answer our soul's question; "Why is Jesus dying so?" He has assured the whole world that He is pleased with His Son! His testimony was, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased."

The words of Isaiah are opened to our understanding and take on clear meaning when we remember that, "**God so LOVED** the world **that He GAVE** His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (Jn. 3:16)

Why did Jesus die such a death? Friend, He did it for YOU! In fact, He did it for the whole world. The Bible declares that, "...whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord SHALL BE SAVED!" (Ro. 10:13)





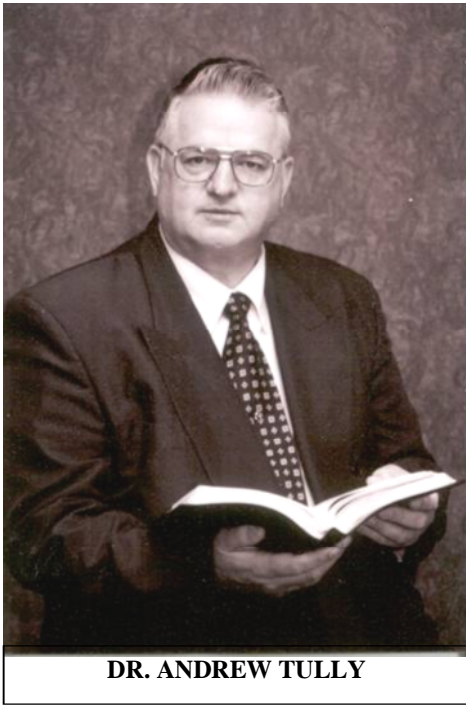
Great Grandpa's BIBLE is the One for Me!

WHAT GOD GAVE ME!

“This precious Book within my hand
Is God’s own Word on which I stand.”
And then the scholars came along
and said he preacher had it wrong:
“Conflations here, rescissions there,
and scribal errors everywhere.”
A book “essentially correct,”
but not in every last respect.
“A ‘fairly certain’ word,” they say,
“To light our path and guide our way.”
Then in despair I bowed by head.
“We have no Word of God,” I said.
“If some of this old Book is wrong,
pray tell, what else does not belong?”
Will still more manuscripts be found
to make us go another round?
Correcting, changing, taking out;
creating questions, fear and doubt?
Must more discoveries come to light
before we finally get it right?
Will precious doctrines fade away
because of what the scholars say?

How many “errors” must we purge
because of what the scholars urge?
How many versions must we make?
How many changes can we take?
How will we ever know we’re through –
that we possess a scripture true?
If man must find God’s Word, my friend,
when will the changes ever end?
Then to the Book again I fled
to find out what my Father said.
“Forever settled...never fade” –
This promise God the Spirit made.
A thousand generations hence –
that seems a pretty strong defense.
A “perfect Book?” Then it must be
man can’t improve what God gave me.
We have a Book completely true,
instructing us in all we do.
Preserved by God, not found by men,
inscribed by God the Spirit’s pen.
If God or scholars you must choose,
be sure the “experts” always lose.
Don’t give to them a second look;
Just keep believing this old Book.

Written by Dr. R. B. Ouellette



DR. ANDREW TULLY

“GOD IS LOVE”

(1 John 4:8)

This is probably one of the most misused and maligned statements about God found anywhere in the Bible. I am sure that the reason for this is found in a simple misunderstanding of the nature of God. The following article is a section of a chapter in the book WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES that I wrote years ago to satisfy a Degree program in Bible College. I have expanded it in brief for this article. Let's take a look at the LOVE OF GOD, as revealed in the written Word of God.

There are two basic words for “love” in the New Testament. One (phileo) refers to a “*brotherly love; family love.*” This is a purely human love, though a good love. This is the word used when Paul told Timothy that the older women in the church are to teach the younger women to “love their husbands” and “love their children.” Therefore, it is a love that can be taught, and since it can be taught it can be learned.

The other (agape), however, refers to **a divine love, a love that only God can love** – and only believers can agape as God does through them. “*God is agape*” (1 John 4:8). This is a self-sacrificial love; it is a love that does not ask for, nor expect, love in return. It is the love that is not altered by the response or lack thereof of the party loved.

