

The Screwtape Letters ~ Letter 19 ~ God's Conditional Love
April 4th, 2021

Before reading the following overview of this Letter, we suggest that you click on the link above to read the short **Letter 19** for today's Illustrated Message, which will help you understand the following message.

Screwtape says to Wormwood; *“The truth is I slipped by mere carelessness into saying that the Enemy really loves the humans. That, of course, is an impossibility. He is one being, they are distinct from Him. Their good cannot be His. All His talk about Love must be a disguise for something else.”*

As we've said before, the Enemy that Screwtape is referring to is God. It would seem like Screwtape is confessing to Wormwood his mistake about saying that God loves mankind. Screwtape lies again saying that God's love is a charade and there is a hidden motive behind His love. He once again is trying to twist God's word, and render it void of power and origin thru lies about God's true love for us humans whom He created.

Jesus does reveal God's love in **John 15:9-17**, where He says; *“9 As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. 10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. 11 “These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. 12 This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. 13 Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. 14 You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. 15 No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. 16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. 17 These things I command you, that you love one another.”*

The only condition of becoming a friend of Jesus is found in **verse 14**; *“14 You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.”*

Jesus is making it very clear that if you love Him, you'll obey Him. His friendship predicates on obedience. Jesus wants to be in fellowship with those who love and obey Him. Beside all of that, He is the one who created mankind and spoke the worlds into existence and all He requires is that you obey Him. If you want to be Jesus' friend, then you have to do whatever He commands of you. You would think that this condition is unrealistic for Jesus to place on a Christian, but in reality, it is what separates the wheat from the chaff or the true Christian from the false Christian.

In **verse 17** He gives a command that He expects to be followed and that is to love one another as brothers and sisters in Christ.

The following scriptures explain very clearly what God's love commands of us.

1 John 4:16 says; *“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.”*

1 John 4:20-21 says; *“20 If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, [a]how can he love God whom he has not seen? 21 And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.”*

1 John 2:7-11 says; *“7 [a]Brethren, I write no new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you heard [b]from the beginning. 8 Again, a new commandment I write to you, which thing is true in Him and in you, because the*

darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining. 9 He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. 10 He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. 11 But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.”

1 John 3:14-16; “14 We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love [a]his brother abides in death. 15 Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. 16 By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”

If the devil can get a Christian to believe the lie that Screwtape is propagating about God’s love for them, then it will in return affect their love for one another and will ultimately divide the body of Christ and cause a Christian to seek out love in secular settings outside the local Church.

How many Christians today are seeking love outside the Church, simply because they chose not to obey God’s commands to love one another, and as a result their understanding of God’s love has become twisted and the truth is exchanged for lies? We are living in a day and age where the great falling away in the Church is taking place and now is not the time for any Christian to not obey Jesus’ command to love one another.

In **1 John 4:21** we read; “21 And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.”

Screwtape says; “*What does He stand to make out of them? That is the insoluble question. I do not see that it can do any harm to tell you that this very problem was a chief cause of Our Father's quarrel with the Enemy. When the creation of man was first mooted and when, even at that stage, the Enemy freely confessed that he foresaw a certain episode about a cross, Our Father very naturally sought an interview and asked for an explanation. The Enemy gave no reply except to produce the cock-and-bull story about disinterested love which He has been circulating ever since.*”

The devil is such a liar that Screwtape makes it ‘look like’, he can ask an explanation from God, as to what He was doing. Satan seems to have a memory loss that God created him, not the other way around, and that God is God and shares His glory with no one. It is necessary to note the truth about what happened to Lucifer, satan, who yes, was thrown out of heaven and didn’t voluntarily leave as Screwtape alludes to.

Ezekiel 28:12-19; ““You were the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. ¹³ You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The sardius, topaz, and diamond, Beryl, onyx, and jasper, Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes Was prepared for you on the day you were created. ¹⁴ “You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. ¹⁵ You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you. ¹⁶ “By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within, And you sinned; Therefore I cast you as a profane thing Out of the mountain of God; And I destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the fiery stones. ¹⁷ “Your heart was ^[b]lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; **I cast you to the ground.** I laid you before kings, That they might gaze at you. ¹⁸ “You defiled your sanctuaries by the multitude of your iniquities, By the iniquity of your trading; Therefore I brought fire from your midst; It devoured you, **And I turned you to ashes upon the earth In the sight of all who saw you.** ¹⁹ All who knew you among the peoples are astonished at you; You have become a horror, And shall be no more forever.” ’ ”

Also read [Isaiah 14:12-15](#) and a scripture where Jesus Himself relating the history of when Satan was thrown from heaven where Jesus says in **Luke 10:17-19**; “¹⁷ Then the ^[e]seventy returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.” ¹⁸ And He said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.” ¹⁹ Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.”

