

# Light—Life—Love

## Introduction

Light, Life, Love, these three great energies are the great power of God. Oh, there are others, such as, creation power, miracle power, and the power of the spoken word. Nothing, however, is more important in the life of a Christian than these three big L's. There are very basic needs in each person that must be supplied in good measure if we are to be happy and fulfilled. These needs are fully met in Jesus Christ.

The Apostle John often spoke about these three, and showed their relationship to each other. John 1:4 says; "In him was **life**, and that **life** was the **light** of men." John also spoke of God's love being expressed in the giving of his son Jesus to the world, so that, we might have the gift of eternal life.

For God so **loved** the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have **eternal life**. John 3:16

Then he went on and said,

This is the verdict: **Light** has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God." John 3:19-21

These three, though interconnected are still separate and in the coming pages we will examine them to find their true meaning and application to our lives.

# Let There Be Light

## Genesis 1

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup> Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

<sup>3</sup> And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. <sup>4</sup> God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup> God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

<sup>6</sup> And God said, “Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water.” <sup>7</sup> So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. <sup>8</sup> God called the expanse “sky.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

<sup>9</sup> And God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.” And it was so. <sup>10</sup> God called the dry ground “land,” and the gathered waters he called “seas.” And God saw that it was good.

<sup>11</sup> Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.” And it was so. <sup>12</sup> The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. <sup>13</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.

<sup>14</sup> And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, <sup>15</sup> and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth.” And it was so. <sup>16</sup> God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. <sup>17</sup> God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, <sup>18</sup> to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. <sup>19</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

<sup>20</sup> And God said, “Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky.” <sup>21</sup> So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. <sup>22</sup> God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.” <sup>23</sup> And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day.

<sup>24</sup> And God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind.” And it was so. <sup>25</sup> God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

<sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image,  
in the image of God he created him;  
male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup> God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

<sup>29</sup> Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. <sup>30</sup> And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so.

<sup>31</sup> God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

2 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array.

<sup>2</sup> By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. <sup>3</sup> And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

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“In the beginning God,” thus with the simplicity of pure truth the Biblical account begins. There is no need to hype it or embellish it; no adjectives are needed to press the point—just God. There is no need to even prove his existence or speak of how he has come to be—he is and that is all that needs to be said.

There are so many imponderables concerning God, but for me, the great wonder is that there is anything at all. To me, the fact that I exist and am able to read these wonder filled words, “In the beginning God,” settles all the imponderables about God, either he exists or I do not. How it is that he exists is not revealed to us, nor do I expect that it will be in this frame of time. My intellectual limitations on this subject are merely the result of limited information, therefore, it is with peace that I accept what is evident and do not dispute what can only be accepted.

“The fool says in his heart, ‘There is no God.’” (Psalm 14:1) And so it is, because, only a fool can ignore such a large volume of supportive evidence, both in the scriptures and in creation itself.

Some people point to some portion of scripture and see what they believe to be a reason to discard the biblical account as unreliable or lacking in the credibility assigned to it. Wiser men, however, recognize that what seems to be a flaw does not negate the volumes of material that are solidly verifiable.

Wise men understand that new information often proves what seemed to be a flaw to be correct after all. For example, when the prophet spoke of the circle of the earth, the popular belief was that the world was flat and therefore, God only knew about the circle of the earth. Admittedly, flaws in copying and translating do occur, but remarkably, after centuries have past and new discoveries of older and better copies have been found, little has changed in the substance of what has been brought to us as scripture.

## Created

The opening statement of the Bible continues, “created,” thus we have the next powerful statement of pure and uncluttered truth that like the preceding statement needs no further discussion. The evidence is that it exists. Science has tried to explain the process and some have tried to exclude God as creator but they always come to the same problem, why is there anything at all? They have tried to tell us about evolution, but evolution starts with some form of substance. They have tried to explain to us that there was a big bang, but what banged? Before there was a bang there had to be something to bang, before anything could evolve, there had to be something to evolve. Even if that were true, where did that something come from? Genesis 1:1 simply states, “In the beginning God created.” Then the next statement becomes more specific, “the heavens and earth.”

We are not burdened with trying to understand what is beyond the range of necessary knowledge to conduct the affairs of this present life, only to make us aware that what can be seen, touched and observed is not all that there is. What lies beyond this realm is not for us to fully comprehend, but the evidences of its existence do appear from time to time.

From the time of the previous statements, to the next statement is a gap of information that has left many to ponder what is meant. In the beginning God created the earth but in verse two it is formless and empty, dark and covered with water. Whether this implies that this was simply the first stage of the creative process much like a fetus in the embryonic fluid of the mother's womb or the result of some previous occupation of the planet by a different form of life that experienced a catastrophic calamity such as the flood in Noah's day is not known at this time. Some people believe this accounts for some of the fossilized evidence that has baffled scientist and given rise to all sorts of theories. Others believe that the fossils are the result of the great flood of Noah's day. Some people stress over the seeming contradiction between Science and Religion over how long each part of creation actually took.

One minister wrote that there were two Bibles written; one in the fossils and the structures of the earth, and the other in the Holy Bible. He then went on to explain that if there is a contradiction it was the error of interpretation of what was seen.

I personally believe that from a biblical point of view I don't have any problem with the idea that creation was a process that may have taken much longer than anyone has ever considered. May I ask, "What difference does it make if the whole process took trillions of years or seven twenty four hour days? Faith tells me that since God has always been that time is irrelevant. Millions of years seem like a long time to us, but eternity if measured as we measure time would stretch into trillions of years just for starters. And one other observation I would like to point out is that God created light and darkness before he created any physical source of natural light. If there was no sun how then was time counted?