The perfect love of God is **rational** and **voluntary** affection. He does not love because of the fact that He IS love. Rather, **He loves because He wants to love.**

Since God's love is **rational**, it involves a submission to a higher law than itself – that of truth and holiness. His love finds a perfect standard in His holiness. Holiness, being the primary attribute of God that governs and guides all other attributes, is the standard for His love.

THE OBJECTS OF GOD'S LOVE

Love always has an object, or a multiplicity of objects. What is the object of God's love? There are many found in the Word of God. This list is doubtless not complete, but it gives us an idea of who and what God loves.

(Continued on page 12)



Motherhood

by Billy Sunday (1862-1935)

"Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages" (Exodus 2:9).

THE STORY OF MOSES is one of the most beautiful and fascinating in all the world. It takes a hold on us and never for an instant does it lose its interest, for it is so graphically told that once heard it is never forgotten.

I have often imagined the anxiety with which that child was born, for he came into the world with the sentence of death lagging over him, for Pharaoh had decreed that the male children should die, and the mother defied even the command of the king, and determined that the child should live, and right from the beginning the battle of right against might was fought at the cradle.

Moses' mother was a slave. She had to work in the brick yards or labor in the field, but God was on her side and she won, as the mother always wins with God on her side. Before going to work she had to choose some hiding place for her child, and she put his little sister, Miriam, on guard while she kept herself from being seen by the soldiers of Pharaoh, who were seeking everywhere to murder the Jewish male children.

For three months she kept him hidden, possibly finding a new hiding place every few days. It is hard to imagine anything more difficult than to hide a healthy, growing baby, and he was hidden for three months.

Now he was grown larger and more full of life and a more secure hiding place had to be found, and I can imagine this mother giving up her rest and sleep to prepare an ark for the saving of her child.

I think every twig was carefully scrutinized in order that nothing poor might get into its composition, and in the weaving of that ark, the mother's heart, her soul, her prayers, her tears, were interwoven. Oh, if you mothers would exercise as much care over the company your children keep, over the books they read and the places they go, there would not be so many girls feeding the red light district, nor

so many boys growing up to bad, criminal lives.

And with what thanksgiving she must have poured out her heart when at last the work was done and the ark was ready to carry its precious cargo, more precious than if it was to hold the crown jewels of Egypt. And I can imagine the last night that baby was in the home.

Probably some of you can remember when the last night came when baby was alive; you can remember the last night the coffin stayed, and the next day the pallbearers and the hearse came. The others may have slept soundly, but there was no sleep for you, and I can imagine there was no sleep for Moses' mother.

Others in the house might have slept, but not a moment could she spare of the precious time allotted her with her little one, and all through the night she must have prayed that God would shield and protect her baby and bless the work she had done and the step she was about to take.

Some people often say to me: "I wonder what the angels do: how they employ their time?" I think I know what some of them did that night. You bet they were not out to some bridge whist party. They guarded that house so carefully that not a soldier of old Pharaoh ever crossed the threshold. They saw to it that not one of them harmed that baby.

At dawn the mother must have kissed him goodbye, placed him in the ark and hid him among the reeds and rushes, and with an itching heart and tear dimmed eyes she turned back again to the field and back to the brick yards to labor, and wait to see what God will do.

She had done her prayerful best, and when you have done that you can bank on it that God will not fail you. How easy it is for God to give the needed help, no matter how hopeless it might seem, if we only believe that with God all things are possible, no matter how improbable.

What unexpected answers the Lord would give to our prayers! She knew God would help her some way, but I don't think she ever dreamed that God would help her by sending Pharaoh's daughter to care for the child; but it was no harder for God to send the princess than it was to get the mother to prepare the ark. What was impossible from her standpoint was easy for God. Pharaoh's daughter came down to the water to bathe, and the ark was discovered, just as God wanted it to be, and one of her maids was sent to fetch it. You often wonder what the angels are doing. I think some of the angels herded the crocodiles on the other side of the Nile to keep them from finding Moses and eating him up.

You can bank on it all Heaven was interested to see that not one hair of that baby's head was injured. There weren't devils enough in Hell to pull one hair out of its head. You may be sure the angels were not out to some bridge whist party then. God had something for them to do.

