

**"THE WORDS OF THE LORD ARE PURE WORDS, LIKE SILVER TRIED IN
A FURNACE OF EARTH, PURIFIED SEVEN TIMES.
YOU SHALL KEEP THEM, O LORD, YOU SHALL PRESERVE THEM FROM
THIS GENERATION FOREVER." (PSALM 12: 6 & 7)**

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Jesus Christ our Love

**"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."
(John 3:16)**

**"God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."
(Romans 5:8)**

**"This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you."
(John 15:12-14)
Emphasis Added**

**"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself."
(Matthew 22:36-39)**

AMEN!

Let it be known that all things that relate to God and His relationship with man began with "Love" and will end in "Love". Love is expressed in the Alpha, and Love is expressed in the Omega. From Genesis 1:1 to Revelation 22:21 Love is expressed through the very nature and character of God. There are two central themes that make up a solid foundation that enables man to enjoy fellowship and union with God –The first is "Love", and the second is "Obedience".. "Love" is always first. "Obedience" is always second. "Obedience" apart from "Love" is called by God "legalism". Those who "Love" God, obey God. Those who do not obey God, do not love God. Those who say they love God, and who do not obey God, are liars. Those who say that they "Love" God and do not "Love" their brethren, are also liars.

"He who says, "I know Him", and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

But whoever keeps His word, truly the Love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.

**He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.”
(1 John 2: 4-6)**

“If someone says, “I Love God”, and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not Love his brother whom he has seen, how can he Love God whom he has not seen?

**And this commandment we have from Him: that he who Loves God must Love his brother also.”
(1 John 4:20-21)**

“Love”! The word “love” may be the most abused, misused and misunderstood word in the human language. It is so commonly and loosely used in the church that it no longer carries “Life” with it. Remember that God is “Love” (1 John 4:8), and He is “Life” (John 14:6). On the whole, our use of the word “Love” has lost its Power and its Life. It has become a dead word as it falls from our lips.

As this message rose up in me several days ago, I was shocked. In fact, at this very moment I feel like a student that has entered into a classroom to study a subject about which I know little or nothing. Therefore, I can say in complete honesty that what you are reading, dear saint, is as much for me as it is for you. We have, for the most part, become a people who love in word only and not in deed. We talk the talk, but we do not walk the walk. Our lips speak often of love in tender affectionate tones while our hearts are as cold as ice. I am firmly convinced that this lack of love is the result of not knowing God, who is Love.

What many of us call love is nothing more than what I call “animalistic love”, that is found throughout the animal Kingdom. We see this love demonstrated in the relationship between a mama bear and her cub, a cow and her calf, a mare and her foal, the elephant at the death of one of their own, and birds that mate for a lifetime. However, this is not the “Agape Love” that Father’s word speaks to us about.

Agape Love is God’s expression of love through that son or daughter that is in “union” with Him – not in mental agreement with Him – but in “Union” with Him. There is a difference between being in agreement in one’s brain and being in “Union” in one’s heart. Until we are in “Union” with God, in the deepest part of our heart, we will continue as we are today – Loving our own families, a few close friends, and a handful of our fellow pew partners. Most of us live and die in an atmosphere of “self gratifying” love and sincerely believe that God is well pleased with us. Nothing could be further from the Truth!

**“For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.”
(Matthew 5: 46-48)**

I am persuaded that there is a great mystery in “Love”, and that it is hidden in Christ. The Holy Scripture is very clear on this matter. God, who is “Love” (1 John 4:16), loved us first (John 3:16), and then commanded that we return our love to Him. From the beginning (Deuteronomy 6:5) our Father has demanded that we love Him more than any other person, thing, or entity on earth. That specifically includes our closest family members (see Matthew 10: 37-39). It is a command from God to man. It is not a suggestion, nor an option that man can accept or refuse. Not only is it a commandment, but it is a “requirement” for entry into heaven. To make matters more difficult for us, it is a commandment that is impossible for us to meet, apart from God. Impossible!

**“God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.”
(1 John 4:16b)**

**“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”
(John 15:4&5)**

“Apart from Me you can do nothing!” Could it be any clearer? Apart from Jesus Christ, we can do nothing that is acceptable to God. Nothing! We can perhaps, convince our religious friends that we are “Born Again” (John 3:3) and filled with His Spirit by all of our religious activity. We may even convince “self” that we are well pleasing to our Father. In fact, we may possess lots of spiritual gifts, including that of “tongues” and at our death be praised of all men – and still be unacceptable, if we have not “Love”.