For the purpose of the biblical account what needs to be known and understood is that God methodically worked his way through a process to arrive at what is presently evident. Curious minds inquire into imponderable ideas and this is normal, but the result is that when we are not content to understand what is given to us to understand, confusion is the result. Confusion leads to unbelief and unbelief leads to arrogant human exaltation and the rejection of Divine revelation.

There is a parallel between what exists in the natural and what exist in the spiritual. The biblical account reveals that God is both the author of the natural and the spiritual. Just as there was a process of creation of the heavens and the earth that brought us to the present conditions of life and reality on this planet, so there is a spiritual process that is being worked through in the lives of those who allow this creative process in their heart and soul.

## **Let there be Light**

Some people scoff at the idea of a new birth as some sort of psychological evolutionary step in human development. Such is the darkness that covers the minds of all mankind until the light of divine revelation bursts forth in the inner recesses of the heart. When God created the earth, darkness covered it; therefore, God said, "let there be light."

When God commences his work, light is needed because; God always works in the light. Light and truth are used interchangeably in the scriptures because, what light is to the natural world, truth is to the spiritual kingdom of God. God is always in the light, he dwells in the light and his very nature is light. Where God is not is darkness. Darkness is the absence of light. Darkness is a reality that pertains to this world. Where God is not recognized or given his proper place, darkness is the result. So it was that in the creative process God created a condition of absence of light and called it night. There is a distinction between light and darkness and for life to exist light is needed.

Darkness preceded light, and so it must be. Darkness is the absence of the energy of light. There is no such thing as darkness; it is the condition of absence of the energy of light.

Darkness also is a condition that exists when the source of light is being obstructed by some object that doesn't permit light to travel through. What the source of light was when God first

said, "Let there be light," is not revealed at this point so suffice it to say, it came from God. The creation of the stars and sun came later, but first there was light. Perhaps it emanated from his very person, as is the case in the Book of Revelation concerning the New Jerusalem.

All light comes from God and especially spiritual light. When we look at the conditions of the present world, as we now know it, we see varying degrees of light.

Darkness is needed to teach appreciation of the light. When people are determined to, "go it alone," God often allows them to stumble about and really make a mess of their life, and after they have spent all their natural capital, such things as health, talents, good judgment, education, connections, and anything else that natural people depend upon who have no interest in God, he then allow the light of divine truth to shine upon their heart, and how good it is.

I have said that symbolizism is the language of scripture. That is to say that God reveals spiritual truths through symbols and stories as well as direct words of revelation and prophecy. Since spiritual truth has elements that are other world in nature, therefore, God uses things of this world to speak to us about what is yet to be experienced in the realms beyond the present.

Turning to the New Testament we see a different sort of light introduced into human experience. In the beginning natural light preceded life, and was in fact necessary for the existence of life. Now we see a new principle at work, life is what produces spiritual light! John 1:4 says; "In him was **life**, and that **life** was the **light** of men." Then again John said; "**God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.**" [1John 1:5] Then again;

This is the verdict: **Light** has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. <sup>20</sup> Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. <sup>21</sup> But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God." John 3:19-21

God is light! Light came into the world in the person of Jesus Christ, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Think about it. If we walk in darkness, we are not walking in God! We use the term, walk in the Spirit, not realizing that if we walk in the Spirit we cannot walk in what is sinful. Sin and evil is darkness. In him, John said, is no darkness at all. Darkness is the absence of light and light and truth are often used in the same way. If truth is so closely related to light so as to be used interchangeably, then what is not true is evil.

Natural light is an energy that makes vision possible. Likewise, spiritual light also makes things visible, but what it makes visible is often sin. Light also makes righteousness visible but to see righteousness there must be righteousness to see. True righteousness comes from God and is manifest in the life of a believer in their attitudes, behaviors, motives and goals. Like everything spiritual, counterfeits are abundant.

Whether we are talking about life, light, or love, we are talking about facets of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer. When doing a study on the subject of the Holy Spirit and what he does in the life of a believer, a distinction is helpful in our thinking about what word is used to mean Holy Spirit. Spirit is a word in Greek that means breath or wind. To live in the Spirit is to live in the Holy breath or wind of God! I like to put it another way, walk in the atmosphere of the Holy Spirit.

Gifts and ministries are a manifestation of a different word meaning power. Having manifestations of the power of the Holy Spirit are not the same as walking in the Spirit. You can walk in the spirit even when there are no manifestations of the power of the Spirit, and likewise you may even have manifestations of the power of the spirit when you are not walking in the Spirit. Ideally, these are equally present when manifestations of the power are manifest, but walking in the Spirit will definitely not always include manifestations of the power. When a condition of walking in the Spirit is established, it is a constant and does not come and go in the same way that manifestations of the power of the spirit does. Gifts and ministries operate when

the occasion is right and the need is present, however the potential for manifestation is always available once the gift has been given, but the atmosphere of the Spirit is constant even when there is no particular need.

He is always present with us, often speaking to us, listening for us to speak words of love and praise to our Lord, encouraging and sustaining us in our times of need. Fellowship with the Spirit is an ongoing experience that only is broken when some violation of the Spirit occurs. If we through disobedience to the Lords will or through an act of willfulness or sin, violate the Spirit, the peace we have enjoyed will be lifted and in its place there will be a host of other feelings and or urges descend upon us. Once we have entered into a state of walking and living in the Spirit, we will be very uncomfortable doing otherwise.