The ark was brought, and with feminine curiosity the daughter of Pharaoh had to look into it to see what was there, and when they removed the cover there was lying a strong, healthy baby boy, kicking up its heels and sucking its thumbs, as probably most of us did when we were boys, and probably as you did when you were a girl.

The baby looks up and weeps, and those tears blotted out all that was against it and gave it a chance for its life. I don't know, but I think an angel stood there and pinched it to make it cry, for it cried at the right time. Just as God plans, God always does things at the right time. Give God a chance - I he may be a little slow at times, but He will always get around in time.

The tears of that baby were the jewels with which Israel was ransomed from Egyptian bondage. The princess had a woman's heart, and when a woman's heart and a baby's tears meet, something happens that gives the devil cold feet. Perhaps the princess had a baby that had died, and the sight of Moses may have torn the wound open and made it bleed afresh. But she had a woman's heart, and that made her forget she was the daughter of Pharaoh and she was determined to give protection to that baby.

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

Faithful Miriam (the Lord be praised for Miriam) saw the heart of the princess reflected in her face. Miriam had studied faces so much that she could read the princess' heart as plainly as if written in an open book, and she said to her: "Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" and the princess said, "Go."

I see her little feet and legs fly as she runs down the hot, dusty road, and her mother must have seen her coming a mile away, and she ran to meet her own baby put back into her arms and she was being paid Egyptian gold to take care of her own baby.

See how the Lord does things. "Now, you take this child and nurse it for me and I will pay you your wages." How quickly the mother was paid for these long hours of anxiety and alarm and grief, and if the angels know what is going on what a hilarious time there must have been in Heaven when they saw Moses and Miriam back at home under the protection of the daughter of Pharaoh. I imagine she dropped on her knees and poured out her heart to God, who had helped her so gloriously. She must have said: "Well, Lord, I knew you would help me. I knew you would take care of my baby when I made the ark and put him in it and put it in the water, but I never dreamed that You would put him back into my arms to take care of, so I would not have to work and slave in the field and make back and be tortured almost to death by fear that the soldiers of Pharaoh would find my baby and kill him.

"I never thought you would soften the stony heart of Pharaoh and make him pay me for what I would rather do than anything else in this world." Everything was against her, but she would not give up. Her heart never failed. She made as brave a fight as any man ever made at the sound of cannon or the roar of musketry. Mothers are always brave when the safety of their children is concerned.

If men had half as much grit as the women there would be different stories written about a good many homes. Look at her work! It is the greatest in the world; in its far reaching importance it is transcendently above everything in the universe - her task in molding hearts and lives and shaping character. If you want to find greatness, don't go toward the throne; go to the cradle, and the nearer you get to the cradle, the nearer to greatness.

Now, when Jesus wanted to give His disciples an impressive object lesson, He called in a college professor, did he? Not much. He brought in a little child and said: "Except ye become as one of these, ye shall in no wise enter the kingdom of God."

A young man one time joined a church and the preacher asked him: "What was it I said that induced you to be a Christian?" Said the young man: "Nothing that I have ever heard you say, but it is the way my mother lived." I tell you an ounce of example outweighs forty million tons of theory and speculation.

If the mothers would live as they should, we preachers would have little to do. Keep the devil out of the boys and girls and he will get out of the world. The old sinners will die off if we keep the young ones clean. The biggest place in the world is that which is being filled by the people who are closely in touch with youth. Being a king, an emperor or a president is mighty small potatoes compared to being a mother or the teacher of children, whether in a public school or in a Sunday school, and they fill places so great that there isn't an angel in Heaven that wouldn't be glad to give a bushel of diamonds to boot to come down here and take their places.

Oh, you wait until you reach the mountains of eternity, then read the mothers' names in God's hall of fame, and see what they have been in the world. Wait until you see God's hall of fame; you won't see any Ralph Waldo Emersons, but you will see women bent over the washtub. I want to tell you

women, fooling away your time drinking society brandy mash and a cocktail, and playing cards, is mighty small business compared to molding the life of a child.

Tell me, where did Moses get his faith? From his mother. Where did Moses get his backbone to say "I won't be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter"? He got it from his mother. Where did Moses get the nerve to say, "Excuse me, please", to the pleasure of Egypt? He got it from his mother.

