

(Note: The following e-mail study-commentary by C J McKnight on the subject of **THE LORD IS LOVE** covers the time it was begun about the first part of December, 2008 to May 23, 2009.)

THE LORD IS:

LOVE. His nature, His being, His purpose, everything about Him is a direct display of His almighty love for human kind. It is a component of His emotions which are of the greatest benefit to mankind. His is a love, which is unequaled by any other in time or eternity, on earth or heaven. It is unique in its character. Its depths and intensity may not be measured in common, earthly terms. As with all things, He is the source, the fountainhead of Agape love. The highest form of love, for it is love as only He can love. 1 John 4:16

The beauty of His love is that He fully desires and has purposed that it may become a love which is shared. John presented it as being something which was made known. A positive statement which would reveal the evidence that they had become partakers of the great and majestic love. In the intertwining of the Lord with man, the confirmation of His presence is the manifestation of His love. Love will reign supreme where His love is dwelling. 1 John 4:16 The witness that we are in Christ and He in us is determined by the measure of the workings of love. The ability to display love toward others. What a challenge. We say that we are in Christ. It is necessary that we display in works and not in words the fact of His inward presence. The ways of the Lord are very practical and are contrary to the ways of mankind. Hos. 14:9

His love dwelling and manifesting itself in us is the beginning, the foundation of the Christian life. We daily face the challenge of living that love. The world is filled with that which is unlovely, the despicable, the vile and the those who live with the extreme lowest nature of man, as their way of life. Yet, the love of the Lord is always extended to those of such character. The wonderful forgiveness found in His love is extended to the whosoever will, regardless of their wicked and sinful nature. He has concluded all under sin that He might have mercy upon us all. Gal.3:22

As with all of the ways of the Lord, He looks to bring His love in us to its perfection. 1 John 4:12 "His love is perfected in us." That is, it is brought to its fullness, a completed state reflecting that love as it is found in Him. It is not dormant but is a living, functional love. Surely, if He is in us and we are in Him, then the whole of His glorious being will be made displayed in us just as it is resident within Him. He is in the process of purifying a special people unto Himself who bear His likeness and have His Spirit. Titus 2:14

THE LORD IS LOVE. 2

We readily speak of His tremendous love expressed for us in the giving of His only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus. John 3:16 In His love we find the care and compassion which we so desperately need in this life. In Him we are assured of one who regardless of all circumstances in which we find ourselves, still loves us. The plan of the redemption of fallen mankind has its beginnings from before the foundation of the world. In His foreknowledge, those who have accepted and embraced His love, were acknowledged by Him from the very beginning of creation. Eph. 1:4 The effect of that love has a sanctifying influence on every life that embraces it. It is a love which will produce a spirit of holiness and blamelessness, before Him.

If there is one word which characterizes Christianity, it has to be love. There is absolutely no question as to the magnitude of His love for mankind. The key to a real and personal relationship of love for Him is found in the measure of reciprocal love displayed. The unchanging first and great commandment is to love the Lord with the whole, the entire heart. The passion of such powerful love cannot help but greatly touch the heart of the Lord. Love responds to love. A real love for Him must embrace also the soul of man. Such an expression of love for Him speaks to placing Him far above the beggarly elements of this world. He must be the very first and predominate in our expressions of what we love and seek for, even in the necessities of this life. Then the mind, with every thought being brought into subjection to the Lord Jesus. 2 Cor. 10:5 That which we entertain in our mind will determine our course of action in all matters. The mind which meditates in the Word and on the Lord is a mind of perfect peace. Isa. 26:3

In His response to question of the lawyer Jesus added 'with all your strength.' Luke 10:27 The whole energy and effort turned toward a constant increase of appreciation and love toward the Lord. The call of the love of the Lord is for mankind to come to a full understanding of His mighty love and then respond with whole man, body, soul and spirit. The result of such deep and profound love creates the ability to fulfill the second commandment, and that is to love our neighbor, the whole of humanity as the Lord loves them. How can we improve or grow in His love without meeting these basic requirements. The strength, the power of the manifestation of the life of Christ in His people is dependent

THE LORD IS LOVE. 3

Love will be tested in many ways. This is indeed the acid test of Christianity. The love of the Lord as it unfolds in our hearts will lead us to the very farthest point of love. That is; to love our enemies. Hatreds, animosities, warfare's, variances, all are a part of life on earth. They are not easily forgotten, some times even for generations. Jesus called upon those who would be His disciples to be like Him and love those who would be at enmity with Him. Bless, invoke the blessing of the Lord on those who curse and blaspheme you. Do good, be a blessing to those who demonstrate their gross dislike of you. Pray for those who would heap insult after insult upon you and in the ultimate, persecute you. Mt. 5:44 Thus, the reaction of Christ, and hopefully that of His followers, is presented to us. It is a staggering challenge seeing that the natural, the carnal man usually will react in anything but in a spirit of love. Still, Jesus taught, and lived just exactly what His standard of the Christian life would be.

Jesus left us an example that is hard for the natural nature of mankind to follow. It is most definitely not an easy step for the spiritual man to demonstrate, either. This is love at it's greatest moment of testing. His prayer of forgiveness for those responsible for His physical crucifixion is the ideal for Christian living. "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." Luke 23:34 The actions of all who were involved in the accusations, the trial and the ultimate death of the Lord Jesus were grossly illegal. Most definitely a breach, a complete disregard for the Law. Even so, He prayed that the Father would forgive them for their dire actions. That is love.

We have another example taken from those early days of the development of the church in Jerusalem. Stephen, one of seven, who were appointed to be responsible for the daily affairs of the church. He was mightily used of the Lord working great signs and wonders among the people. Acts 6:8 False accusations and lying witnesses were brought against him and he was condemned to be stoned. At the time of his stoning, he saw the Lord Jesus standing at the right hand of the Father. Jesus stood in honor of the first martyr and to welcome him into His eternal kingdom. Stephen beautifully demonstrated the Agape love. The fullness of the love of the Lord. His prayer was; "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Acts 7:60 That love which is found in Christ must be revealed in the hearts of all who love Him. It is not an easy task but it will yield good fruit.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 4

God is love. Love is His very being. His nature. His character. His personality. As with all good things, love emanates from Him. He is its source, its flow and its all in all. Aside from Him, love has no depths. The individual may say that they possess the love of the Lord but that love must be demonstrated, not in word but in deed. To be without His love is to be without Him. 1 John 4:8 Love is made to be synonymous with the Lord and the Lord with love. They are inseparable. He can only abide where there is His type of love. Those who claim the Lord Jesus as their Savior and Lord, of necessity must prepare an atmosphere of love in their hearts that He might come and dwell there.

Do we come to a position in our Christian life where we take things for granted, and then are puzzled when our prayer does not receive an immediate and positive response. Consider the motivating force that is behind faith. Faith, in and of itself is insufficient. That which empowers it is love. Gal. 5:6b Faith WORKS by love. Love is made the energizing factor of that which is the result of faith. Where there is love, there is confidence and absolute trust. A deep rooted assurance that we may ask what we will and it shall be done. The greatest of love is found in the Lord Jesus. For it is said of Him, that greater love has no one than this, that a man lay down His life for His friends. John 15:13 This would place the burden of true and intense love on the part of the one making the petition to the Lord. The person who is exercising faith, will see results, according to their love for Him.

Let us consider another evidence of those who demonstrate true love for the Lord. Most definitely, obedience is vital. The very thought of obedience to most anything today is almost an obscene word. Nevertheless, it remains a sign of the measure of love which one has for the Lord. He would most certainly use our willingness to follow the teaching of His Word as an indication of how deep our love for Him might be. The person who is in love with Him will most definitely do their best to please Him. The sign for which He is looking is in the keeping of His commandments. John 14:15 His commandments are not grievous, especially if we have been born of and are filled with His Spirit. 1 John 5:3 Once again we find that we are evaluated on the basis of our attitude and love toward others. Especially, those who are of the household of faith. 1 John 5:2 His love, as it is demonstrated in His people, is very practical and has its beginnings in our acceptance or rejection of others.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 5

The Agape love of the Lord is very practical as it is displayed in the life of those who are His very own. It is of great strength and has very definite requirements. To make the statement that we love the Lord but at the same time have hatred toward our brother places one in the category of a liar. This declaration of the Apostle John is very specific and to the point. It is a situation where there is no compromise. To love the Lord is to love our brother in Christ, regardless of their displeasing actions toward us. Not an easy task but love overcomes all adverse attitudes. 1 John 4:20 Heavenly love has its roots on earth. If we cannot love that which we see, how can we possibly love the unseen Lord?