I admit that having been born into the home of a Pentecostal pastor and having heard sermons on the Holy Spirit, I didn't understand that there was a difference between having the "anointing" and living in the Spirit. I thought they were one and the same. This error in my thinking leads me to a sense of consternation, when someone would suggest that I should live in the Spirit I thought that meant I should have Goosebumps running up my back all the time. I thought that was impossible, and definitely it wasn't practical but never once did I associate living in the Spirit with my thoughts, motives, desires or endeavors of life. I didn't realize that the power of the Spirit is a manifestation of the Spirit and that gifts and anointings are present when needed but that the atmosphere of the Spirit is constant. When I finally came to this understanding I began to learn about living to please the Lord.

Walking in the light is the same as walking in the spirit but the emphasis is upon what happens to us when light is present. Over and over again we are instructed concerning the light, and how it is that without the light we walk in darkness and therefore evil. We are told that we are now children of the day, and that we should live lives of purity and holiness because we are now in the kingdom of light. It all seems so simple, yet we need to be reminded that what is of the night, is lacking in light. God is light and in him is no darkness at all. Again, darkness is where light is not, and since God is light obviously, there is no darkness in him. We cannot be in darkness and still be in God. We cannot be doing the works of God if we are in the darkness of the world. Of course, we understand that this world is a dark place spiritually, and that we must live in this world, but it is possible to be in the world physically and socially without the world being in us! We must co-mingle with the world but we must not enter into the spirit of the world in either word or deed.

I have been a building contractor and at one time before beginning a job, I was talking with my son-in-law Jeff McEachron about our up coming job, and told him that we were not going to allow the spirit of intimidation to rule us. Shortly after this I went into the job office where the superintendent was and he acknowledged me, then he walked over to where I was and stood real close and looked down at me in an obvious attempt to intimidate me. He had been a football coach at a local high school and was used to exerting this form of intimidation. He is tall man, and I am about average height and size, but without flinching I looked up at him and began telling him how things were going to be on this job site when we were there. I told him when we came on the job in the morning, we would say "good morning," and that if we had any problems we would talk about them. I don't think he had ever had anyone stand up to him in a pleasant way and tell him in essence, you can't intimidate me and what is more, you don't even need to. As the job proceeded, it was not at all uncommon for him to come to me and ask my opinion about some problem on the job. The relationship that started on that job lead to other work and even after my son-in-law took over the business he worked with him for several years. The respect was always there, and it also affected the whole job. Other contractors would remark how they liked to work on the jobs where we were at. This also resulted in several men finding Christ.

In the early days of our ministry, we had several home bible study ministries in various locations, and being non-denominational would often have people of a variety of Church backgrounds and affiliations in any given meetings. Since we were not interested in promoting a

denominational agenda or promoting a doctrinal bias, we were able to simply teach the word of God in simplicity and love. The Lord had given me the following scripture as a guide at some point along the way, and the application of it brought a spirit of love and joy into our ministry. Paraphrasing what the Lord was saying to me was, you look after the fellowship and I will look after the cleansing. He also made it clear that if we will dwell on the common light we share, the light will become brighter and fellowship will follow. This is the scripture he used;

This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: **God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.** If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. [1 John 1:5-7]

It is so true that if we will avoid subjects that are divisive and controversial, we will always experience the peace of God. It is the job of the Teacher, the Holy Spirit, to bring convictions of sin, righteousness and judgment. He is very good at what he does, but if there is a desire to learn and discuss even sensitive subjects without the spirit of controversy present, then Godly instruction can bring a favorable result.

I was visiting a woman of God one evening having a time of sharing the things of the Lord, when all at once the conversation turned to a controversial subject that we were theologically on opposite sides of. Once this occurred the sense of the presence of the Holy Spirit that had filled the room and our hearts, lifted and there was coldness spiritually instead. I told her that I didn't feel that this discussion was pleasing to the Lord and she agreed, so we changed the subject and the sense of peace returned. Afterward, I asked the Lord about what had happened, whereupon he gave me some instructions that brought peace and understanding to me as to how to view the subject we had been talking about. What was spoken to me that night has been a guiding light to me ever sense.

This principle is applicable to almost any subject and circumstance whether it is at home in personal interactions or at a place of business or jobsite. This subject will be discussed further in the chapter on love.

The Apostle Paul writes,

"But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet." [1Thes. 5:4-8]

There are always overlaps of thought when speaking about the ministry of the Holy Spirit. What he brings to us are always the attributes of Christ, and since they all come in the same way but for slightly different purposes, mentioning them in a single sentence would some times occur. In the natural, we eat food, but some foods contain a variety of vitamins and minerals. Each is useful to the health and strength, of the body that receives it. Vitamins are not the same as minerals, just as life, light and love are not the same, yet all come from the same source and all are delivered to us in the same way, by the moving of the Holy Spirit.

In the passage quoted, the Apostle Paul mentions faith as equally important as love. It is noteworthy that faith is a vital part of the picture before us. Faith is a positive condition that enables every other function of the Spirit to operate in our lives. Any form of unbelief immediately disconnects us from the source. It is impossible to walk in the Spirit, or in the light, while unbelief is present with us. Unbelief is a negative condition and therefore is an enemy of life in the Spirit. Faith in the presence of the Holy Spirit is essential to our life in the Spirit.