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. 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.

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.

(1 Corinthians 13: 1-3)

Emphasis Added

“It profits me nothing!” “Nothing!” Webster defines the English word “nothing” as follows: “of no account: worthless: zero”. I don’t know about you dear reader, but Paul’s words cause me to fear and tremble. The more revelation that I receive of Father’s truth concerning Love, the deeper I am led into a state of repentance. The more revelation I am given on God’s love and His requirement of me as it relates to that Love, the more I realize just how spiritually poor I am. Religious pride is now coming into contact with death at the Cross. And out of death comes resurrection life that is not only filled with a fear of God, but also hope and encouragement.

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:3)

**“But on this one I will look: On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, And who trembles at My word.”
(Isaiah 66:2b)**

**“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart –
These, O God, You will not despise.”** (Psalm 51:17)

The poor in spirit, the contrite and broken spirit as well as trembling at God’s word, are all signs that identify the one that Father has revealed Himself too. “Agape Love” is never found in one who is infected with religious pride! “Agape Love” is nothing less than God Himself, expressing Himself To – In and Through that son or daughter that comes to Him as a little child.

**“Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said,
“Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children,
you will by no means enter the Kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles
himself as this little child is the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven.”**

(Matthew 18: 2-4)
Emphasis Added

Whatever Jesus meant when He said that one must be converted and become as a little child to enter heaven, surely “Love” was a big part of that meaning. In the natural, it is easy to see love flowing from a mother or father to their little child. It is also easy to see that love returned to the mother or father as the child cuddles up or hugs them with a pure innocence that only comes from a little child. That little child held in the arms of its’ mother or father receives their love and affection without question, and returns that love just as naturally as the sun rises and sets over the earth. I believe that this is exactly what our Father is saying to us here. We are to return to Him His Agape Love, that He has first shown us, just as that babe in arms does.

So important did our Father consider this commandment that He had it recorded not only in Matthew 18, but also in Mark 10 and in Luke 18. Each time this warning appears, Jesus states clearly that if we fail to become as a “little child” we will “by no means” enter the kingdom of heaven. “By No Means!” That is a serious warning for those of us who have ears to hear. One’s failure to heed this sober warning, clearly demonstrates their lack of any fear of God.

I must confess that I was raised in a Christian family and grew up in a Southern Baptist church, for which I am thankful. However, I was never taught to fear God. Not only that, but after Father woke me up spiritually in my mid 40’s and I entered the “full gospel – Charismatic” branch of the organized church, I heard no more there about “fearing God” than I had heard anywhere else. I realize now that during more than 50 years inside the walls of organized religion I was only taught about one part of God, and that part, while true, appealed to my flesh. It tickled my ears (2 Timothy 4: 3-4) and kept “self” satisfied. Man, rather than God, became the central focus. In other words, Christianity was all about me – “self” – How “I” could receive whatever “I” needed or thought that “I” needed. Of course that included my family, my friends and my fellow believers. Life was all about us --- not God! Of course, I believed all that I said and did was for Christ. After all it was all done in His name. I now realize that the vast majority of we believers are using God’s word in an attempt to get God to satisfy our hearts’ desire. Little, if any thought is given to our applying God’s word to our lives so that He receives His hearts’ desire. Truly, man’s heart is exceedingly self-centered and wicked.

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?”
(Jeremiah 17:9)

Our Father is the One True God of perfect mathematical order. In Him there is no confusion, no division or lack of unity. God, was in the beginning “all in all” and in the end, He will once again be “all in all” (1 Corinthians 15:28). God, being Love, is all about Love – Agape Love. Love was His motivation to “create all things”, not for man, but for Himself (Colossians 1: 16-17). God is always “true” to Himself. He is never at odds with Himself. God has always prevailed, and God will always prevail. Therefore, Agape Love has, and will always prevail! Love, never fails. Man, including all who call themselves “followers” (a term used loosely by many) of Christ is doomed to failure, if he has not Love. May God have mercy on us all, and wake us up to this Truth, before it is eternally too late.