There is a mighty power in a mother's hand. There's more power in a woman's hand than there is in a king's scepter. And there is a mighty power in a mother's kiss - inspiration, courage, hope, ambition, in a mother's kiss. One kiss made Benjamin West a painter, and the memory of it clung to him through life. One kiss will drive away the fear in the dark and make the little one brave. It will give strength where there is weakness.

I was in a town one day and saw a mother out with her boy, and he had great steel braces on both legs, to his hips, and when I got near enough to them I learned by their conversation that wasn't the first time the mother had had him out for a walk.

She had him out exercising him so he would get use of his limbs. He was struggling and she smiled and said: "You are doing fine today; better than you did yesterday," and she stooped and kissed him, and the kiss of encouragement made him work all the harder, and she said: "You are doing great, son," and he said, "Mamma, I'm going to run: look at me." And one of his toes caught on the steel brace on the other leg and he stumbled, but she caught him and kissed him, and said: "That was fine, son; how well you did it!"

Now, he did it because his mother had encouraged him with a kiss. He didn't do it to show off. There is nothing that will help and inspire like a mother's kiss.

There is power in a mother's song, too. It's the best music the world ever heard. The best music in the world is like biscuits - it's the kind mother makes. The song of a mother is sweeter than that ever sung by minstrel or written by poet. Talk about sonnets! You ought to hear the mother sing when her babe is on her breast, when her heart is filled with emotions. Her voice may not please an artist, but it will please anyone who has a heart in him. The songs that have moved the world are not the songs written by the great masters. The best music, in my judgment, is not the faultless rendition of these high priced opera singers.

There is nothing in art that can put into melody the happiness which associations and memories bring. I think when we reach heaven it will be found that some of the best songs we will sing there will be those we learned at mother's knee.

There is power in a mother's love. A mother's love must be like God's love. How God could ever tell the world that He loved it without a mother's help has often puzzled me. If the devils in Hell ever turned pale it was the day mother's love flamed up for the first time in a woman's heart. If the devil ever got "cold feet" it was that day, in my judgment. You know a mother has to love her babe before it is born. Like God, she has to go into the shadows of the valley of death to bring it into the world!

"Take this child and raise it for me, and I will pay you your wages." Will you promise and covenant with God, and with me, and with one another, that from now on you will try, with God's help, to do better than you ever have done to raise your children for God?



There's No Place Like Home!

Thoughts by a lady for the ladies!

by

Imogene Parker

Imogene Parker is the mother of three adult children and the wife of Dr. Elmo Parker, pastor of Victory Baptist Temple in Piedmont, Mo. God's call upon her life is to serve her husband and family, but He also has used her to bless the lives of many Christian women through the years as she has spoken to ladies groups and as she counseled with wives and mothers.

A MOTHER'S JEWELS

(Part one)

I have on my heart a desire to share some things with you concerning our homes. The home is the foundation of our churches and our nation. The Bible declares, "Every wise woman buildeth her house, but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands." (Prov. 14:1)

"Home" always stirs our memory. For those of us who had a happy Christian home the word "home" is exceedingly precious! As ladies we love "precious things like diamonds and rubies. We like to adorn ourselves and our houses with beautiful things, but, I wonder how serious we are about the precious Jewels we have at our very fingertips.

In the book, Acres of Diamonds, the story is told of a man who sold all of his possessions and left his family in search of diamonds. He traveled all over the world; then returned broke and destitute only to find that diamonds had been discovered in his own back yard!

How many of us are searching for treasures

and trinkets and are overlooking the real Jewels that are right in our own home?

One of the most precious jewels we have in our home IS our home! The Lord has brought to my mind seven things that are basic building blocks for a genuine "Christian" home:

1. **Commitment**— First, there must be a commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ. Of all that we might possess, HE is the most precious! Are you fully committed to Him? Have you truly surrendered your body, soul, and spirit to Him? Secondly, we must be committed to our husband. On May 21, 1955, I committed myself to Elmo Parker! I meant it when I said that I would have him, "...for better and for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health." I meant it when I promised to forsake all others and cleave only to him as long as God gives us life!
2. **God's Love**— It should go without saying that if we are to have a "Christian" home we must have God in our home! He must be in our heart, in our head, and in our

home! He is NOT the "guest" at every meal, He is at the head of the table!