Due to an overemphasis of the sort of faith that is present when seeking God for a specific answer; many people seem to lose sight of the constancy of faith that simply trusts God at all times. John speaks of believing in Jesus, which means in Greek, to "be believing" which suggests a constant state of believing opposed to a sudden burst of believing believed to be necessary for miracles. It is this constant state of believing that makes possible a "burst of believing" that is encouraged by those operating in the gift ministries. Bursts of believing come and go as the occasion demands, but constant faith is always there ready to act or react as the need requires.

In the passage 1 Thes. 5:4-8 quoted, we are reminded that we are sons of the light and sons of the day, and therefore our manner of life should also be like day people. Be alert and self-controlled, he admonishes us, in other words, don't walk around in a spiritual daze or slumber. "Wake up" is sometimes used to help us see ourselves.

I remember going on a carpenter job one day and being assigned the job of nailing rafters into place. I had a helper who was still in a state of slumber, so I went ahead and moved the rafter into position to nail my end, but he wasn't alert to what he was supposed to do resulting in the rafter falling on his head! Needless to say, he was suddenly fully awake and alert to his responsibility. How many times do we find ourselves in a similar situation, when we walk about in this ungodly world in a state of semi-consciousness until something hits us square between the eyes suddenly awakening us to the presence of evil? The Apostle wanted us to be alert to such things so we won't be surprised by anything, because as children of the day, we see it coming. This truth is sometimes applied to prophetic truth as well as everyday truth.

The Apostle also refers to being intoxicated; he says that that is associated with the night. People of the day should never be intoxicated, because, intoxication results in being in a stupor which is to have our senses numbed. We Christians need our full capacities fully engaged at all times and any amount of intoxication is an enemy of the Spirit filled life.

There is another scripture I feel is noteworthy found in John 12:35-36. Then Jesus told them, "You are going to have the **light** just a little while longer. Walk while you have **the light**, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going. **Put your trust in the light while you have it, so that you may become sons of light.**" This passage was given at the end of a discourse about laying down our lives.

Jesus was about to go to the cross to lay down his life for the sins of the world. He wanted us to know an important truth about laying down one's life. He spoke of his hour of glorification as being when his life would be laid down. He also wanted us to know that death for the righteous is not the end. He spoke of life as being like unto a seed that is planted in the ground. For all practical purposes, the life of the seed as being a single seed is over, but what comes from it is a life of a plant that will grow and become many seeds.

This principle is repeated over and over again as we who follow Jesus lay down our natural lives in the sense of ceasing to live for ourselves, seeking our own way rather than seeking the will of God, and making manifestations of the love of God our primary concerns.

Jesus was the word made flesh and dwelling among us. Speaking of him as being the word means that he was everything that had been revealed about the coming Christ and more. Everything that had been revealed about the holiness of God, the love of God, the care for his people and the whole subject of judgment, were included in who Jesus was. It was his spiritual DNA. He was the fullness of the Godhead manifest. Now he must die. That death however, would be the beginning of the creation of many such sons. Not many Gods as some suppose, but rather people who have the very nature of Christ and the wholeness of the God head, resident in them. These people having been born again by the Spirit's power and have the capacity to manifest the attributes of the holiness, power, and love of God. These people will walk in the light as he is in the light and reflect his glory to all mankind.

At the end of this discourse, Jesus spoke of how he was the light but that this would end soon, he then encourage the people to take advantage of this time, because, when it would end, it would be over, but that that would result in many sons becoming sons of the light.



## Here are some related passages of scripture.

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." [John 8:12]

As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." [John 9:4-5]

Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? A man who walks by day will not stumble, for he sees by this world's light. It is when he walks by night that he stumbles, for he has no light." [John 11:9-10]

Jesus replied, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.

"Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name!"

Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again." The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him.

Jesus said, "This voice was for your benefit, not mine. Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die.

The crowd spoke up, "We have heard from the Law that the Christ will remain forever, so how can you say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this 'Son of Man'?"

Then Jesus told them, "You are going to have the **light** just a little while longer. Walk while you have **the light**, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going. **Put your trust in the light while you have it, so that you may become sons of light.**" When he had finished speaking, Jesus left and hid himself from them. [John 12:23-36]

And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. **Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.** [Romans 13:11-14]

Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded

the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, **“Let light shine out of darkness,” made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.**

But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. [2 Cor. 4:1-7]

Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.”

“Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.” “I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.” [2 Cor. 6:14-18]

For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for **Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.** It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve. [2 Cor. 11:13-15]

Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a man is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. Therefore do not be partners with them.

**For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: “Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”**

Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. [Ephesians 5:1-21]

**But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness.** So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. Therefore

encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. [1 Thes.5:4-11]

This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: **God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.** If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But **if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.**

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives. [John 1:5-10]

Dear friends, I am not writing you a new command but an old one, which you have had since the beginning. This old command is the message you have heard. Yet I am writing you a new command; its truth is seen in him and you, because the darkness is passing and the true light is already shining.

**Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still in the darkness.** Whoever loves his brother lives in the light, and there is nothing in him to make him stumble. But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded him. [1 John 2:7-11]

# Life

Life comes in two separate forms, natural life and spiritual life. The evidence of the fact that there is a difference is found in the discussion about God's love for the world being expressed in the giving of eternal life. The message was given to a man who was alive in the natural, but was lacking in the spirit. There are similarities between natural life and eternal life and there are also vast differences!

