



Glenn Brown

IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE!

What is? The Christian faith is. Life is. God is. In fact, the Bible reveals that "God is love!" Wow! What a statement! And the Bible says that if we truly know God, we also will love, and if we are not walking in love we simply don't know God, regardless of how many times we have sat in church services. Listen to these amazing words from I John 4:7-8 in the Amplified: *Beloved, let us love one another, for love is (springs) from God, and he who loves (his fellowmen) is begotten (born) of God and is coming (progressively) to know and understand God (to perceive and recognize and get a better and clearer knowledge of Him). He who does not love has not become acquainted with God (does not and never did know Him), for God is love.*

Chapter 13 of the book of 1 Corinthians is called The Love Chapter. It is an inspired teaching about loving others. Paul starts by saying, *Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.* If I stand in a pulpit, or in a university, or in an influential newspaper, or in a place of great political power, and speak impressive, moving words, but don't have love in my heart, then I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal that make a lot of noise and call attention to themselves.

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I have great spiritual and intellectual gifts, if I have understanding and insights into the Bible, but there is no love in my heart, I am nothing. Remember the Sadducees and Pharisees of Jesus' day. They were great spiritual leaders, they knew the Bible by memory, and they prayed and fasted, but none of it was motivated by love, and Jesus scathingly condemned them for their hypocrisy.

And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. This is an amazing statement. But we can see examples in our own day. Think of the faith and commitment it takes to strap onto your body a vest of high powered explosives and to blow yourself up. They not only blow themselves up, they kill and maim as many enemies as possible: men, women and children. They perform this act of self-sacrifice as an act of holy war against the enemies of their people and their god, Allah. But the true God says their sacrifice has been in vain. There have been people down through history that have done comparable acts of genocide in the name of the true God. For instance, during the Crusades, armies under the banner of the cross committed terrible atrocities, murdering, raping and pillaging their way across Europe all the way to Jerusalem. According to God's Word, they were as misguided as the terrorists of the present day, and in my opinion they will receive an even harsher condemnation because they misrepresented the nature of the true God.

Jesus told us that the Great Commandment, the big one, the first one, the most important one, the one that subsumes all the other commandments in the Bible, is to *Love God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength, and to love others as you love yourself.* It has been pointed out many times that this commandment implies that you must love yourself, in a right way, or you certainly can't love others. That is self-evident. Some folks would insist that they don't love themselves. In an old book, George Verwer suggests that we substitute the word "care" for the word "love" to demonstrate that we all do indeed love ourselves.

It is not sinful to love, care, for ourselves, it is natural and a matter of survival. When baby is hungry, cold, hot, wet, lonely, fearful, baby will let you know, loudly, that he has needs. And from the time we get up to the time we go to bed, we are involved in loving, caring, for ourselves: our tummy says "I'm hungry" and we run to the kitchen, our skin says "I'm cold" and we run to set the thermostat or put on a sweater, our back says "Ugh! and we walk to the recliner, our mind says "I'm bored" and we turn on the TV, our body says "I'm worn out" and we hop into bed. And we sleep on a Sealy Posturepedic, costing a lot of bucks, instead of on the floor or on a bed of straw - because we love ourselves. Right?

God says, Love others as you do yourself. A sentimental "feeling" of love is not what God has in mind. Jesus' illustration of loving your neighbor was the story of the Good Samaritan who did something about the guy lying by the side of the road. Love is not a feeling, it is an action. Take care of their needs as you take care of yourself. We do that by instinct with our kids, and maybe with our spouse, although a lot of people in our narcissistic, drug-addicted society don't even show love

to those in their own homes. (The Bible says in 1 Tim. 5:8 - *If you don't show love to, take care of, your relatives, then you are worse than an unbeliever.* I believe this has implications beyond material needs.)

Love, Biblically, always involves a decision, and it always involves sacrifice. When baby starts wailing at 1:00 AM, 2:00 AM, 3:00 AM, it doesn't cut it to lie in bed and say, "Oh, that precious little thing! I just love her so much."

As we mature, we can show love beyond our family to our tribe. But that is where love stops for many people in the world. Think Sunni's and Shiite's. We can grow to love our nation. That may require more than a flag flying over our driveway. It may require paying our taxes and volunteering for the armed services. I believe that only God's big heart of love can enlarge our hearts to the point that we can love people of other races, nations, and religions. I have dear friends, a mature couple, that are so filled with God's love that recently they sold their home and their car, liquidated all their assets, and went to love people in Africa. Love. Sacrifice. Amazing! Only God could do that kind of work in people's hearts.