To add to the strength of this state of affairs John proclaimed it to be a commandment. Jesus said that it was the second commandment and was connected to the first, through a love for the Lord and an exact emotion of love for our neighbor, to the same degree as we exercise love for ourselves. Mt. 22:39 May the Lord impress upon us how extremely important this facet of our Christian experience is to our own well being, not only spiritually but physical as well. Lets follow John as he takes this thought one step farther. A love for all who are in the household of faith assures us that we have passed from death unto life. Dead in trespasses and sins but now made alive in Christ Jesus. However, when we do not love our brother, we are situated in the same category as the old man, the

man of the past. The sentence of death is upon us. Notice that John stated that when we do not love, we are relegated to a place as being one of those who have the sentence of death upon them. He did not say that we had to dislike them or even hate them but just not to love them, for whatever reason. 1 John 3:14

What stronger emotions do we face in life other than love and hate. Attitudes which are diametrically opposite one to the other. They are the extremes of human emotion and are manifest in every human being to some degree. Love makes no room for the hatred of our brethren. As a matter of fact, just to allow hatred to take over our heart, is in the sight of the Lord as murder. Hatred will destroy all hope of eternal life. A hard, hard saying but it is the Word. 1 John 3:15 The reaction of the one who loves, is not to destroy, but is willing to go so far as to lay down their own life for the brethren. A commitment which may only be accomplished because of that Godlike, Agape love. Love is not exercised unless the Lord of love is ruling and reigning in the heart. 1 John 3:16

THE LORD IS LOVE. 6

The love of the Lord is not a secret, hidden love but has been made manifest in the sending of the Lord Jesus into this world. Love at its greatest, at its peak of perfection and fullness is that which has always existed between the Father and the Son. Yet, that same love caused the Father to send His Son into the world to reconcile mankind unto Himself. The force, the power of that love made Jesus willing to suffer ridicule and shame at the hands of the very ones whom He had come to bless and save. In the ultimate, it led Him to the cross and crucifixion. All, with the Divine purpose of giving eternal life to all who would believe on the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. 1 John 4:9

Love begins with the Lord. Except He be in our lives our love remains on a human level. He elevates love, in those who are His, to the highest degree. In Him we learn the true meaning of love. He shuns and despises sin, even so Christ Jesus came to save sinners. Jesus laid down His life for those who will follow His teachings. Because He loves them and they love Him He now calls them friends. A relationship, and fellowship which is unlimited. John 15:13-14 His love is seen in His words concerning His crucifixion. He

could have stopped it. He could have requested twelve legions of angels to assist Him and deliver Him. A legion has been variously numbered to be between 4,200 to 6000 men. That would have been a multitude more that was necessary to deliver Him. Mt. 26:53 Moreover He said that no man was able to take His life from Him but that He would lay it down of His own volition and that He had been given power from the Father to take it up again. John 10:18 While men was used as the instrument of death, He willingly submitted Himself to become the sacrifice, the only acceptable sacrifice. 1 John 4:10

He is the one and only propitiation. The only sacrifice acceptable to the Lord. The true, the perfect atonement. Propitiation in Rom. 3:25 is used in reference to the mercy seat of the tabernacle and the temple. Christ Jesus is our mercy seat. The place, the source of our redemption and salvation. By His blood alone we are redeemed and freed from sin. John the Baptist, the forerunner, the prophet who was to precede and announce His coming proclaimed Jesus to be the Lamb of God. John 1:29, 36 Reference is made some twenty-two times in the book of Revelation to the Lamb. He is predominant in the book and rightfully so for He will finish His work in the end of the age, guiding His very own unto their ultimate destiny, the new heavens and the new earth. Rev. 21 - 22.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 7

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Rom. 8:39 There are many forces arrayed against those who are in Christ but all are conquerable and have been defeated. Paul listed seven catastrophic events which may occur in our lives but none of them, as tragic as they are, can bring separation between the Lord and His people. Rom. 8:35 There is no outsider who has the ability and power to rob one of that gracious love which is found in the Lord Jesus. Such action is one that the individual takes in their own self interest. Many things may be blamed as to their action but they, themselves made the decision to depart from the presence of the love of Christ. Paul stated that Demas had forsaken him, which could have been but a going on to continue working for the Lord. However, when Paul adds, that Demas loved this present world it is obvious that Demas not only forsook Paul but the Lord as well. It was his decision to leave. 2 Tim. 4:10

We are ordained of the Lord to be more than conquerors through Him that loves us. Above, beyond, greater than, fully, absolute triumphant and victorious. Rom. 8:37 A conqueror, a victor of such great magnitude will be triumphant under all circumstances. Paul was fully persuaded that nothing, but nothing could separate one from the goodness and mercy found in the love of Christ. Conditions in all areas of life will take place which are puzzling and greatly disturbing and will cause great consternation and distress of heart and mind. Forces seen and unseen may align themselves against us but in Christ we overcome. There is categorically no outside force capable of wedging its way between the recipient of the love of Christ. Rom. 8:38-39

The theme of the blind, deaf, unthinking, unimaginative heart as found in 1 Cor. 2:9 is the condition of an apostate church. Read verse ten. That which is hidden to the worldly and the sinner is made visible to the believer. We can hear the voice of the Spirit, the Word of the Lord, who is so willing to reveal the secrets of the Most High to those who are the participants of His tremendous love. Treasures untold are to be found in the Word. The Lord makes Himself known while enlightening His very own from the Word. All that we need to know for the present is recorded in His Word. When we have embraced all the knowledge of the spiritual elements found in the Book, there is still more. He will spend eternity unfolding the majestic greatness of His being and personality. We see now through a glass darkly but the day is not far hence when we will dwell with eternal love ever making itself known and real in the redeemed. 1 Cor. 13:12

THE LORD IS LOVE. 8

A certain, positive sign of His love toward us as individuals is made very evident when we get out of line. When we are walking contrary to His will and He convicts one of their wrong doing, it is a sure sign of His love. To have the ability to live contrary to His will without conviction is a positive indication that the person is reprobate and grossly void of His love. EVERY son of the Lord must go through a time of chastening, of discipline and instruction in the ways of the Lord. Some may need a little more correction to get their attention. These will be scourged or corrected in a more sever manner. Heb. 12:6 In all of the churches mentioned in the book of

Revelation there are reflected characteristics of the last day church but the church of Laodicea gives the best illustration of the church of today. Their faults and shortcomings are not hidden but to them the Lord gives the same loving message, that those whom He loves He will rebuke and chasten. He also issued a call for repentance. Rev. 3:19

Chastisement, when accepted and received graciously is further evidence of belonging to the great family of the Lord. It is a sure sign of recognition by the Lord as having been acknowledged as a son of the Most High. Every loving and caring father will correct and discipline his children that they might be a good representative of the family. A witness in conduct and word exemplifying the standards of the household in which they have been raised. Heb. 12:7 The immediate consequences of applied instructions may seem difficult to receive and endure but the benefits far out weigh any problems suffered momentarily while undergoing instruction and alignment with the desire of the instructor.

However, to be without chastisement, becomes a direct indication of a complete separation from the standards of the family. When correction is an evidence of love, to be without or beyond correction is to be completely outside of parental authority. Empty and void of the benefits and blessings of love. These are not sons, they are illegitimate children and will not be benefited or recognized as sons of the Lord. Heb. 12:8

Hopefully, we have been corrected by our earthly fathers to enhance our ability to fit into society and become a person of value and principles. While under their tutorship there will most certainly be times of correction which are displeasing and perhaps even painful. In the end, when we realize that their actions were for our own good, we honor them for their efforts. How much more should, we honor the Lord for His actions of love toward us. Heb. 12:9 Obedience to Him is life everlasting.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 9

Parental correction follows the will of the parent. Correction from the Lord is for our benefit, for our gain, that we might be blessed of Him. The blessing is evidenced in the impartation of His holiness. All a part of the process of His new creation being worked out in those who are His very own. Heb.

12:10 Just imagine it, He wants to share His holiness with His people. Holiness should then be the desire of our hearts not something rejected and ridiculed. It is His nature, I am Holy. Not only is He holy but He is the very essence of holiness. The beauty of it is that He wants to share that Divine nature with us. It is not a case of imposing holiness on us but rather one of gifting us with Himself. Be ye holy. 1 Peter 1:15-16 Incidentally the word translated conversation, should be conduct. However, most definitely our language should follow suit.

Testing, trials, problems, and chastising all are most unpleasant. Especially so when Christians who too often take the attitude that there should never be reverses in their life. Too often we have been pampered by a clergy which preaches that all must go well with us. Who in the New Testament history was more dedicated to the Lord than Paul. The record of the magnitude of his rough journey as a Christian is to be found in 2 Cor. 11:22-27. In the light of what he experienced how can we even think of voicing a complaint. In chapter twelve he tells of the benefit of all that he suffered for Christ. Truly a remarkable life in the Lord.

The scriptures give a fearful sound to the correction of the Lord, for instance, I will visit their transgressions with the rod and their iniquity with stripes. Ps. 89:32 A definite warning of impending correction for those who walk contrary to His will. We have to thoroughly agree with the author of the book of Hebrews that no chastening is a joyous occasion while we are in the midst of being corrected. The results of these times of adjustment yield a tremendous profit. They produce the fruit of righteousness. Paul prayed for the church at Philippi That they might be FILLED with the fruits (note it is in the plural), the works of righteousness, the purity which originates from the Lord. The measure of the word fullness is given by the Lord Jesus as being, a good measure, a complete measure. Pressed down, packed in as solidly as possible. Shaken together, everyone knows that you can get more in if you agitate the container. Running over, a constant pouring forth until the container is full and pouring forth. Luke 6:38 It is the will of the Lord that He bless His people with spiritual blessings in a far greater measure than just the natural blessings. He will accomplish a full, a complete work in His people.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 10

Motivated faith is that which has been activated by love. Faith and love are strong companions in the arsenal of the Christian battle. Faith is vital to the gospel of Christ. The promises of the Lord all work by faith. Faith requires love for without it faith cannot produce the petition sought after. Faith works, by love. Gal. 5:6 In seeking out the mysteries of faith, we have here an extremely necessary element which is paramount to receiving a positive response from the Lord to our requests. The love of Christ in us, prepares the heart to come before Him in confidence, knowing that because of love, He hears our petitions.

Faith created by the presence of the love of Christ in us will direct us into all truth. Good doctrine, the truth, are words of faith, for faith comes by hearing and hearing from the Word of the Lord. Rom. 10:17 Paul urged Timothy to strongly maintain the teaching which he had received through the faith and love found in the Lord Jesus. 2 Tim. 3:13 Sound doctrine, based on the love of Christ is more important in our day than ever before. In these last days we will see a veritable flood tide of false teachers and false doctrines which are not founded on love but on greed and a desire to control. 2 Tim. 3:1-7 The pure, unadulterated love of Christ will never lead us by any other means than the Word of the Lord.