The first observation of the differences is in the scope of each. Natural life is temporary and very fragile. Natural life is dependant upon the right conditions to sustain a constant readiness to react. This is true at both the cellular level and the collective systems of an organism. Once a vital function is lost, the whole being is threatened and unless a remedy is given, death will follow. Death is the condition that exists where life is not. It is my assertion that life is energy, and loss of it results in what we term death.

Spiritual life is similar in that it is also dependent upon certain conditions for its continual existence. However, it is eternal life, with no expectation of eventual death. Eternal life is dependant upon faith in Jesus Christ as its sustaining power source.

Outside of Jesus Christ there is no eternal life for human beings. [John 3:16] Jesus came into this world with dying on the cross as his primary mission. Everything he did and said was relevant to that mission. His death on the cross was necessary for our eternal life to begin. It was our fallen state and resultant sin that separates us from the source of life, therefore, it was necessary for Jesus to die in our stead on the cross paying our sin penalty so that the spirit of eternal life could be given to us. This new life begins, sometimes imperceptibly at first, but as we continue in Christ, radical changes begin to take place.

Just as natural life begins with the seed of life being imparted and the DNA determines what will be, so it is in the spiritual; it is the DNA of Christ that determines what will be. There can be no spiritual development without the impartation of the spirit of eternal life. For a person to try to be a Christian without the impartation of the spirit of eternal life is an exercise in futility. Christian behavior is to some degree learned, yet it is only when the spirit of truth is involved that it is a meaningful spiritual development.

We Christians are eternally grateful to the Lord Jesus Christ for qualifying us to be recipients of the spirit of eternal life and for the continual ministry of his spirit that brings to us all the spiritual nutrients for proper spiritual development and growth. Spiritual development and growth do not just happen; they are directly related to our personal involvement with our Lord Jesus Christ.

For a person to be a happy, healthy, fully developed and mature Christian, it is necessary to maintain a vital connection to the head Christ Jesus. This truth is demonstrated in the scriptural declaration that the life is in the blood. Before Jesus went to the cross to become the sin sacrifice, he put the spirit of eternal life into the cup at the time of the last supper. He held the cup and said; "this cup is the new covenant in my blood," [Luke 22:20, See Leviticus 17:10-14] indicating that it was what had been in his blood that answered to all the promises of a coming Redeemer and Savior, were now resident in the cup. What Leviticus says was that the life of the creature is in the blood and therefore it is a logical conclusion that the life spoken of by John was also in the blood of Jesus. The fact that Jesus had eternal life in himself is because God is the father of Jesus Christ making him what is referred to as the second Adam.

[1 Corinthians 15:44-49] If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. So it is written: "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam [Christ Jesus], **a life-giving spirit**. The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven. As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the man from heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven.

Jesus went on to say that his blood is being poured out for them. It is clear that that is the reason why Jesus held the cup and put what was in his blood into the cup to be held as a sort of escrow account, was because he was going to be the lamb of God, the sin sacrifice for the world and that what was in the cup was now being made available to all mankind and was later poured out on the day of Pentecost. Meanwhile, Jesus had to go to the cross and pay the sin penalty for all the sinners who had and would put their trust in him.

It is interesting to me that the fact that Jesus had life in himself was a wonderful thing, but how could that help me? I am not a natural descendant of Jesus; I am of Adam's race. That problem had a wonderful solution in the transfer that was being made; the means of delivery of the energy of life from Christ Jesus to all of us who believe in him was changing from natural descendants to a spiritual impartation. Now it would be said, **the Spirit gives life.** [2 Corinthians 3:6]

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John had declared that in him was life, [contextually we understand to mean eternal life,] and that the life was the light of the world. The logical question is, "what is there about the spirit of life that would be the light of the world?" To answer that we would have to look at what it is to not have life.

As already stated, death is the absence of life. We all know what happens when something dies, it corrupts. The process begins immediately and continues all the way to decay and eventual total dissipation. We know about the stench and instinctively we avoid contact with dead bodies. There is nothing pleasant about death, and only in the presences of some sort of preservative or preserving condition is the process impeded or even stopped. No matter how effective the preserving effort, there is no longer any of the evidences of life!

Life on the other hand is an amazing condition! Life produces beauty and when health is present, amazing things can happen. It is a sad thing to watch when old age begins to rob us of the vitality and beauty of youth. Some people will go to great lengths to slow the process and erase the inevitable result, because life is a temporary condition in this realm now present.

When we look at spiritual death the picture is even bleaker. The lack of spiritual life is evidenced most profoundly in the nature and attitudes of fallen humanity. It is an increasingly common phenomenon for people to make excuses for some fault in their behavior or personality by saying something like, "I can't help it, I was born that way." Sadly, truer words were never spoken. Of course, people were born that way. God knew it and he also knew the reason for the dilemma we find ourselves in, we lack the spirit of divine life or eternal life.

Many efforts have been made in the Bible to describe what happens to humans when the spirit of life is not present. The story of Cain killing his brother Abel immerses very soon after Adam and Eve were expelled from the garden and from access to the tree of life. As long as they were in the Garden of Eden they were able to eat the fruit of the tree of life and thus received whatever was needed to sustain life indefinitely.

When people are without the spirit of life, the only recourse to prevent totally destructive behaviors is some form of law. Laws are the friend of any culture that seeks to live in some form of civility. The closer people are to one another, the more important it is to have good well enforceable laws to govern their behaviors.