The farthest extreme from that example are the people, and there are many of them, who don't love others, they don't love God, and they don't even love themselves. They may care for themselves on the physical level, but they deeply loathe and despise themselves. They constantly do bad things to themselves through the substances they eat and drink and smoke to deaden their pain; they constantly think evil thoughts and say bad words about themselves, "I'm worthless, I'm useless, nobody loves me, God really despises me, everybody would be better off if I were dead." They sometimes commit suicide. Sometimes they do it spectacularly by killing a lot of other people before they kill themselves, thus demonstrating their hatred of God and people and their own life.

If anyone has the view that everything that happens in the world is, in some way, God's will, then they have a perverted view of God and have never read what the Bible clearly states: *"God so loved the world that He gave His only Son..." "It is not God's will that any should perish, but that all should come to the knowledge of the truth." "God is light and in Him is no darkness at all."*

God is love. He is love. *Every good and perfect gift comes down from above.* If anything that is not good and perfect and loving comes into your life, it is not from God. Put that down in your little book and remember it when the devil whispers into your mind that God brought loss or sickness or disaster to your door. There is a devil! That's what the Bible reveals. He is the one who came *to steal and kill and destroy, not God!* From the beginning, in the Garden of Eden, the devil insinuated the thought into the minds of Eve and Adam, "God is not really good. He can't be trusted. He is holding out on you. You would be better off to live your life independently, deciding for yourselves what is right and wrong, good and evil." We are still falling for those lies and living in suspicion of our Creator, the One whom Jesus called our Father in Heaven.

We need to repent for not loving and trusting our Father. No, we don't understand why all the evil and suffering in the world. But we need to choose to repent and believe God. We also need to repent for not loving others, especially those in our own family. And we may need to repent for not loving ourself in a healthy way. 1 Peter 2:6 is a wonderful verse that I have been meditating on. It says, **THOSE WHO TRUST THE LORD WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.** Choose again today to love, trust, and obey Him. You will not be disappointed. He loves you more than you can know.

BAD FRUIT AND BAD ROOTS

Some examples:

- **Pre-Natal**
 1. Ministered on one occasion to a man who said he constantly woke up suffocating. In prayer, the Holy Spirit showed him that he was born with the umbilical cord around his neck. Cast out a spirit of death, led in forgiveness to his mother who did want to have a baby, and he was set free.
 2. In many cases a difficult delivery indicates that the baby did not want to be born, usually because he knew he was not welcomed, or maybe because of abandonment by his father, or his father and mother were always arguing and fighting, etc.
 3. Prayed one time in Mexico for a newborn baby who was suffering from colic. The Holy Spirit reminded the mother that when she was 8 months pregnant she fell under a bus and narrowly missed being crushed. Fear apparently came into the infant at that time. We cast out a spirit of fear and death, etc. The baby quieted down and I am sure was healed at that point.
 4. Dr. Thomas Verny, in his book, The Secret Life of the Unborn Child, reports that when a pregnant mother even thinks about smoking a cigarette, her baby immediately starts having an increased heart rate. Nicotine causes a level of oxygen starvation for the placenta, and the baby feels threatened.

- **Chronic Fatigue** ---Art Mathias says this is a performance

disorder. In striving to keep others happy - win their approval - win God's approval, our bodies wear out and give up. Ex.: Melissa had a father who had a great personality, was loving and successful, and she had an older sister who was just like their father. She always had the thought, "I can't measure up!" Note that this happened in spite of the fact that her family was Christian and loving. She reflected her negative thoughts onto God, our Heavenly Father, and was certain she could never please Him. The pressure and stress were destroying her health. **MANY PASTORS AND CHRISTIAN LEADERS ARE CAUGHT IN THIS SAME TRAP!**

- **PMS** - - Art Mathias says that PMS is rooted in resentment

and fear of being a female, and reaction against the body that God created to function in order to cleanse itself and reproduce. Ex.: Laura - - had suffered with PMS since puberty and was unable to conceive. He led her through forgiveness of her father, who wanted a boy and not a girl, repentance for rejecting herself as a woman, etc. She was healed of the PMS and later conceived and had a little girl. Ex.: In Mexico I ministered to a 17 year-old girl who was thin, had never developed as a woman, and

looked about 10 or 11 years-old. Her family had been abandoned by their father, almost starved, and her mother worked like a slave to try to feed them. She decided that if that is what it means to be a woman, she didn't want it, and rejected herself as a woman. Led her through forgiveness of her father, and repentance for her inner vows, and she was transformed. The next day she looked so completely different and vibrant that I did not recognize her when she came in the church. I am sure God started the healing process.