In writing about the most necessary pieces of armor, the very first mentioned by the Apostle Paul is that of the breast plate. 1 Tim. 5:8 That which provides protection to the various vital organs of man and in particular the heart. It is called the breastplate of love and faith. Here again we see these two, faith and love, combining to supply the utmost protection. To the Ephesians it was called the breast plate of righteousness. Eph. 6:14 Righteousness, purity, is the result of the faith and love of Christ working in the believer. Furthermore he exhorted them to make certain that they were fully protected by using the whole armor of the Lord. Any one piece by itself is insufficient. The whole, will fully protect the individual so clothed. From the beginning as a babe in Christ, to a growth of full maturity as one in the midst of a great spiritual battle, it is faith and love which support us and bring us to victory in all things. The love of Christ made manifest in His people is our assurance of life eternal in His glorious presence. His love for His people is unquestionable. He is looking for those

who will love Him with the same passion which He displayed in coming into this world and offering Himself as the only sacrifice acceptable to His Father for the salvation of mankind.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 11

What more exceedingly important reason could there be for the baptism of the Spirit. It is the Spirit of the Lord, the Holy Spirit who rains upon us, in great abundance, the ability to love as the Lord loves. Rom. 5:5 It is the Spirit of the Lord who works in us to bring us to the perfections which are found in the Lord Jesus. The abounding, limitless riches of His glory which bring strength to the inner man, the spiritual being. Thus enabling the follower of Christ the ability to stand tall and strong in the might of His power. Eph. 3:16

What a glorious privilege to have the Christ of God dwelling in our hearts . That is an absolute assurance of His presence, daily. He has said He would never leave nor forsake His own. We have then, the strong declaration of His being there until we are rooted and grounded, by faith in His love. Roots are the source for moisture and the elements from the soil so necessary for its growth. Our roots must be in the Spirit and in the Word in order to receive the essential Spiritual substances for growth in the things of Christ. To be grounded speaks to the strength and stability of the roots. Love is the cause and source of the health of the Spiritual man. A love for the Lord and a love for our fellow man as great and strong as we love our selves. Eph. 3:17

One of the open secrets of a successful Christian life is to have a deep and practical knowledge of the love which is to be found in the Lord Jesus. If He dwells with us, and He promised to do so, then most assuredly He enters in with His essence and being. It is impossible for the Lord Jesus to be present without there being a very definite and positive manifestation of that glorious presence. His company has always the aura of the divine and most wonderful glory of the Lord. Even to begin to comprehend the magnitude of His love can only be experienced. He will express and show forth His love in each and every heart which will seek Him earnestly in ever increasing grace and love. The heart which is totally in love with Him will find themselves filled with all the fullness of the Lord. Eph. 3:19 This is the

final status of the Bride of Christ. The true and everlasting temple of the Lord. The enormity of the purpose of the Lord in making His people His eternal dwelling place is too often minimized into almost nothing. Yet, it is the most glorious and final intention of the Lord in the work of the redemption of mankind. He will fill that majestic church of the end of the age with the absolute completeness of Himself. The fullness of all that He is.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 12

Love which exceeds all knowledge, understanding or science. The great and marvelous love which emanates from the Lord alone. There is no other source. The very existence of such life changing love is exceedingly far beyond the ability of the human understanding to comprehend its mighty influence in those who are its recipients. It is like the old saying we used to hear so often in personal testimonies; "it is better felt than told." The benefits, the results of knowing such divine love are limitless in their scope of gladness, joy and blessing. Eph. 3:19

"Filled with all the fullness of God" Could we find words which more completely express the results of His great and most wonderful love revealed in His church. In this statement we find a work of His Spirit in us that may only be grasped by actually experiencing the promise which is made. His love will lead His Bride to that place where she is filled, let's take a look at the measurement which the Lord uses. In the first place, He uses a good measure, that is a proper, fitting, legal portion. Then to make certain that the purchaser receives the proper amount it is pushed down and squeezed as much as possible into the container. To the great benefit of the purchaser. It is shaken, agitated until the product is compact. The result is a container which is spilling all over the place because of the honesty of the one preparing it. Luke 6:38 Most assuredly any blessing prepared by the Lord for His people would even exceed such generous proportions. There is no way whereby we may measure the limitless blessing of the Lord. He DAILY LOADS us with BENEFITS. Ps. 68:19

Consider carefully, this is His promise to you. The generosity of the Lord is complete. It is the nature of the all sufficient One to bless His people with all sufficiency, withholding no good thing from them. Those who seek the

Lord will never lack in any good thing. Ps. 34:10 He will not withhold any good thing from those who walk in righteousness before Him. Ps. 84:11 He is absolutely limitless in His giving to those who love Him. Therefore we may anticipate that when He anointed Paul to write, “all fullness” He meant precisely that. All means all, everything, the whole of what ever the subject is, completeness, that glorious and generous full measure. This time we are not measuring a commodity of this world but the absolute completeness of all that makes the Lord, God. The enormity of the plan and purpose of the Lord is absolutely mind boggling to the natural man and even to the spiritual man it is utterly amazing. He will fulfill all of His Word.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 13

The supreme purpose of the Lord in having a Bride like Himself is a beautiful and most marvelous action of the Lord. The fullness of what and who He is will be imparted to His beloved. She will be filled with all, reaching the astonishing point, of the fullness of the Lord. Strong’s Dictionary related the following meaning to the word fullness; repletion or completion, i.e. (subjectively) what fills (as contents, supplement, copiousness, multitude), or (objectively) what is filled (as container, performance, period): This leaves no doubt but what the Lord meant us to understand that He will fully occupy His temple, with the richness of His own being. Eph. 3:19

The Lord consistently expressed His goal for His church, particularly in the end of the age. A perfected ministry will produce a perfected church. A body of believers united in perfect harmony. An enlightened people who fully understand the desire of the Lord and know perfectly His exact will for them. Their knowledge of Him is of the most intimate sort. They know and follow the Word. They are the people who have achieved the highest order of Christianity for they have reached the “measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” Eph. 4:13 What a challenge. Measuring up to the high standard of the Christ of God. Demonstrating His stature, His maturity and spiritual comprehension. Fulfilling the great commission. Being in every aspect the continuation of His miraculous ministry to the world. Committed to the Lord to such a degree that the flesh, the carnal man has no participation in the perfected work of the Lord.

The church has been called to be His body in the earth. A body of perfect order and synchronized to function perfectly. The tabernacle, which was but a type and symbol of the true temple, the church, in its construction required men and women who were given the intelligence of the Lord to build it. They were to follow exactly according to the pattern shown Moses on the mount. How much more will the Lord use a fully anointed ministry to bring about the perfecting of His saints. Eph. 5:27 He cannot occupy a temple which is faulty in its construction. He will not dwell in a people who are not wholly like Himself. He fills all in all and will gather unto Himself, from the church, those individuals who meet His criteria. They are to be one, united together with Him in every aspect of the word unity. Eph. 1:23 What He is, they will be also for they are His body, perfectly joined with Him. Functioning together as one. Nothing of His presence, power and authority will be withheld from the most beautiful Bride of all time and eternity.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 14

The focal point of all that is spiritual and everlasting is the Lord Jesus. The Father has highly lifted up His Son above all others and bestowed on Him a name which is superior to all other names, even in heaven as well as on earth, in eternity as well as in time. There is no personage nor name greater and more highly prized by His Father, than the Lord Jesus Christ. Phil.2:9 His name is the most tremendous of all names. No other name can even begin to compare with His name. He inherited the fullness of that name from His Father, the earthly name given Him was Jesus, or Savior, now He was privileged to be called by the name of both Lord and Christ. Heb. 1:4

In His fulfilling the great act of obedience, that is, His crucifixion, the Father saw fit to bestow upon Him His name, Lord and the name of the Holy Spirit, Christ. Therefore, God made this same Jesus both Lord and Christ. Acts 2:36 He bears the fullness of the name of God thereby exalting Him and making Him to be all and in all. Col. 3:10 As Redeemer and Lord, His great love for human kind drove Him to Calvary. When the proper time had come He steadfastly set His face to proceed to Jerusalem. Luke 9:51 He well knew that the prophetic utterances of the prophets concerning the Messiah would all be accomplished in this visit to Jerusalem. Luke 18:31 He did not

go blindly nor naively, He knew precisely what would happen to Him and how it would be accomplished. His tremendous love for the lost was a strong motivation driving Him to the death of the cross as the only, the one true lamb of God.

He is more than a manifestation of God. He became the dwelling place, the habitation, the true temple of the Godhead. The wonder, the magnitude of that which He will accomplish in His perfected Bride with whom He will join in such close affinity that she is called His body. One with Him. Composed of the same material, having the identical likeness, sharing equal rights and heavenly positions with Him. She cannot be His body unless she is of the precise nature and character as Christ. Only by being equal, a joint heir, may she be His body. The body must be of equivalent beauty and majesty as the head. We are only complete in Him. While at the same time, He is only fulfilled when His body is united as one and also made to be true bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh. Col.2:10 What will be accomplished is in the perfect will and the good pleasure of the Father. The finished product is an eternal, everlasting, heavenly marriage, the result of the mighty work of the crucified Christ. Col. 1:19

THE LORD IS LOVE. 15

The more excellent way. Generally speaking, the very best, when affordable, is that which is desired and sought after. This is a superb way to treat the treasures of the Lord. His promise is that He will not keep any good thing from those who walk in righteousness. Ps. 84:11 His gifts to His children are always the very best, so much so that James calls them, good and perfect. James 1:17 Among the many benefit's the Lord bestows upon His children is the ability to love. When we have Him in our hearts we have the very essence of love. He creates within us the ability to love as He who is love, loves. Therefore He introduces His charity, His agape love into our lives. Not love on a human scale but like that great, intense love that sent the Lord Jesus to Calvary to die for mankind. John 3:16

Increased love is an indication of spiritual growth. Paul prayed for the folks in Philippi that they might come to abounding measures of love. Which would cause an ever increasing revelation and comprehension of the tremendous love found in the Lord Jesus. Phil. 1:9 We are dealing now with

that agape love which flows from the very throne of the Lord. While it is love as He loves, it is also something that is fully shared with all those who would walk with the Lord Jesus.