When the spirit of life is present, fewer laws are needed to regulate bad behaviors. Ideally, when people come to Jesus, all bad behaviors immediately leave and only good behaviors manifest. Experience tells us that such is not the case though some important and sometimes revolutionary changes do take place. Often due to the complexity of human behaviors, some form of laws is still needed to guide us. Every man doing what is right in his own eyes never has work well.

In this present age, we are encouraged to come to Jesus and live in close fellowship with him because, if we don't have close fellowship with him, we will be lacking in the spirit of life. Without getting into a discussion about what constitutes saving grace, let me say that to be a healthy Christian there must be a constant inflow of the Spirit of life that comes from Jesus and only from Jesus. Without this constant flow of the energy of life Christians soon become weak in their spiritual natures and begin to manifest the negative characteristics of their fallen natures.

We are given natural conditions to help us understand spiritual truths, thus, looking at a natural bodies give us instruction concerning principles that apply to our spiritual man. In our natural bodies we know that we must have a constant source of nutrients for our blood to carry to each living cell in our bodies or they will become weak and subject to sickness and disease and even death. It is equally true in the spiritual, as is stated in 1 John 5:11-12. "And this is the testimony: **God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.**" We thus see that staying connected to Jesus is necessary if we are to have eternal life.

It is evident in the New Testament scriptures that what the blood is to the natural life of a person, now the Spirit is to the Christian. I think it is safe to say that the Spirit acts as the bloodstream of the Church. The Spirit brings all the nutrients necessary for a healthy Christian life and a healthy Church as well. These nutrients come from Christ and are delivered by the Spirit. It is by the Spirit that we have the mind of Christ and it is by the Spirit we are strengthened to stand strong against Satan's seductive and destructive power.

John gave us an interesting passage of scripture in 1John 5:6-8 where he discusses a subject that has interested me for a number of years. He tells us that there is a commonality between Spirit, water and blood. Aside from the traditional interpretation of the passage that I do not take any exception to, I observe that these three have a unique commonality in that in vegetation water is the carrier of the nutrients of life, in animals it is blood but in the spiritual body of Christ, it is Spirit!

This is he that came by water and blood, *even* Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, **the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.** [1John 5:6-8KJV]

What I get from this is a teaching that what water is to vegetation and blood is to animals, the Spirit is to the body of Christ! This being said, we can ponder the similarities we can observe when water is not present for vegetation, and blood stops flowing in animals. They die, now don't they? If that is the case, and I believe it is, then wouldn't it be logical to assume that if the Spirit stops flowing to the individual Christian, spiritual death could occur?

This opens the door for all sorts of considerations, first I would like to ask, what condition is it that is termed "the moving of the spirit?" Over the years of my life and ministry, the Spirit has taught me that anything that is done that is spiritual in nature, is in some way a moving of the Spirit. Such things as; meditating on the word of God, prayer, witnessing, singing songs of praise and worship, fellowshiping, teaching, preaching, exercising gifts of the spirit, etc. can all be spirit lead and inspired. Things that stop the flow of the Spirit are; carnal or sinful activities, unwholesome or negative thoughts or words, gossiping, treating people in ways that demean them

or humiliate them, stirring controversies, debating divisive issues, indulging in sinfully motivated entertainment, etc..

Another area worthy of thought is what happens when a person neglects activities or condition where the moving of the spirit can occur? I once heard a story that I have often repeated. There was a man who was a new Christian and regularly attended church, but his work was about to take him to an area where church attendance would be out of the question. After some time the man returned and the pastor of the church asked him how he had done. The man replied that he had two dogs inside that fought and fought and fought, one was white and the other was a black dog. Oh, said the pastor, which one has been winning? He asked. The man replied, the one I feed the most! I suppose this is a truth that is familiar to every Christian that has become busy with the everyday course of life and has neglected their spiritual life. For many Christians, neglect is one of the greatest enemies of our spiritual life that there is. Oh, Satan attacks us in a host of ways too numerous to discuss here, but you probably are ahead of me, thinking about what it is that is your worst enemy to maintaining a vital connection to Christ by the moving of the Spirit in your life.

In the natural life, if the flow of blood is impeded to any part of our body, that part is in danger. It is equally true that whatever stops the flow of divine life is a very serious matter. If it is what the scripture refers to as a "besetting sin" or some simple little idea or attitude that we fall into that is contrary to the Spirit, it is serious.

Sin is a symptom of the lack of spiritual life, that is to say, if there is sin in the life of the Christian, it indicates that there is a deficiency of some kind in their behaviors that is preventing a solid connection to the source of life, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Sometimes there is a lack of spiritual life that does not produce acts of sin. This is a good thing because it is the result of laws that guards us from doing harmful acts that would certainly lead to death.

We all love our liberty in Christ, but liberty to sin is not what that is talking about. It is liberty from the want to that we rejoice in. Liberty from the want to usually is an evidence of the presence of the spirit of life.

Though we are not under the laws of Moses, there still are laws that govern us as Christians. These are boundaries that keep us from wandering into sinful activities that are just as harmful now as at any other time in history.

The emphasis today is not so much upon the outward behaviors as the attitudes and secret loves of the heart. If our hearts are pure, our attitudes will also be pure and our thoughts will also be wholesome and pure. When impure thoughts invade our consciousness we reject them and focus our thoughts upon those things that are pure and peaceable.

Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace; therefore, we as Christians have a right to live in peace. When confusion and turmoil are present, it is because we have violated a principle of the Spirit in either thought or deed. Once a violation has occurred and peace has been lost, it is necessary to acknowledge the violation and pay the penalty, if there is one, just like we would if a traffic cop stops us for a violation of a law of the road. When peace is restored, learn from the experience and you will be a stronger Christian in the future.

### **Here are some relevant Scripture references:**

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because **through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.** For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned **sin** in sinful man, in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but **according to the Spirit.** [Romans 8:1-4]

He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but **the Spirit gives life.** [2 Corinthians 3:6]

Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! **For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law.** [Galatians 3:21]

The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; **the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.** Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. [Galatians 6:8-9]

His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that **through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.** [1 Peter 1:3-4]

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. **The life appeared**; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you **the eternal life**, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete. [1 John 1:1-4]

See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. And this is what he promised us—even **eternal life.** [1 John 2:24-25]

**We know that we have passed from death to life**, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death. Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him. [1 John 3:14-15]

And this is the testimony: **God has given us eternal life**, and **this life is in his Son.** **He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.** [1 John 5:11]

If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. So it is written: “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam [Christ Jesus], **a life-giving spirit.** The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. The first man was of the dust of the earth, the second man from heaven. As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the man from heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven. [1 Corinthians 15:44-49]



# Love

We have been studying the ministry of the Holy Spirit in relationship to his mission on earth which is to bring all that Jesus Christ is to each of us and to nurture and instruct us in a proper way of life so that we will always have the full benefit of Christ every moment of every day.

We have looked at how it is that the energy of eternal life comes to us and what effect it has upon us. We have considered the energy of light and how we are now children of the light, and how though we were once of the night, we are now to live as children of the day.

Now we come to the subject of love. What the world needs is love, lots of love, all kinds of love; family love, romantic love, neighborly love but most of all, we need God's love. Love is an attribute of God, because God is love! [1John 4:8] In Romans 5: 5 we learn that love comes from God and is poured out into our hearts! "**God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.**" [Romans 5:5] And once more we come to the knowledge that what is called love in the natural is inferior to what comes from God.

We all know what natural love is like, the love of a mother or other family members, the love of friends and other piers. These loves touch our emotions and bring a response of well-being; but to be loved by God, now that is really special. God's love is always a positive and unconditional kind of love. His favor is another matter, however, because favor depends on obedience. Since God loves us as a father loves his children, disobedience will certainly bring discipline upon us. Obedience is rewarded in more ways than can be expressed here.

When God's love is in our hearts we are admonished to love one another. Over and over we are instructed to give expression to this God love to one another. John goes so far as to say that if we don't show love to our brothers and sisters in the Lord that we don't really know God at all, because God is love.

It is evident that showing love is a decision we make and an action we take. This is probably the touch point between the invisible kingdom of God and the visible kingdom of God. When we are in the act of loving one another the atmosphere is right for other mighty manifestations of God to come to us. When the atmosphere is charged with the energy of divine love coming from us; when our hearts have been cleansed of all unforgiveness, rancor, dissension and selfism, and we are no longer judgmental or full of pride, then we are in a position to really love with divine love.

If we need instructions about what love is like and how it works, we have only to turn to 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

First in the passage quoted, we see that the Apostle Paul wants us to understand the importance of love over everything else he has been talking about. Going back a few verses we read;

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But eagerly desire the greater gifts. [1 Corinthians 12:27-31]

He starts his dissertation about love by saying that those who are in the positions he has just mentioned without love are like sounding brass and tinkling cymbals. Even if a person speaks and it sounds like an angel speaking, if it doesn't contain the energy of divine love, it is worthless. He goes on to enumerate other very highly esteemed manifestations of God, prophecy, great intellectual understanding and knowledge, faith that can even move mountains, great generosity, and a willingness to die in the flames of martyrdom, but if it lacks Agape love, it is worth nothing. He also listed some very highly esteemed ministries in the church that have God as the appointer. All of these ministries and manifestations of the Spirit come up short if we do not have Agape love as the lubricant that makes it all work.

If we wonder how we are doing in our Christian life, if the love we show measures up to Agape love, then we need to read on in I Corinthians 13:4-8. I like to insert the personal pronoun, I, when I read the passage wherever it speaks of love. If it doesn't fit then I am coming up short in my manifestations of Agape love. Here is how I read it; I am patient, I am kind. I don't envy, I don't boast, I am not proud. I am not rude, I am not self-seeking, I am not easily angered, and I keep no record of wrongs. I do not delight in evil but rejoice with the truth. I always protect, I always trust, I always hope, I always persevere, I never fail.

John gives us this wonderful passage in 1 John 4 on love. It explains so much about the kind of love we are talking about.

Dear friends, **let us love one another, for love comes from God.** Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. **Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.** This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but **if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.**

John said that it is by our doing that this love is made complete in us! Love is given to us by the ministry of the Holy Spirit, but it is up to us to apply what has been given. Loving is a decision we make, love flows through the actions we take and often love is expressed in the words we speak.

Recently, I have been encouraging my congregation to always speak the language of love. I have made it our motto to say, "Love is spoken here." Looking again at the passage in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, it is easy to see that so many of the phrases about love include verbalizations. When we say that love is patient and kind, isn't it true that that often is expressed in the words we use? The words we use may also affect actions and attitudes, and how we select our words and the tone of our voice indicates the love in our hearts.