- **Inner Vows** - - The two women in the examples above

made inner vows. When people say, "I will never forgive myself!" "I will never overcome this problem!" "I was ruined by what happened to me and will never get over it!" "I will never get well, I will always be sick!" "I'll always be lonely!" "My father died young, and I will die young!" "I reject myself as a woman or a man." You are cursing yourself, and the enemy is listening and has the legal right to bring this curse on you. Forgive and repent! Ex.: Clayton Gollhofer told me the sad story of how his pastor had destroyed his ministry. He was a humble man and a great pastor, but he would never admit to making a mistake or doing wrong. Eventually the church fired him. Clayton prayed with him and learned that when he was 12 years-old he pushed his little sister one day and caused her to get a bad splinter in her hand. He admitted what he had done to his father. His father went into a rage and broke both of his arms over his knee! Outrageous! The boy was in a double cast all summer, and he made a vow, "I will never admit to doing wrong!" An absolutely heartbreaking story.

- **Anger** - - Ex.: A successful businessman who was a

committed Christian had a problem with anger that was messing up his life. Whenever he felt confronted in any way, he would explode! He had much prayer and ministry but could not get past this. Finally a counselor led him to ask the Holy Spirit to show him the root, and a picture came to his mind. He saw himself when he was 8 years old, he was on a porch, and his grandmother was beating him with a two-by-four. So whenever he was confronted by someone, he was no longer a middle-aged businessman, he was a helpless little 8 year-old boy being beaten almost to death, and he reacted in an over-the-top way as an act of self-preservation. The counselor invited Jesus to come into that memory, and the man saw Jesus with His arms wrapped around him, shielding him and taking the force of the blows on His own body. The man realized this was what had actually happened since none of his ribs had been broken by that beating. The man wept in gratitude, and was healed.

- **Yoga** - - This is somewhat out of context but may speak to

someone's problem: "Yoga" means "light," and is connected to a major Hindu god, Nirvana, the god of light. Each of the 12 classic yoga positions is a station and connection with each of the 12 gods or spirits connected to Nirvana. I don't think there is a problem with the stretching exercises (but you should ask God about it), but if you have been into the positions, especially with mantras or chanting, or into emptying your mind and inviting the "spirit of light" or whatever to come into you, you should repent and renounce idolatry and break curses.

- **Karate** - - Ex.: Harold Dewberry tells about ministering to

a man who was a black-belt and a champion of Karate. He was having many spiritual/emotional problems. When Harold led him to break and renounce the spiritual connections to idolatrous gods, he was healed, but he lost his kick!

DON'T SPIT IN THE FLOWERS!

Dudley Hall tells about a little experiment he tried on his grand-children. One spring he and his wife had a big family get-together at their home near Dallas. There were over 20 little grandkids in attendance. He took all of them around to their fenced-in backyard. There was a sand-box, a jungle-gym, and all kinds of toys. He gathered all the children together

and pointed out all the fun things to do. Then he pointed to a small, circular flower bed in the middle of the backyard, and in a serious voice, he said, “Now, children, you can run and play and do anything you want in this nice big yard, but these are your Grandmother’s special flowers, and we have one important rule for you to remember: “Don’t spit in the flowers!” He repeated everything again and asked if everyone understood. They all nodded their heads in agreement.

Dudley then left the backyard, hurried to the side door, and went into a back room and peeked at the kids through the venetian blinds. Most of the little boys immediately ran up and spit in the flowers, ran off to play, and periodically came back and spit in them again. The little girls stared at the flowers, went off for awhile, and eventually came back, looked around to make sure grandpa was gone, and spit in the flowers. He said that every one of his grandkids, even the nicest little girls, spat in the flowers.

That is hilarious, but unfortunately the rule-breaking doesn’t stop when people grow out of childhood. During the Christmas season I was talking with a lady who works in the cosmetic and jewelry department in the local Wal-Mart, and she told me that over \$70,000 in merchandise had been stolen from their department in the previous 11 months! Boy, that is costing all of us. I read about a recent survey that reported on the high percentage of teen-agers who admitted to cheating and to shop-lifting. It is no longer the exception, it is common. And I recently learned, by accident, about a mature Christian lady who never has stopped her teen-aged habit of shop-lifting! I have heard a lot of things during my years of counseling, but when I heard that one I was completely flabbergasted.

The definition of grace that we have all learned is that grace is the unmerited favor of God. That is true, but I like this definition better: Grace is the desire and the ability to do God’s will. I love that definition. We don’t have the desire to keep the commandments, to live a life of love (sacrifice), except for God’s grace. And even if we desire to keep them, we can’t. We don’t have the will power to do it. But if we will repent and surrender our will to His will, and continue to do that every time we fall on our face, little by little He will change our hearts and enable to us to obey Him.

2 Timothy 2:19 says, ***The solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: ‘The Lord knows those who are His, and let everyone who names of the name of Christ depart from iniquity.*** What that means, I believe, is that if you call yourself a Christian, stop sinning or else!

God Bless,

Glenn

Web-site: www.glennbrownministries.com

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