In the scriptures agape love is sometimes translated love, and at other times charity. The nature, the actions, the emotions of that God like love are well recorded by the Apostle Paul in His letter to the Corinthians. It is obvious that the motive of any spiritual activity must be based on charity. Any person manifesting spiritual gifts and involved in the work of the Lord being without charity, is likened to sounding brass or a tinkling symbol. Nothing pleasant to be derived from the cacophony produced by the clanging of these metals. 1 Cor. 13:1 The sound of love is melodious and harmonious. A pleasant sound to be heard.

Love is placed on a much higher plain of spirituality than spectacular gifts which may be manifest by some who claim to be exercised in said gifts. He included some pretty powerful gifts as being needful of charity for their true demonstration. As fantastic as these gifts might be, they still require charity, the agape love of the Lord, to produce a lasting effect in the lives of those who participate. The individual may be well versed in exercising these gifts but in the end, if they are without that gracious love which originates with the Lord, they are nothing. All their capabilities are useless and in vain if not fully engaged by the love of the Lord.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 16

Charity contrasted with knowledge. Paul, the writer of the Epistle was not a stranger to either. Knowledge is something which is earned by hard study. Charity, especially agape love, is a gift from the Lord. Knowledge has a tendency to cause pride and is the attainment of the individual. Charity will manifest humility and a true hearted concern to help others. Therefore Paul declared that charity edifies. It is a most vital element in the building of the body of Christ as well as the personal Christian character. The growth of each person in Christ is accelerated by the love which is alive in them. Eph. 4:16 Spiritual knowledge is of great benefit, especially when mixed with the profound and marvelous love of the Lord.

Charity defined, all of its assets are available to those who would be filled with that heavenly, Godlike love. The first on the list of the Apostle is longsuffering. The ability act with forbearance in the face of a situation which may be most galling. Exhibiting patience when all feeling of empathy may be exhausted. This is positively one of the outstanding characteristic of our Lord, who is love. Consider how long He waited for us to turn to Him. 1 Cor. 13:4 We need to take note that longsuffering is also a fruit of the Spirit. Gal. 5:22 This would make it a measuring rod which could be used in determining whether or not one had been filled with the Spirit.

The kindness of the love of the Lord has been made manifest even to the unthankful and the evil. Therefore Jesus taught that we should love the unlovely and go even a step farther by doing good unto them. Luke 6:35 Added to that Jesus urged all to exercise the same measure of mercy as was shown to them by the heavenly Father. Luke 6:36 It becomes obvious that attitudes must be changed. Opinions must be altered if we are to exemplify the love of Christ to the world. This is a good time to consider the words of the Lord Jesus when He sent His disciples to minister to the people. Be as wise as serpents. Discern and understand the wisdom of the enemy and apply the wisdom of the Lord which is far greater. Be harmless, as harmless as doves. Be kind, be merciful, show forth the love of the Lord. Mt.10:16

Charity is not envious of others in any manner, of their abilities, their possessions or success in life. They do not crave to be equal to, or above the status of the life of others. They are not jealousy of the plaudits heaped upon their associates. 1 Cor. 13:4 The standard established by the Lord may seem extremely high but the rewards more than recompense any supposed short comings which we feel we may suffer.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 17 (missing)

THE LORD IS LOVE. 18

We are considering the manifestation of the Spirit of Christ in the body of Christ. The elements of His love which we find in the scriptures are but the normal evidence of one possessing the love of the Lord. These are not

super Christians but rather common every day, born again believers. Nevertheless, each work of His love in us is a challenge to exemplify the beauty of His life. Love is not easily provoked. 1 Cor. 13:5 In the rush and bustle of modern day life it is so easy to find ourselves 'on edge,' geared up and ready to vent the frustrations which build up so easily. Mind you, The standard is not to be provoked at all, but not to be easily provoked. Consider the frustration of the meekest man on the earth, at least in his day, the man Moses. Num. 12:3 This same man became very angry at the rebellion of the children of Israel. Num. 16:15 Even the Lord was provoked with Israel. Num. 14:23 It is obvious that love gives a sufficient measure of control to allow patience to have its perfect work.

The thoughts and meditations of the heart are above evil surmising. The thought presented is that of thinking no evil and does not indicate sinful and wicked thoughts. 1 Cor. 13:5 It is the imagination of the heart and mind in which misunderstandings, and presumptions arise as to the motives of others. These are then mulled over and over in the thoughts until the idea of retaliation and retribution in some sort of an evil work is considered. The love of the Lord will keep us from being envious or jealous of the success of others. It does not pray for, seek or desire for an evil thing to come upon others, regardless of how badly that person may have harmed them. They are not desirous of returning evil for evil.

Now, we come to the matter of sin. Or. 13:6 Those possessing the love of the Lord find no joy in the sinful ways of this world. Because of the righteousness of Christ made known in their lives by the Word of the Lord, sin has become exceedingly sinful to them. To be a new creature in Christ means to be new in all things. To walk in new ways. To have new thoughts. The old passing away and all things becoming new. 2 Cor. 5:17 The new man once loved the things of this world. Now that natural, worldly love has been replaced by true love, the love of the Lord. They are not found rejoicing when those who opposed them fall because of their wickedness. They take no pleasure in every act of judgment which comes upon those who have done wrong. The attitude and being of Christ is constantly seen in them.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 19

Love finds no pleasure or joy in iniquity whether committed by them or others. Any pleasure derived from sinful actions is vain and very short lived. Love does not rejoice in the fall or failures of others regardless of actions which were worthy of all that happened to them. Love is not cruel nor does it desire vengeance. 1 Cor. 13:6 The Lord is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance and eternal life. 2 Peter 3:9

Love is inseparable from truth. Truth is the source of the Love displayed by the Lord. He is both love and truth. They are revealed in their fullness in the Lord Jesus. The spirit of the redeemed finds great joy in searching for and finding the truth. 1 Cor. 13:6 Truth and love bring liberty to those who are bound in sin. They create great rejoicing in the human heart by their presence. Truth abounds when the love of the Lord dwells within the person who has been born of the Spirit.

Love shows forth great ability to stand against every and all opposition. 1 Cor. 13:7 As a Christian we do not always escape troubles, trials and the adverse circumstances of life. The wise man said that; all things come alike to all. Ecc. 9:2a But, there is a difference. At times the righteous are delivered in a miraculous fashion. At times they are not. However, under all situations the righteous fare much better than the unrighteous. The strength of the Lord enables them to face their difficulties with the knowledge that they do not stand alone, He has promised never to leave nor forsake us.

His love displayed in our lives is a true source of our faith, our belief in the promises of His Word. Faith is not naïve until it can be deceived, rather it has absolute confidence in His promises. While we are exhorted to believe all things, the gift of His Spirit will illuminate our understanding until we may discern those things which are not of faith. 1 Cor. 13:7 Faith is to be in the Word of the Lord. John warned that we are not to receive every spirit but to try the spirits. 1 John 4:1 A good method to be used in trying the spirit of a person is to let them talk in personal conversation. They will soon tell you what is within, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. Mt. 12:34 The attitude, the spiritual personality of a person will be exposed by their words. Living as we are in the end of the age it is an imperative that the Christian be on guard at all times. His love manifest in us will bring forth

the fruit of righteousness preparing us for the glorious and marvelous events scheduled by Him, for His church in these last days.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 20

Love is the essence of hope. Scriptural hope is more than a wish. Spiritual hope address the confidence and full expectation that is found in the promises of the Lord Jesus. 1 Cor. 13:7 Hope, that is, belief in the Lord Jesus is equal to faith. Hope in the Lord Jesus has a part in the salvation of mankind. Like as with faith, this hope is in the inner being and has hope in the ability of the Lord to fulfill His Word in us. Rom. 8:24 Hoping for those yet invisible things requires waiting and patience. The Lord is not obligated to respond to our prayers immediately, He may, or may hesitate in taking action that we might exercise hope and assurance that He has heard our prayers.

His love as it is displayed in us will bear up under every situation. 1 Cor. 13:7 Extreme difficulties will come. Time of deep strife and sorrow but love enables us to continue in the steadfastness which is to be found in the Lord Jesus. The person who remains steadfast when faced with temptation will find themselves rewarded at the conclusion of that trial with the everlasting crown of life. James 1:12 The recompense far outweighs any discomfort or heartache suffered during the season of trial.

Life is filled with disappointments and people whom we may feel have failed us. 1 Cor. 13:7 His love is limitless and absolutely unending. The beauty of all that we find evidenced in His love is imparted to those who know Him. When His consistent love is abiding in us we receive of His being and character the same nature that is found in Him. As we delve into the sharing of His love it becomes more and more evident that we are to be filled with His love and partake of the divine virtues which are found in that love.

Not only does faith operate by love but the ability to be what He is, as it is expressed by Paul in these scriptures, depends on love. 1 Cor. 13:7 In being loved by the Lord and participating with Him in His great and perfect love, we are changed. It becomes a matter of ever increasing love and the

showing forth of the glory of the Lord. We are in the process of growth, being changed, through His love for us. The end result will be a people, the redeemed of the Lord, His Bride, who have reached the very completeness of the revelation of His love in their lives. The life of a victorious Christian is fueled by the presence of His love as it flows in our hearts and has a persistent effect in our conduct and manner of life.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 21

Enduring love is that which we find in the Lord Jesus. Human love will at times be short lived. It is incapable of maintaining its depth and fervor. Even a Mothers love, which seems to be the most highly regarded among mankind, can change and become hatred, leading to the murder of their child. Love, as a virtue of the Lord is consistent and unchanging. His love is unfailing. 1 Cor. 13:8 It does not diminish in its magnitude. It is without partiality. The manner in which He has demonstrated His love in one life is the pattern which He uses for all. There is nothing in this life which cannot fail. His love is totally unfailing. He is love, all inclusive love, eternal and everlasting. His love is more real than any human love that has ever existed.