3. God's Favor— The psalmist declared, "I intreated thy favor with my whole heart." Ladies, we MUST seek the Lord's favor to have a proper relationship with our husband and children. We need His love, His wisdom, His guidance!

4. Thought and Planning— Mother, YOU are the "heart" of your home. The day to day routine that every home must have should NOT just happen; rather it should be structured. You will need to show your children HOW to serve the Lord in their every day activities.

Self discipline is "caught" much easier than it is "taught!" Plan and provide for the basic structure of your children's lives, particularly when they are young.

5. Be Consistent— Consistency is a must with the training of children. Remember ladies, Bible standards don't change! Right is right and wrong is wrong. People used to tell us, "You are too strict on those kids. When they grow up they will hate you!" Well, all I can say is, "Ask them!" Our children are all middle aged now. The two girls are married to preachers! Our son is very active in our local church! They love us, NOT hate us!

6. Be Genuine— Authority in the home can not have a, "Don't do as I do, do as I tell you!" attitude. We cannot say one thing and do another.

7. Your Home Must be Continually Renewed We are human and make mistakes, but God is always ready to give us fresh blessings. A Christ home is truly a Jewel. This could be the most beautiful jewel you posses! See the diamonds in YOUR OWN BACK YARD!



QUOTATIONS

OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT



Theodore Roosevelt

It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs and comes up short again and again, because there is no effort without error or shortcoming, but who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, who spends himself for a worthy cause; who, at the best, knows, in the end, the triumph of high achievement, and who, at the worst, if he fails, at least he fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who knew neither victory nor defeat.

(Continued from page 5)

God loves **HIS SON**, the Lord Jesus Christ. At the baptism of Jesus, God the Father spoke to His Son from Heaven, *"Thou art my **beloved** Son, in whom I am well pleased"* (Matthew 3:17). The word, *"beloved,"* means, "loved one." We as human family members understand this definition. We may love everyone, but there are those within our family circle that are the special objects of a deeper kind of love than we have for anyone else. They are our *"beloved,"* our "loved ones."

At the transfiguration of Christ, the Father's voice was heard from Heaven, *"This is my **beloved** Son..."* (Matthew 17:5). The Lord Jesus Christ was, and is, the recipient of the love of the Father. God the Father loves God the Son to a degree that human fathers could never love their beloved sons.

Jesus said to the Father in His high-priestly prayer, *"Thou **lovest** me before the foundation of the world"* (John 17:24). God loves His Son more than any human could ever love his own offspring. God's love is a perfect love and transcends all bounds. God loves His own Son.

Can you imagine the torment that God the Father must have felt for His Son when He was dying on Calvary, suffering as the Just for the unjust? He suffered the white heat of the wrath of God on our behalf. Can you even begin to imagine what the Father felt like when His Son cried out from the cross in the darkness of the hour, *"My God! My God! Why hast thou forsaken (disowned) me?"*

God also loves **BELIEVERS** with a special kind of love. In John 16:27 Jesus told His disciples, *"For the Father himself **loveth** you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God."* Yes, God loves the entire world, but those who are in Christ are the special object of God's love.

Again, in His prayer of John chapter seventeen, He reminded the Father, *"that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and **HAS LOVED THEM, AS THOU HAS LOVED ME**"* (emphasis mine), verse twenty-three. God loves His own.

In Romans 1:7 the Apostle Paul writes to the church in Rome and calls them, *"beloved of God."* The saved are the "loved ones" of God. The greatest feeling in the world is that experienced from being loved. Multiplied a thousand times over, it is the greatest joy in all of life to know that we are the special objects of God's Divine love.

God's love to us is unconditional, Christian. However, it must be respected. That does not mean that God endorses our sin or apathy. God hates our sin and our self-centeredness. However, we can rest in the fact that we are the *"beloved of God"* – His "loved ones."

God also loves **ISRAEL**. We must be ever so careful how we speak of the Jews. They are special objects of God's love (just as are believers special objects of

God's love). In Jeremiah 31:3 God said to Israel in particular, *"I have **loved thee with an everlasting love.**"* God loves Israel.