Again, you cannot give what you do not have. If we don't have an ongoing relationship with the Lord Jesus by his Spirit, we will not have Agape love to show. If we show love it will be the same kind that even a sinner can have, natural love. Once more, Agape love is God's love

opposed to man's love. The goal is to be like God, even in our love. The difference is somewhat like the difference between brass and gold. Both have their place, but gold is best.

## Here are some related passages of scripture.

We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God. And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.

**God is love.** Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother. [1John 4:13-21]

And hope does not disappoint us, because **God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.** [Romans 5:5]

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. (I Cor. 13:4-7)

## Conclusion

In the beginning of this presentation your attention was taken to the first chapter of Genesis in the Bible. It was there that we see God as being the creator of heaven and earth. After the initial creation of the heavens and the earth, we read that darkness covered the face of the deep; the next creative words were "let there be light." At this point there is no mention of a light source outside the "word of God."

There was an immediate separation from where the energy was and where it was not. God called the light day and the darkness night. Next God began a work of defining where things such as where water would be and where land would be, he also separated the water above from the water that covered the earth; this is a point to ponder.

I once was meditating on this portion of scripture while in the approximate time I became somewhat overcome with a sense of anxiety over the immensity of the universe, when all at once the thought hit me that what if in this verse what resulted was a kind of bubble with the waters all about the earth but only a portion of it remaining on the earth. Then I was also grappling with my concept of God as being a very small individual when suddenly the thought appeared in my mind that perhaps this "bubble" was in a bowl of water sitting on God's desk at this point I realized that my concepts were far too limiting. My concept of a small God and a very large universe was causing my mind to spin but this seemed to bring it all into perspective. It all has to do with relative sizes not realizing there is no boundary to either time or space; nor can I visualize the size of God without some point of reference regarding something that I deem to be stable and therefore a unit of measurement. What is the point of all of this? Simply this, we are not equipped to measure anything that has its origin in a realm that is not of the physical laws of this present realm. There are many things that are not revealed to us in this present time, but if we dare to say there is no God we are absolute fools and we will die in our sins.

The next step in the creation story has to do with the creation of life forms of vegetation containing plants and trees, each with the capacity to reproduce.

The next step that is revealed to us in the creation story is the creation of substances containing energy that produce light (stars, moon, and sun) to give us points of reference regarding days and seasons and a separation on the earth of day and night.

Then he went to birds, animals, and fish each with the capability to multiply.

Next we see the attention of God to the further development of the animal kingdom and to create man and woman in his image. God then assigned the responsibility to them of governing all of this.

After each sequence in the creation story the poetic phrase "There was evening and there was morning the---day," This designation of "day" has caused some to conclude that each day was a twenty-four hour period of time. Other authors have suggested that the word day could have also been translated age. The use of the term morning and evening lends strength to the idea but if they were indeed ages rather than literal days, then we would read evening and morning as from the fading of an age to the next sequence there would be a period of darkness, then the next sequence called day or age would begin at the first rays of light. This period of darkness preceding another sequence of creative activity would be a sort of pause, or rest.

Having done all this God rested on the seventh day, He then sanctified the seventh day and blessed it and declared it holy. See Genesis 2:1-3.

This writing is titled Light, Life, and Love; so it is interesting to me that in chapter one of Genesis there isn't one reference to the third "Big L" love. Chapter one is all under the name of God "Elohim" whereas chapter two introduces us to a second name of God "Lord God" Chapter two is all about love. God our creator uses different language to describe the process of creation

using the words formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and he became a living being. The Lord God had also planted a garden for him to occupy with rivers and precious stones and minerals, all kinds of fruit bearing trees. All of this is a picture of what love looks like as God was at work preparing everything man would ever want or need. The garden God made for Adam and Eve must have been something to behold! There was only one requirement for Adam and Eve to live lives of total fulfillment forever. There was one tree in the garden that God plainly told them not to eat the fruit. It was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Now the theme of all scripture from Genesis chapter two was about Love. From the time man was created until this current time the command of God has remained, "Don't eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but try as we will it seems the temptation is too great for us to resist. We must at least taste it. Truly the Bible states, "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God."

Since the Biblical story is about love, the record is about mans folly in wandering away from Him. It is the story of tragedy and triumph as we see God plea with man to turn from his wicked ways and to return to him. It is also the story of how when called upon God has gone to great lengths to rescue man from destruction.

Despite God's warnings pleadings man has persistently tried to go it alone. God even gave wonderful laws to help us understand what righteousness looks like but it was to no avail. Man kept right on going and only occasionally turned to God with all their hearts. Our sin was so enormous that God even came too us in the form of a baby and actually lived among us and demonstrated what love looks like when it comes from a man who refuses to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. That man is Jesus, or Yeshua his true Jewish name. He came, he lived among us, then he die on a rugged Roman cross for all of our sins so that all we have to do now is accept that wonderful gift of love and the record of all our sins is wiped clean. Now that is the ultimate picture of what love really looks like. It is the last and only opportunity we have to turn to God and be granted the forgiveness of sins and gain access to God's home forever. Please don't let one more hour pass without reaching for salvation and like a drowning man, don't let go of God again, he will pull you out of what ever mess your in and write your name in the great book of love, The Lambs Book of Life.

If you don't know how to pray, just say, "God Help me, I need you and I accept you, please forgive all the sins I ever committed or even wanted to, but for some reason didn't, I now know you really love me and for that I thank you and from this day forward, with your help I will serve you. And by the way my name is\_\_\_\_\_.