His undying, unfading, never ceasing love will be in constant evidence in the new heavens and the new earth. The occupants of eternity will know a steady flow of His love originating from His throne and covering the whole of that new earth, simply because He is love. His presence is marked and known by His presence dwelling in His people. The person who does the will of the Lord Jesus because they love Him, will know that the presence of the Lord, who is love dwells within. John 14:23 Consider the magnitude of love which He brings within the spirit nature of those who are His.

Prophecy, speaking in tongues and knowledge are blended together as gifts that will cease. 1 Cor. 13:8 If any one of them has ceased then all are ended. They will cease only when the Lord Jesus perfects the church and all that pertains to that glorious end time church. They will end, their current weakness, only when that fullness is ushered in by the Lord Jesus. 1 Cor. 13:10 While some argue that prophecy and tongues have ceased, that must also be the case with knowledge. The scripture stated that the increase of knowledge would be an end time phenomena. The manner in

which we travel over the face of the earth today by every means of transportation surely fits “many shall run to and fro.” Plus, “knowledge shall be increased.” Dan. 12:4 Spiritual knowledge is gained by the revelation of the Word of the Lord, accompanied by the gift of the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues and the interpretation thereof, as well as the gift of prophecy. These did not cease with the diminishing of the early church, for if they had, there would be no knowledge. The expression of His tremendous love is often revealed to the church through, tongues, prophecy and knowledge. Rather than having died or at the very least faded away they have intensified greatly in the dealings of the Lord in the church. A message, an experience which has swept around the world and is advancing by leaps and bounds.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 22

Four essentials which are necessary for a mature Christian life. Without the abiding presence of the Spirit of the Lord faith, hope and charity will not be active in those who call themselves, His people. His continuous presence is absolutely vital as a catalyst to spiritual growth and the fulfillment of the promises of the Lord. 1 Cor. 13:13 The thought of His dwelling with us in the fullness of His glory and power is staggering, yet it is His desire. Jesus promised that those who love Him will become a vessel in which the fullness of the Godhead would dwell. John 14:23 There is a place in Christian experience where we come to a realization of the terrific magnitude of the purpose of the Lord in His redeemed. Too often we keep Him as a babe in the manger and not as the mature King of kings who desires to rule and reign in our lives. Can we limit fullness or does it really mean filled to the capacity? The promise is that when we know the love of Christ we will be filled with all the fullness of the Lord. Gal. 3:19 Whatever we have received of the Lord in the past, there is still much, much more. As a matter of fact, of the fullness of Himself there is no end. Our capacity is limited only by our willingness to receive. He is inexhaustible in all of His being and character.

Faith in the Lord is an absolute necessity. Without faith it is impossible to please Him. Heb. 11:6 On the positive side, His gifts are innumerable to those who will diligently seek Him. The emphasis should be on diligence, The half hearted, the lazy receive little or nothing at all. The power which

motivates faith is the subject of our study and that is love. Gal. 5:6 A deep, whole hearted love for the Lord Jesus is the foundation of all that we are going to receive from Him. He is moved by our love for Him. Do not be afraid to communicate to Him how much you love Him. It will do something for you that nothing else can do. He delights in hearing your praise and expressions of adoration for Him.

Hope too is stimulated by our love for the Lord Jesus. There is no disappointment in those who place their confidence in Christ. Rom. 5:5 Hope, as it is used in the Word of the Lord is a word of strength and power. It speaks to us of one whom we can believe in and trust explicitly. He is not a man that He should lie. His promises are yea and amen. When all else and all others have failed, He remains faithful in all things. He is our hope for this life and for life eternal, of which He is the author. Our desire, our hope, our confidence in Him becomes an anchor to our souls and we know that dwelling in His love we are held fast and will not drift. Heb. 6:19

THE LORD IS LOVE. 23

The greatest of these is love. 1 Cor. 13:13 Not only is it the greatest of the three but it is the greatest of any and all. There is nothing that exceeds the love which makes the Lord who He is and what He is. He is Lord of all, He is the entirety, the totality of love. No entity, human or spirit, living or dead, has, nor will they ever exceed the magnitude of His love. His love is extended to all who are born on this earth, none are excluded. John 3:16 He loves the very worst, the most ungodly sinner, is the object of His love. The rejected of society are loved with the same love that is extended to the whosoever will. The Lord does not respect one above the other. Acts 10:34

Love demands That here be some sort of communication between the lovers. Long distant love exists, but not for long. There must be fellowship where love is expressed one to another. The Lord Jesus, knowing that He would soon depart this life, promised to send another Comforter. One just like Himself. One whom Jesus recognized as a person. He would come with the explicit purpose of revealing the Lord Jesus. His communication would center on glorifying the Lord Jesus. He, the Holy Spirit, is the love line between the redeemed and the Redeemer. John 16:7, 13-15 He makes Jesus known and makes Him to be very wonderful and real.

Because we are the sons of the heavenly Father and we have been born of His Spirit, as was the Lord Jesus, we have therefore received the Spirit of the Lord. The Father has fulfilled the request of His Son, the Lord Jesus and has sent the Comforter to make Christ real in our lives. Gal. 4:6 His great and grand gift of love is the baptism of the Spirit. He is given to all who ask, no time limit used. Luke 11:13 How can we know true love unless the Spirit of love dwells within. Paul, listing the experiences of the Ephesian church said; that after having heard the word of salvation, they believed and were therefore sealed with the promised Holy Spirit. Eph. 1:13

Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down His life for His friends. John 15:13 The world was visited by life and love in the Lord Jesus. He is the full, the absolute representation of the love of the Father. The love which is found in Christ will reach its zenith in the end of the age with the marriage of Christ and the true church. Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her. Eph. 5:25 The intensity of that love is seen in the tremendous price that He was willing to pay to bring her into existence.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 24

Of His love for human kind there is no doubt. How much we understand and participate in His love is the question. When, if ever will we fully comprehend the magnitude of His great love for us. He is at the far end of the spectrum, the eternal. We are but natural, born in sin and sharpened in iniquity. Yet, before anyone but the Lord even thought of our existence He had already expressed His love and prepared a way of salvation for us. While we were wallowing in sin and unrighteousness, He had already paid the price for our redemption. Rom. 5:8

The only means of mankind associating with the Lord was to be through His expression of love by sending His Son, the Lord Jesus, into this world. So that we through Him might be made like Him and possess eternal life. This is the true example of His love for us, in that He loved the unlovely, really the unlovable, with such a passion that He was willing to die for them. He is at one time, the mercy seat and also the propitiation granting mankind the privilege of standing before the Lord. Access is only obtainable through His atonement of love. 1 John 4:9-10

The practicality of the requirements for His love to be manifest in us are so simple, yet so profound. They are built on the foundation of love. First, a true, earnest, sincere love for the Lord. A love which involves the total man, spirit, soul and body. That is the first and the great commandment. Mark 12:30-31 There can be no spiritual development without one having a real burning heart felt love for Him. The second, is the demonstration of that love which is shown by as equal a measure of love, but this time toward our fellow man. The measure of love we demonstrate toward our neighbors is the gauge which the Lord uses to determine our love. He is not looking for lip service, He wants the heart. Mt. 15:8

The real test of love, perhaps the hardest part of all of its requirements is to love our enemies. Mt. 5:44 By love and prayer, hatred can be eliminated from the heart of love. The two are not compatible. One or the other will rule and reign and in the mean time will destroy the other. Enmity fills the whole man with unkind and disruptive thoughts. Remember, as a man thinks in his heart so is he. Prov. 23:7 From deep within, from the hidden man of the heart the mouth will proclaim the condition of the heart by speaking words of love or hate. Trying to mix the two can only create a bitterness of heart and soul. Love the Lord, love your fellow man and then come to a place of complete victory by loving, with all your heart, those who have misused you.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 25

The place afforded love in our relationship with the Lord is right up front. Fruit is so necessary to indicate the maturity of a tree, so with things spiritual. In listing the fruit of the Spirit the very first fruit mentioned is love. Unquestionably its position in the word list indicates its great importance. It is not only an evidence of one having been filled with the Spirit but is the force and power by which the other fruit functions. Without love, nothing can work. Consider the fruit of the Spirit, note that without love, they will shrivel up and die. Gal. 5:22-24

The tree bearing the fruit of the Spirit requires the continual presence of the Christ of God dwelling within, for without Him we can do nothing. A tree to

bear fruit must be pruned of all dead and superfluous branches. Christ abiding in us and His words in us, is the sure way to be abundantly fruitful. The result is twofold the Father is glorified and the fruitful one is considered to be a disciple. A disciple being one who eagerly learns of the way of the Master and emulates Him in every aspect of His life and teaching. John 15:1-8 There is most certainly a life style that is presented and lived which is of great benefit. Above all it is imperative that the whole man and heart be motivated by a true love for the Lord Jesus. John 15:9

The child of the Lord is invited to walk with him down a pathway named love. It is here that we learn of the incredible love which He has displayed toward the whole world. While His embrace reaches out to all, each and every one of us will learn to know Him on an individual basis. His love is very much centered on the individual who is in step with Him. Eph. 5:2 The Spirit and the Word combine to produce spiritual growth bringing us to the spiritual; growth which make us to be like Him. The proclamation of the anointed word spoken in love, whether it be positive or negative, combines to bring forth the manifestation of the true life of Christ in the believer. Eph. 4:15

The call of love, is to be made like unto the Lord Jesus. Reflecting His love, mercy and compassion to a world lost in sin. The high calling of the Lord in Christ Jesus is to be holy and blameless before Him. This is a challenge which has been issued to every generation of Christianity. It is no less in effect today than it was at any time in the past. We are chosen with a purpose that we might be a people who love the righteousness which is revealed in the Lord Jesus. It is the call of His Spirit to the Christian world today. His chosen ones are to be blameless and absolutely whole. Eph. 1:4

THE LORD IS LOVE. 26

Far greater than any gift or offering that we might bring to the Lord is our love. Mark 12:33 Jesus listed five ways of presenting our love to Him. Coming to Him we approach His presence on the basis of human love. Not until we have been filled with His love do we begin to love with agape love, that is love which is found only in the Lord. Phileo love is that which enables one to have friends and to be a friend. It is a personal and physical

care and concern for another. It involves the emotions of the intellect and heart. In manifesting our love to Him, and in order to be worthy of His love He must become the center of our love. Our love for all others must be exceeded by our love for Him. In all actuality, when His love is in our hearts we will find a new appreciation and love for those whom we love.