We are living a day when the present administration of the United States, the last major friend of the special people of God, has turned their backs on God's chosen people. However, God had promised them that He would bless those who bless them and curse those who curse them (Genesis 12). Therefore, we can come to the conclusion that this country is now under the judgment of God, and is in for more severe judgment in the days ahead unless this horrifying position is reversed.

It is a dangerous and foolish thing to betray the special people of God, the Jews. They are presently not in favor with God because of their rejection of the Messiah; however, they are still, and will always be, the special object of the love of God.

God also loves **SINNERS**. He hates sin – but He loves the sinner. Ephesians 2:4 says, *"He **loved us**, when we were dead in sins."*

In Romans 5:6-8 the Apostle Paul said, *"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his **love** toward us, in that, **while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.**"*

God loves sinners, and is *"not willing that **any** should perish, but that **all** should come to repentance"* (II Peter 3:9). If you, dear reader, die without Jesus Christ and therefore have to spend eternity in a place the Bible calls, *"the lake of fire"* (Revelation 20:11-15), you will have to trample on the love of God to do it.

Don't reject God's love and trample under your feet the blood of His beloved Son (Hebrews 10:29)! Turn to Christ today; trust Him and receive Him as your own personal Saviour without delay. *"But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name"* (John 1:12).

God love you so much, dear sinner, that He sent His only begotten Son to earth to die as your substitute (John 3:16). He died in your place; in essence, He took your Hell for you! He wants you to escape Hell and spend eternity with Him in Heaven. Why not give Him your heart and life now! He said, *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved..."* (Acts 16:31).

"For whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:13). Call on Him now – tell Him that you realize that you are a sinner and you are trusting Him and His death, burial, and resurrection as your only hope of Heaven. Then contact us here at VBT and let us know so we can rejoice with you!

God bless you! God loves you!



Above All Things!

by

Pastor Scott Miller



How Fervent is Your Love? | Peter 4:7-8

Most Bible-believers who are striving to live for Christ and are students of the Word realize that we are perhaps living in the last of the last days before the return of Christ. As such, we know that the Bible gives us admonitions for these days. We know that we are to witness to the lost (Matt 24:14); to contend for the faith (Jude 13); and to be sober-minded and to watch unto prayer (I Peter 4:7-8).

However, right after Peter tells us to be sober-minded and to watch unto prayer, he admonishes us in this manner: "**Above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover a multitude of sins.**" If there one thing we ought to major on in these last days, it ought to be in this matter of having fervent charity among ourselves. We know that there exists the possibility of a chilling of our love due to what we are told in Matt 24:12 "...because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." Jesus says because iniquity shall abound love chills. More and more we are seeing that come to pass. Often, we find too, that our love for the brethren grows cold when our love for the Lord Jesus does the same.

On the shores of Galilee, after his resurrection, Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him. The account is found in John 21 where we read that Peter vehemently asserted that he did: "*Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee.*" Knowing truly the condition of Peter's heart, the Lord wanted to expose to Peter that his love was truly deficient. We find in this passage four qualities of *fervent* charity.

FERVENT LOVE HAS A PRIORITY

Whenever we read the Scriptures we ought to imagine the setting. As a teacher, I love to do this for it causes the Scriptures come alive for the audience. In verse 15, Jesus says to Simon Peter after the meal, "*Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?*" Now, what do you suppose *these* is? Is it the other disciples sitting around the fire, or something else? I think it had to be the great catch of fish they had just brought to shore. Why? Because in the same chapter, verse 3, we find Peter saying to the other disciples, "I go a fishing." They answered Peter by saying, "We go too." Peter was ready to back to his former occupation due perhaps to the fact that he was discouraged and ready to quit. So, Jesus question was quite searching of Peter's priorities. He wanted Peter to come to grips with what he really loved—fish or Christ.

Before you or I can have fervent love for each other, we must have fervent, or passionate love, for

the Lord. The fact of the matter is that Christ is to have the preeminence over all *other* loves. God set that standard in Moses day—“*And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might*” (Deut. 6:5). What is the “*these*” in your life? Whatever it is, it is robbing you of the fervency that you owe to the Saviour—and to others. Fervent love toward the Saviour must be a priority before we can have *fervent* charity for the saints.