Let's read some Bible scriptures as to what Screwtape refers to as a, ‘*cock-and-bull story about disinterested love*’. Let's remind the devil as we read these scriptures about the cross, the death of Jesus and the power that was in His death.

Romans 5:6-11 says; “6 For when we were still without strength, [[a](#)]in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, **Christ died for us.** 9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. 10 For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. 11 And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.”

Colossians 2:13-15 says; “13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, 14 having wiped out the [[a](#)]handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, **having nailed it to the cross.** 15 **Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.**”

It's very understandable that the devil would want to underestimate the love of God, and try to reduce it to being a lie, simply because it was here that Jesus disarmed him and the fallen angels and made them a public spectacle. Not only did Jesus die for our sins, but He rose from the dead and is now seated in Heaven where He continually makes intercession for His Church. That is very comforting to know. Here are some more scriptures of what Screwtape calls, ‘*cock-and-bull story about disinterested love*’, which is the cross of Jesus.

Romans 8:34 says; “34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is **even at the right hand of God,** who also makes intercession for us.”

Ephesians 1:19-21 says; “19 and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power 20 which He worked in Christ when **He raised Him from the dead** and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all principality [[a](#)] and [[b](#)]power and [[c](#)]might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.”

Philippians 2:5-11 says; “5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it [[a](#)]robbery to be equal with God, 7 but [[b](#)]made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became **obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.** 9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Screwtape goes out of his way to discredit the love of God because demons have no understanding of it, and all they know is that they were made a public spectacle of by Jesus, and that He triumphed over them by His death and resurrection and has given His humans an opportunity to be reconciled back to Him for eternity. So, as a

non-Christian, you can be reconciled to God by repenting of your sins, and receive Jesus in the form of the Holy Spirit into your Body and become born again of His Spirit. As a backslidden Christian, you can also repent of your sins that have led you to disobey God's command to love your brothers and sisters in Christ and be reconciled to a friendship with Jesus and the local Church.

When a Christian can't love his or her brothers and sisters in the Church, they don't have an understanding of God's love for them, because if they did, they would be quick to repent and forgive them just as Christ has forgiven themselves. If the devil can keep Christians from loving the body of Christ, the local church, then he is able to substitute with other means of love in secular settings that will cause him or her to backslide further and further from the body of Christ and ultimately from God.

A good example of this can be found in Churches that have opted to go to on-line church services, instead of gathering in person. It's one thing to say that you love God and the Church body, but it's another thing to obey His commands with regards to Church fellowship and not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together.

I question the pastors love for God and the Church body who are disobeying **Hebrews 10:24-25** where it says; *"24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching."*

What is that Day? It's the rapture of the Church and it is imminent.

Jesus says in **John 14:21-24**; *"21 He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and [a]manifest Myself to him."* 22 Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, *"Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?"* 23 Jesus answered and said to him, *"If anyone loves Me, **he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.** 24 He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me."*

Screwtape continues his admonition to Wormwood and says; *"If, on the other hand, he is an emotional, gullible man, feed him on minor poets and fifth rate novelists of the old school until you have made him believe that "Love" is both irresistible and somehow intrinsically meritorious. This belief is not much help, I grant you, in producing casual unchastity; but it is an incomparable recipe for prolonged, "noble", romantic, tragic adulteries, ending, if all goes well, in murders and suicides."*

Screwtape has it in mind to lead the Patient down a road of destruction, full of ongoing sexual sins, that if all goes well will end in murder and suicide and ultimately separate him from God for eternity in Hell.

The devil will use anything he can to get a Christian to discredit the love of Christ, the love of brothers and sisters found in the church gatherings, and to keep them out of church gatherings because he knows that on-line church will not be able to replace church fellowship, and ultimately, will lead them to being open prey for the devil to tempt and overcome them with various sins of the flesh, and if all goes well, they will backslide and will be separated from God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit for eternity in Hell.

1 Peter 5:8 says; *"8 Be [a]sober, be [b]vigilant; [c]because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."*

1 John 3:4-10 says; *"4 Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. 5 And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. 6 Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him. 7 Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. 8 He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has*

sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. 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.* ¹⁰ *In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.*”

The devil continually lies to mankind about God’s love for us, but all of these scriptures reveal the love that Jesus has for us, that He died on the cross because of God’s great love for us to redeem us back to Him. There is no secret or ulterior motive as Screwtape alluded to. It’s simple that God created mankind in His image and through Jesus, has redeemed us back to Him. **1 John 3:1** makes this clear; “*Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.*”