The heart must be strongly involved in loving Him. It is not the physical organ intended but the sentiment, the emotions of the inner man. That which is unseen yet makes us to be the person we are. Hidden to the eyes of all but well known to the Lord. Faith arises in the heart causing a change, the unclean now seek after the righteousness which is found in the Lord. Having confessed their sin, the heart wholehearted seeking the Lord will find the salvation which He has prepared for all men. Rom. 10:10

The whole intellect, the mind and the ability to comprehend, the seeking of understanding and knowledge as it is found in the Lord in its entirety is also required. As we enter into His love we find that it is a love that is far richer, vastly greater and wonderfully deeper than anything we have known previously. In His love we meet with true intelligence. He is wisdom and knowledge personified. The involvement of the whole man in seeking after the Lord will result in great dividends. The mind is renewed and made to be like unto His mind. There is a great transformation which takes place.

Rom. 11:34

The entire soul must also be involved in a true search for the Lord. The soul is the life of the flesh. Lev. 17:11 It is the life giving factor to the entire body. The work horse of natural life. In its constant function blood cares for the whole of the natural man. While soul and spirit are used interchangeably in the scriptures there is a vast difference in their being and makeup. The first man Adam was made a living soul. 1 Cor. 15:45 It took place when the Lord breathed the breath of life into his nostrils. Gen. 2:7

THE LORD IS LOVE. 27

In seeking the Lord the whole strength and ability must become involved.

Paul compared it to the running of a race. In order to win there must be constant training and increase of strength. 1 Cor. 9:24 True love will send one seeking after the Lord with the whole heart. Half a heart, a faint heart will not find the Lord. The total man is required. Jer. 29:13 It is time to compare the things of this life which demand our strength and the things of the Lord which are eternal and apply our strength to that which is of the greatest value. Col. 3:2

The greatest test of our love for the Lord is always in fulfilling His word. The last of the five determining our love for Him is to love as He loves. His love for all is equal, for He is no respecter of persons. We are to exercise a love which is equal to that which we direct toward ourselves. His love is that which reaches out to the whole world. When we love as He loves then we love our neighbor as ourselves. Jesus in defining just exactly who the neighbor might, he gave the parable of good Samaritan as an example. Luke 10:30-37 To Jesus, even the latest stranger to arrive in town was a neighbor. May the Lord help us and give us wisdom in emulating His example.

The dilemma of love. The best of families may have a love in their relationship together which is excellent. However much we may love those who comprise our family unit, Jesus must be loved with a greater love, if we are to be His disciple. Jesus was not advocating hatred of any kind in His appeal to them to become His disciples. The term, love less, is a good interpretation of His purpose. Luke 14:26 The greatness of His love demands our entire attention. He must be placed first in our lives, in preference to all others. As with Abraham and Isaac, Abraham's love for the Lord was greater than that for his son, therefore he was willing to sacrifice him, knowing that he was a gift from the Lord and that the Lord would return Isaac to Abraham. The Lord required the sacrifice of Abraham knowing full well that he would do as requested. Therefore, without Isaac having to die, Abraham proved beyond a shadow of doubt his willingness to be obedient to the Lord even under extreme circumstances. Gen.22:1-14 The Lord not only gave Isaac back to Abraham but provided a proper sacrifice in a ram. Certainly, Abraham's joy was fulfilled that day with a double blessing, his son and the ram. He named that place Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide and most definitely, He did.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 28

Seeing as the very nature of the Lord is love we look for expressions of that true, holy, eternal love. If love between human beings is a strong emotion which is expressed in various ways, how much more true love between the Lord Jesus and those who love Him. It is not an impassionate, blasé type of love. It is a true love which involves the whole being. He is love and therefore is the absolute comprehensiveness of love, it would seem as if though this love would be one sided. Nevertheless, when our foundation and roots are in the Lord Jesus Christ we manifest our love for Him. Eph. 3:17 To know, to experience the love of Christ will cause one to reciprocate with the same measure of love. The natural man may not be able to love with the same degree but the Spirit of the Lord within will lead us to the identical capability of love. Rom.5:5

History as found in the scriptures is frequently used to convey the will and desire of the Lord. In is said that Solomon in writing the Song of Solomon wrote one of the greatest of his one thousand five songs. 1 Kings 4:32 it is a song of love and romance. He opened his song with the sign of affection, the kiss. SOS. 1:2 A kiss, in eastern culture is used as a sign of greeting. It is variously used in that manner throughout the Word. Sometimes between men, children to parents, and other relatives. It was not always just a sign of affection as might be between a couple in love with each other.

The kissing of gods, idols and the like is not uncommon by any means. It is an act of endearment indicating the feelings of the heart. The female, in Solomon's song expresses her hearts desire to be with her lover. To have him kiss her with the kisses of his mouth. The Song of Solomon's is a type portraying the love of Christ and His church, His bride, for one another. With the eternal truth of His Word He conveys His deep affection for His bride. Mt. 4:4 He sends messages of well being, of love and tender care to those who are His very own. Every word He speaks shows forth the greatness of His love for those whom He calls His own. Ps. 119:103

The exhortation of His Word is to reveal our love for Him by kissing the Son lest He be angry with us. Ps. 2:12 We so often approach Him with our requests to perform some much needed deed for us. It is time to enter into His presence with words of love, appreciation and thanksgiving. Choose

very carefully words of love and admiration. Speak them from the heart when coming into the presence of the Lord and see what glorious things He will do. Hos. 14:2

THE LORD IS LOVE. 29

The Lord inspired Solomon to write the Song of Songs. Seeing as it is incorporated into the Scriptures we look for its hidden treasures. What we see portrayed in the love story of the book is for a definite purpose. His intention being that we might comprehend the love, the delight which the Lord Jesus finds in those who love Him. Our response to His love should be greater than any other that we have experienced or will ever experience in life. His banner is a banner declaring His love. Song 2:4

His beloved was brought into the banqueting house, the house of wines. This has all the essentials of a great wedding celebration. The greatest wedding of all is yet to be seen. It is the union between Christ and His church. The sequence of the last day order requires a revival and moving of the Spirit of the Lord in a manner not yet seen in the world. It will be the final visitation of the Lord in gathering in His harvest. It is portrayed for us in the book of Revelation. The Lord Jesus is seen surrounded by a white (leukos, from luke, light) cloud or a cloud of light. Rev. 14:14 The same cloud appeared on the mount of transfiguration as a bright, well illuminated cloud, a cloud of light. Mt. 17:5 How could it have been otherwise when He is seen as shining as the sun and His raiment as white as the light. What a glorious revelation of His real, eternal being. Jesus said that there would be a harvest in the end of the age. Mt. 13:39

As the Son of man, as the eternal seed, the Word of the Lord He will institute the great harvest of the redeemed. This harvest will occupy a period of time during which He will separate the wheat from the chaff. The goats from the sheep. Mt. 25:32-34 The harvest will result in an absolute cleansing, a through purging of those claiming to belong to Christ. An event which will lead to the perfection of the church, resulting in the Bride of Christ being formed. Eph. 5:25-27 The winnowing fork (the Word) will cast the wheat up into the blowing wind (the Spirit) and gather the wheat into the granary or the banqueting hall.

The marriage and the subsequent marriage supper take place on earth, prior to the period of time known as the great tribulation. The process of a great pouring forth of the Spirit and the sanctification by the Word will result in the preparation of the Lambs wife. She will have made herself ready. Rev. 19:7 Much like Esther she will have gone through great preparations anticipating the coming day of her marriage.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 30

His banner over me was love. SOS. 2:4 We note first of all that it was His banner. The insignia of the one who is love personified. It was over her, lifted up for all to see. It is a rallying point for all who are in Christ. Love is an evidence of having been born of the Lord. 1 John 4:7 True love was on display. The greatest example of love in the entire history of man on earth is the gift of life and love through the Lord Jesus. Greater love has no man. John 15:13 Secondly, we take note that the banner was over her. Lifted up on high that all might observe that she is His and is under His divine protection.

His bride will know the fullness of the strength, the authority, the deliverance of His banner of love. His love is a sustaining love, enabling His beloved to face all situations which arise in life. The knowledge of His loving presence is a deep rooted assurance that He is ever with us at all times and under all conditions. Heb. 13:5 He is our refuge, our hiding place, the place of our habitation. For support, as a foundation are the everlasting arms of the Lord. Deut. 33:27 Would we apply such a promise only to Israel of old? Certainly not, this has always been His attitude toward those who love and adore Him. There is no greater spiritual experience than that of finding ourselves in His embrace of love. SOS. 2:6 The love of Christ for His church exceeds by far the very best of love achieved by any couple on earth. Natural love cannot even begin to duplicate such perfect love as is found in the Lord Jesus.

We meet with the destiny of the Bride and find that she is not removed from the earth at the beginning of the tribulation, rather she experiences the very thing of which we have been writing. She finds a refuge from the storm which will come upon the earth in the end of the age. An outburst which has already started. Jesus called it the beginning of sorrows. Mt. 24:8 The

troubles of today's world are merely the introduction. The removal of the Bride will be the key triggering the great tribulation. The Theological question is, where will she go? The book of revelation speaks of her entering into a sheltered place especially prepared by the Lord for the occasion. Rev. 12:5, 14. Here she is kept by the Lord in His banqueting hall. She will find here that which exceeds the effect of wine, it is His love. SOS. 1:2 We would not do an injustice to the Word of the Lord to call it the banquet of love. A love that exists between Christ and His church and is far greater than human love could ever be. The Lord knows those who love Him and He loves them with the fullness of His exceeding great love. 1 Cor. 8:3

THE LORD IS LOVE. 31

The manifestation of the love of the Lord is far greater than any enjoyment which might be derived from wine. Nothing, but absolutely nothing, can reach the ecstasy found in the presence of His Divine love. Song. 1:2 Try as one might to find something that will equal the emotion of the human heart when His love enters in, the search is but in vain. His lovingkindness supersedes all efforts to find a joy or a pleasure which is even similar. His love is excellent, perfect and complete. Ps. 36:7

The love of Christ is love which is unforgettable. Because of its effect Of His love there is no need for a substitute for His love is incomparable. Song 1:4 The attraction of His love is noted in the fact of the bride's desire to run, haste to the drawing of the Lord. Having once participated in that wondrous love only more of the same can satisfy the longing of the human heart for real lovingkindness and care.