I have said many times that an alcoholic or any person with an addiction, will live and die with the addiction, unless two things take place. First, they must confess to God and man that they have a problem. Second, they must ask God and man for help. Before you question the “man” part of my statement, please read James 5:16. I would suggest that our lack of Agape Love problem will never be overcome, until we recognize that we have a problem – confess it openly before God and man, and Repent, asking for forgiveness. Until then, we can only expect more of the same as we continue to love, worship and serve “self”. “I” will continue to rule and reign in this life – until – that day when LOVE confronts “self”. Do you doubt dear reader, who will prevail?

For me, I have, and do so even now, confess that I have more often than not, without realizing it, been motivated to speak and do out of my flesh. Agape Love was not my motivation – Tom was! Regardless of what I believed – Regardless of my zeal for our Lord – Regardless of how in agreement I was with the Word of God – my heart was not in “Union” with Agape Love – God Himself! Tom did not know God – Tom did not fear God, and Tom did not Love God with all of his heart, mind, soul and strength. Now, that is the truth!

I thank Father that He loves us so much that He will tell us the truth with no other motivation other than Love. He is not worried about hurting our feelings or spoiling our grandiose plans for building His church. After all, “Yahweh” – “Jehovah God”, got along quite well before our arrival. And we may be assured that He will get along quite well after our departure. Without a doubt, many of we Christians have a terribly inflated view of ourselves, of our ministry, and even of nations. We have convinced ourselves that God is somehow dependant upon us. We may think that our religious pride is an expression of our love for God, but He seems to think differently.

“For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.”
(Romans 12:3)

“And if anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know. But if anyone loves God, this one is known by Him.”
(1 Corinthians 8:2&3)
Emphasis Added

“For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.”
(Galatians 6:3)
Emphasis Added

“If I were hungry, I would not tell you; For the World is Mine, and all its fullness.”
(Psalm 50:12)

“Behold, the nations are as a drop in a bucket, And are counted as the small dust on the scales;

All nations before Him are as nothing, and they are counted by Him less than nothing and worthless.”
(Isaiah 40:15a & 17) Emphasis Added

When man’s love is centered on himself, his family, his business, his ministry, his friends, his or any other nation, he has failed to walk in the fullness of the First and Great Commandment. He then, without realizing it, begins to think that God is just like him. Because God chooses to remain silent, and man chooses to follow his own heart and ignore God’s word, he becomes more and more “self” centered. Most live and die and never come into the fullness of the Love relationship that Father desires for all of His sons and daughters.

“These things you have done, and I kept silent; You thought that I was altogether like you; But I will rebuke you, And set them in order before your eyes.” (Psalm 50:21)

Dear saints, our Father desires but one thing above all other issues of life and that is that we return to Him the Love that He has bestowed upon us. He desires a deeply personal, intimate and secret (Matthew 6:3, 4, 6 & 18 also Psalm 91:1) relationship. He desires that each of us come into “union” with Him. That “union”, becomes reality when Agape Love is allowed to purge all other affections from the heart, and allow Jesus Christ to become the center of one’s love and affection. Only then can man come into his or her full potential in Christ. Only then can one love their neighbor, their family, and their enemy as God has commanded that we do. Until then, we cannot expect to receive from our Father the full blessing of His manifested presence in our life (John 14:21). That is a spiritual law and there is nothing that we can do to change it.

I hear so much today about the church being a modern day reflection of the Laodicean church of Revelation 3:14-16; and that we are. However, the church of Ephesus (Revelation 2:1-5) is without question, an example of the modern day church. Their sin was that they had lost their first love. Our Lord spoke to those early churches and commanded them to: “Repent or Else!” Today, the message is the same. “Repent!” We have lost our first love, if we ever had it at all, and repentance is our only way back to a place where God and man come into a union of Love – Agape Love. Out of that union flows the fullness of Father’s blessing.

This message will continue-----
God Bless,

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Brother Tom

P.S.

Please visit our website: oakhillministries.org.

"EVERY WORD OF GOD IS PURE; HE IS A SHIELD TO THOSE WHO PUT THEIR TRUST IN HIM. DO NOT ADD TO HIS WORDS, LEST HE REBUKE YOU, AND YOU BE FOUND A LIAR." (PROVERBS 30:5 & 6)