FERVENT LOVE HAS A PURPOSE

In understanding this passage, we note that after each time Peter said he loved the Lord, Jesus gave Peter an object on which to focus that love. We are not simply to have love, but our love is to have a direction. God’s love—which love we are supposed to give to others—had a purpose. We find that purpose in John 3:16, “*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son...*” Again, we read in Romans 5:8, “*But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.*” Someone appropriately wrote, “The love in your heart was not meant there to stay; for love isn’t love until you give it away.”

When we love the Lord and understand his heart, then we will love what He loves—people. First, we will love His church which consists of *people*. Next, we will love our neighbors and acquaintances enough to share the truth of the Gospel with them. *Fervent* love must have a purpose.

FERVENT LOVE HAS A PRICE

After Peter’s third response that he loved the Lord, Jesus told him that love costs something: “*Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not*” (John 21:18). Our Lord expressed to Peter the fact that true love gives; and that giving is often sacrificial. In John 15, Jesus told his disciples just how costly real love is: “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (v. 13). For Peter, there was coming a time when he would glorify God in death. Church history records that Peter did not deem himself worthy enough to die crucified on a cross the same way in which his Saviour was, so he requested to be crucified upside down.

Fervent love will cost us something. First, we must die to our will and desire to completely do the Father’s will. Second, in fulfilling the Father’s will, it will often cost us our time, money, convenience, or something else we “hold dear” for the greater cause of “loving our neighbor as ourselves.” In these last days *fervent* charity is a *rarity*; but it is something Peter says we need to possess.

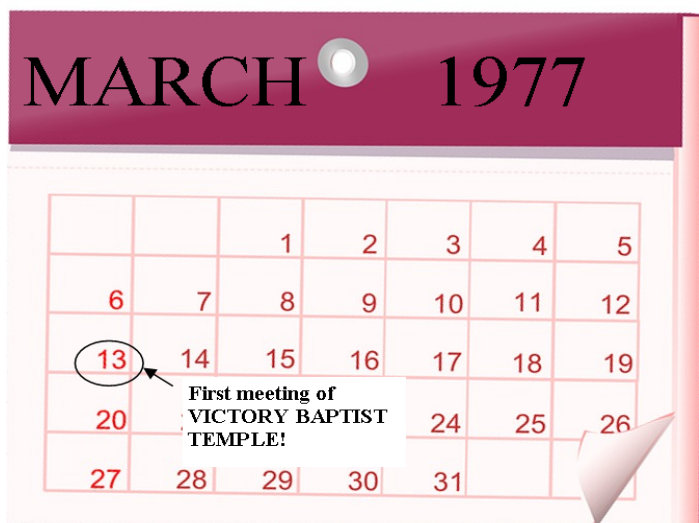
FERVENT LOVE HAS PROOF

Having had his heart exposed, and his future foretold, Jesus now asks Peter to back up his words with action. “*Follow Me,*” Jesus is saying to Peter; “Prove your love to Me.” Saying “*I love you*” is easy to do, but to show love is often difficult when the heart is stingy. The Apostle John tells us: “*My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.*” (1Jo 3:18). Jesus said again, “*If ye love me, keep my commandments*” (John 14:15).

I like to think of insincere love like a hollow chocolate Easter bunny. It looks good on the outside, but one bite into that hollow shell is extremely disappointing. True sincere love is like that full milk chocolate bunny that is solid all the way through—there is delight in every bite!

So, too, in these last days you and I are admonished to “have fervent charity (*agape* love) among ourselves: for charity shall cover a multitude of sins.” Loving others fervently involves loving Jesus first. How are you doing?





GREAT 39th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION—MARCH 13, 2016 -10 AM

LOOK FOR DETAILS AT victorybaptisttemple.com (Look at "Up Coming Events")

From the Church that Cares about You!

The Victory Voice
Route 2, Box 2577
Piedmont, MO 63957

TO:

Contents:

GOD SO LOVED THAT HE GAVE

Pastor Parker—p. 2

GOD IS LOVE—Dr. Tully—p. 5

MOTHERHOOD—Billy Sunday—p. 6

A MOTHER'S JEWELS—Imogene Parker—p. 10

KNOW EITHER VICTORY OR DEFEAT

Theodore Roosevelt—p. 11

ABOVE ALL THINGS—Pastor Miller—p. 14