The vision of the Lord appearing to Jeremiah brought a message of the tremendous love which is to be found in the Lord. His love is an everlasting love, unceasing and unabating. In many ways with the history of their disobedience it was a marvel that we find the Lord still expressing His love for Israel. He continued to reach out to them and attempted to draw them unto Himself. Jer. 31:3 While the Lord despises the sin of any person, at the same time His majestic love causes Him to make known His mercy and great love which is for all people. Eph. 2:4 A love which was made known at Calvary when Christ took our condemnation and our sin upon Himself. We

being born dead, that is dead in trespasses and sin, in His foresight and by His love He prepared salvation for us. Eph. 2:5

The upright are those who love Him. A love which is based upon the proper motives will produce all the benefits of His love. The pure in heart were those who will see and know the Lord. They are promised that because of their purity they will be the king's friend. Prov. 22:11 His love is of such actual reality that when the children of Israel faced their difficulties in Egypt it is stated that in all of their afflictions He too felt their misery, like a parent wanting to take the place of a sick child. In His love and pity for them He delivered them from their bondage. Isa. 53:9 The Lord will make manifest in every avenue of life His great compassion and love to those who love Him. We are assured of His love for the scriptures show us beyond a shadow of a doubt He loves each and every human being.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 32

What's in a name? Tremendous circumstances, prophetic utterances as well as the nature of a person are to be found in the names given in the scriptures. Of them all, there is none more precious, sweeter, or more effective than the name which the Father gave to His Son. He was to be named Jesus or Joshua, meaning savior. Millions in this gospel dispensation have called upon that name and found it to be the only name of salvation. No church, no religion, no individual can save but one and that is the Lord Jesus. Acts 4:12 His name originated in heaven, came from the Father and was declared by the angel of the Lord to Joseph in a dream. Mt. 1:21-25

The aroma of His name is more fragrant than the best and most expensive of perfumes. This is most definitely a scent which arouses the heart of the virgins in their love toward Him. Song 1:3 Let us first identify the virgins, whose hearts are greatly moved at the sound of His name. Paul identified the church as virgins and that he had espoused her to Christ. 2 Cor. 11:2 The Lord Jesus declared that in the last days, when the prophecy of Mathew twenty-four was in the process of fulfillment that the kingdom of heaven would be manifest and likened unto ten virgins who had been alerted to the quickly approaching wedding and went out to meet the bridegroom. They made certain that they had their lamps with them. They

are divided into two groups of fives. Most unfortunately there was a great difference between them. There is a wise class and a foolish class. Mt. 25:1-2

The wise had lamps and a good surplus of oil (Spirit) to burn in them. The foolish had only a sufficient supply for the night and had not prepared for any delay in the coming of the bridegroom. Mt. 25:3-4 At midnight, the cry was heard of the approaching bridegroom. Midnight is a crucial hour in the scriptures. It was midnight when the death angel visited Egypt and all the firstborn not within a shelter of a blood sprinkled door, died. Ex.12:29-33 The Egyptians wanted the Israelites out of town in a hurry, lest they all be dead men.

Samson carried off the doors of the city at midnight. Judges 16:3 The midnight hour represents judgment for the ungodly but deliverance for those who are in Christ. For the foolish, the unprepared, the unconsecrated virgins it will mean that they go into the great tribulation, because they did not have the anointing of the Spirit upon them. They are not recognized as belonging to the wise/bride class. Therefore they are excluded and not permitted to be a part of the bride. Mt. 25:11-12

THE LORD IS LOVE. 33

The marriage of the Lamb will take place in the darkest hours of the age. We face a world of wickedness, deceit and all manner of ungodliness. The Apostle Paul named the last days, "perilous times." 2 Tim. 3:1 Because of the pre-eminence of wickedness, many, in this case half of the ten virgins will find that their love for the Lord has cooled considerably. Oddly enough, a condition which will take place in the end of the age, even while there has been and will continue to be a real revival. Consider the apostate church which was addressed rather sternly by the Lord Jesus for their lack of love. Is it not just like the Lord to warn them and grant them an opportunity to repent and return to their first love. Rev. 2:4-5 Always, before judgment He visits with mercy.

How fitting that the Prophet Isaiah would issue a call for the people to arise and shine, because the glorious light of the Lord has come upon them. Isa. 60:1 Is there a more brilliant display of light to be found in the Word than

that which is displayed in the woman, the bride of Christ in Revelation twelve. She is a light bearer having been clothed with a light as brilliant as the sun. Standing firm on the earth's only natural satellite, the moon and crowned with divinely appointed leadership, the twelve stars in her crown. We have before us the two extremes which will climax together in the last days. These are final conditions which will prevail on the earth. Extreme darkness, like that of Egypt, a darkness causing men to grope about but not move. Ex. 10:21 In the midst of that darkness will arise the church of glory. The full glory of the Lord abiding in and upon the bride of Christ. A people blazing, scintillating, shining with the full effulgence of the glory of the Lord.

Here is a thought well worthy of the believers consideration. God, who is light, is without even a shadow. He is the essence of light. 1 John 1:5 Therefore He is called a SUN, no He is not the sun, but the blazing light which proceeds from Him is the very brightest of all. Ps. 84:11 After all, the light by which we live, He created. He, however is not created light. He is light. His Son, is His exact image and likeness, therefore He too is a Sun, the Sun of righteousness. Mal. 4:2 Jesus said that His people are the light of the world. Mt. 5:14 Just what may we expect in what Paul described as a glorious church. Eph. 5:27 Most definitely it is the church of His glory. In the experience of the Lord Jesus on the mount of transfiguration we are afforded a revelation of the glory of the Lord revealed in the physical body of a person. His face shown as the sun. His raiment was as brilliant as the light. Mt. 17:2 They were dazzling white, glowing. Mk.9:2

THE LORD IS LOVE. 34

His love for mankind is beyond measure. The greatness, the magnitude of it may only be measured by knowing the One who is Love. He loved us, first and uppermost. Those who respond to His love will find that joy of His love expressed to them in a multitude of ways. Love begets love therefore we love Him. 1 John 4:19 The proof of the presence of that love in our hearts is our attitude toward our fellow man. Love and hate cannot dwell in the same heart and spirit. It is impossible to love the Lord who is invisible and to hate the person whom we meet and see. 1 John 4:20-21 Love flows from His throne, from His heart like a mighty flowing stream. All are invited to participate of its blessings.

Those who really love Him become the light of life to a world of darkness. What beautiful statement, “Let those who love you be like the sun when it comes out in full strength.” Judges 5:31 The greatest of love exists between the Father and the Son. The voice of the Father proceeding from the excellent glory, the throne of brilliant light, said; “This is my beloved Son.” 2 Pet. 1:17 We find the Lord Jesus in all of His splendor and glory in the book of Revelation. John, on Patmos, saw the glory of the Lord revealed in His face. His visage was glowing with the glory of the Lord and appeared as the sun shining in its strength. Rev. 1:16 He is also the mighty messenger, accompanied by a cloud of glory, crowned with the rainbow, a full circle whose three dominant colors represent the Godhead with His face blazing forth the light of the Lord. Rev. 10:1 He will proclaim the end of time. Rev. 10:6

John saw the true Holy City, the new Jerusalem. It is the bride of Christ. She is still wearing that majestic wedding garment (Rev. 12:1). Rev. 21:2 A bride of absolute beauty, none have excelled her in their splendor and magnificence. Remember she is clothed with the fullness of light as well as being the temple of the Most High. 1Cor. 6:19 She will possess the glory of the Lord in its ultimate. Her light will shine more brightly and with greater brilliancy than any, other than the Lord Himself. This is the city of the totality, the completeness, of the blazing scintillating light which emanates from the Lord of light. The glory of God and the light of the Lamb will be the constant supply of the greatest display of light, ever. All other current sources of light will no longer exist. All the brilliant glory of that eternal city will originate from the Lord who is light. Rev. 22:5 Love, a love for the Lord and a love for our fellow man is the key to the great city of light.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 35

The bride learns to relish the sweet perfume of His most precious name, the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. She recognized the value of both His name and the attractive odor which accompanied that name. An aroma which is found in the most precious and holy anointing oil. SOS. 1:3 We have seen the vital importance of possessing the oil of the Lord, the baptism of the Spirit, in relationship to those who are in the bride of Christ in the end of the age. The value of that precious anointing cannot be

measured in human terms. Its great worth is demonstrated in the Divine guidance and direction which the Holy Spirit accomplishes in anointed lives. It is a definite assurance of belonging to the family of the Lord. Rom. 8:14

Under the Old testament style of life, Priests, Prophets and Kings were anointed for leadership of the tribes of Israel. The Lord sent Samuel to anoint Saul to be the king of Israel. 1 Samuel 9:16, 10:1, 15:17-18 David was twice anointed to be king. 2 Sam. 2:4 and 2 Sam. 5:3 Solomon was like wise anointed twice. 1 Chr. 29:22 Thus we see the double or the full measure represented in their anointing. Through the work of these two the Temple of the Lord was built. We recognize the Temple as being the dwelling place of the Lord and was a type of the true Temple, the bride of Christ in the end of the age. 1 Cor. 6:19 Elisha (God is salvation), who is also a type of the last day church in revival, requested a double or a full portion of the anointing which was upon Elijah. His request was not an easy one to fulfill but if he kept his eyes on Elijah when they were separated, his desire would be fulfilled. 2 Kings 2:10 The blessing of the Lord will always be on those who keep their eyes on the Lord Jesus.

The anointing of the high priest was for ministry before the Lord. As priests of the Most High, we too must have the precious anointing oil poured out upon us. That oil flowed down over and covered Aaron's head, his miter, his robe and his whole being that he might enter in before the Lord. The importance of being filled with the Spirit cannot be over emphasized. There is no more effecting prayer than that of intercession through the anointing of the Spirit. It may well be accompanied with the demonstration described by Paul as a groaning, a cry which is not distinguishable. Most definitely, not the language of the Spirit or tongues. Rom. 8:26 Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah would travail and that the Father beholding His travail would be satisfied. Isa. 53:11 We see the Lord Jesus, just prior to His arrest and subsequent crucifixion praying in the garden of Gethsemane. Luke 22:39

THE LORD IS LOVE. 36

The prayer and final commitment of the Lord Jesus took place in Gethsemane, the oil press. Once again His love for the souls of mankind became the predominant, the driving force of His life. He was to be pressed

beyond measure. He who is life, was facing death. The sinless One was about to become sin for every man. Even the human side, the natural man would prefer not to enter into death. The agony, the extreme weight of what was about to take place was far greater than any suffering ever to be experienced by any. None other ever has, nor ever will be pressed beyond measure as was the Lord Jesus. It is not possible for others to ever feel the anguish, the distress, the heaviness of soul and spirit which Jesus experienced in the garden. Mt. 26:36-37

The whole plan of the redemption of mankind had been predetermined in the eternity past. The crux of it's success depended entirely upon the reaction of the Lord Jesus in this moment of decision. As always, the natural man sought another solution, a way which would be easier. If possible let this pass from me. So extreme was the pressure of that moment that Jesus expressed His feelings as being sorrowful to the point of death. What a tremendous weight and burden rested upon Him, causing Him to feel at the very threshold of dying under such an oppressive responsibility. Mt. 26:38 Perhaps we can derive a smattering of the feelings of Christ in the words of Job. He spoke of his grief being fully weighed and his calamity placed on the scales. Job. 6:2-3 Were such a thing possible he felt that they would out weigh the sands of the seas, and he was right when applied to the Lord Jesus. The sands of the seas are used by the Lord to number the innumerable total of the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, both naturally and spiritually. Gen. 32:12 The arrows of the Almighty had pierced his soul and their poison had started to work the works of death within his spirit. The agony of Christ in becoming a sacrifice, the anguish of crucifixion and death were already burning and consuming his inner man. The fear, the terror of the Lord was taking hold in his inner being. Job 6:4 At Calvary, Jesus was to bear the punishment for every person ever to have lived on this earth. In His love and mercy He took our place. The expressions of Job would be ours were it not for the redemption which is found in the Lord Jesus and only in Him. Isaiah described Him as having taken upon Himself all of our calamities, our pains, and our sorrows. God, His very own Father smote Him, and afflicted Him on our behalf. He was wounded, he was beaten for the redemption of every man, including Himself, for though He was the Son of God, He was a man and therefore needed redemption even as every other individual. Isa. 54:4

THE LORD IS LOVE. 37

The love slave surrendered their freedom because of their love for their master, his wife and his children. The purchase of a Hebrew man or woman, as a slave was to exist only for six years. In the seventh year, the Sabbatical year, the year of rest, they were to be given their freedom. In that period of time had the slave become attached to their own family or the family of their master they could continue on or go free but would have to leave their own immediate family behind. Deut. 2-4

Their decision would be made by the force, the power of love. Love for their master and his family, or love for the wife or children causing the individual to give up their rightful freedom and become a slave because of love. Ex. 21:5 The love slave would make a positive and definitive decision by refusing release in exchange for love. Thus we find a mighty demonstration of the power of real love. The prophet Isaiah declared the experience of the Lord Jesus in Gethsemane and the travail of soul while at the same time calling Him the righteous servant. The love slave who would be the sin bearer of the world that He might make those just who would believe on Him. Isa. 53:11 This Jesus who clothed Himself after the manner of a servant. Entering into the world as a man, only to manifest His total humility by becoming obedient to His Father and submitting to the most horrible form of death, the death of the cross. Phil. 2:7-8

The master is then obligated to take the individual to the judges, Hebrew, Elohiym, or the supreme God. This was a vow not made to man but unto the Lord. A lasting, life long promise to serve to the best of one's ability. The prospective love servant was then taken to the door. This act had its spiritual significance under the old order but how much more under the new. Christ is the door. This is the place of consecration to Him. Entering in we dedicate our lives to a continual service unto Him. I AM, the door. John 10:9

The ear is then pinned to the door post. The ear is the instrument of the body whereby we hear the wish and command of the master. The Lord must have the very best attention of our ears, that we might hear His command and do His will. Hearing is a way whereby we can develop our faith in Him. For, faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of the

Lord. Rom. 10:17 The ear lobe pierced and, as if it were nailed to the door post reminds us of the blood sprinkled door posts in the land of Goshen. Blood, the power of redemption. A threefold sprinkling assuring them of deliverance from the scourge of the death angels visit at midnight. Ex. 12:7

THE LORD IS LOVE. 38

The ear of the love servant is now marked. They had indicated their desire to be enduringly attached to their master and his family. The witness and testimony of their love is evidenced by all. Wherever they would go, it was known that they were a slave of love. Deut. 15:17 The choosing of the ear for the sign of love is good. Instructions are usually spoken and in the case of a servant the hearing of the command and its subsequent fulfillment were necessary. The act of obedience is pleasing to the master and also to the Lord. The Lord created the ear that we might hear and obey. Prov. 20:12

Hearing the voice of the Lord and obedience to His command is an imperative. Obedience to Him, is the assurance that He will act in a manner beneficial to the hearer and obedient. Ex. 23:22 Meditate on this one for a while. Are we missing something which not only would contribute to our healing but this is also a promise of health. Ex. 15:26 The fact that the Lord wants the attention of the ear is also seen in the anointing of the priest and the healing of the leper. Strangely enough the same anointing was enacted for both, one for service the other for healing. It was a three fold anointing of blood to be applied to the priest, on the ear (hearing), the thumb (works) and the foot (walk). Ex. 29:20 The same practice was to be followed for the leper. Leprosy, in the scriptures is a type of sin. Lev. 14:14 All have sinned and come short of the glory of the Lord. All come the same way, through the blood of atonement shed by the Lord Jesus.

The Holy anointing oil was sprinkled upon the priesthood. Ex. 29:21 On Aaron, the high priest it was obviously poured out upon him as well until he was well covered. Ps. 133:2 This Holy oil represents the precious anointing of the Holy Spirit. With the leper the process was the same as with the blood, upon the ear, the thumb and the big toe. The remnant of the oil was poured out upon them as a part of the healing, the cleansing from leprosy. Lev. 14:17-18

More important to the Lord is the nature of the love slave who has the ability to hear His instructions. David spoke of the Lord as having opened, digged (margin) or bored his ear, which was far more important than any sacrifice or offering which might be offered unto the Lord. Ps. 40:6 The instructed, the wise person is the one whose ear awakens in the morning to the hearing of the voice of the Lord. It is the Lord who gives hearing to the ear that we might do His will. Those who hear His voice will not be rebellious nor turn from His will. Isa. 50:4-5

THE LORD IS LOVE. 39

In the love servant we find a type of the Lord Jesus. We note also that we too are called upon to follow the pattern which He established and become love servants of the Lord. The prophet Isaiah called attention to this one who would come from the Father, whom the Father would call, my servant. Isa. 42:1 In the eternity past, in the kingdom of God, He was equal with His Father. That high and exalted position He laid aside to be born a man as all others are that He might do the Fathers will and at the same time fulfill the demand for the sacrifice of a Lamb. He became a love servant to all, to His Father and to all of mankind. Phil. 2:7

Never has there been a more humble man. As the Logos, the Word, He surrendered a most prestigious position, equal with God. Phil. 2:6 He was life, eternal life, that too He left to take upon Himself a body which would become a sacrifice. The prophetic utterances of the old testament, the sacrifices of the old order, were all a prelude leading up to His atoning death. The bearer of the light of life was to enter into the darkness of death. The Prince, the leader, the author of light and life was to be extinguished for a season. In His servitude He was to die the worst kind of death with which man could afflict Him. He was crucified, nailed to the cross with two malefactors, indicating that He was even as one of them. He was suspended on the cross as one who violated the Law. a false prophet. They made Him a public spectacle. All manner of human abuse was directed at Him. He was humiliated such as none other has, nor ever will experience. Isa. 53:2-11

We must never lose sight of the fact that Jesus was just as human as you and I are. He was subjected to every and all the temptations to sin that we face. There is no difference between His resistance and fight against sin and that which we encounter. He was totally, completely, exactly like all others born into this world. He was tempted in every way, every manner, even as we are, yet without sin. Heb. 4:15 The same power which was in Him is also in us. Acts 1:8 Therefore the same victory which He enjoyed should also be ours. The temptations which He faced are those common to all mankind. However, the promise of the Lord is that He will provide a way of escape and deliverance. 1 Cor. 10:13 The shame, the disgrace of the cross was immense for it touched not only worldly things but heavenly and eternal as well. Thus He was able to despise the shame. Heb. 12:2 His eyes were fixed on the goal, the prize of a redeemed people. A nation of victorious individuals who, like Him, have overcome sin and live triumphantly for Him.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 40

The greatest love of all is the love which occupies the throne of the Lord. No where and at no time is there greater love to be experienced than that which originates from His throne. We have a representative, an advocate seated on the right side of the throne who thoroughly understands us, even better than we think we know ourselves. He is noted as being sympathetic to all of our weaknesses. He is moved upon, motivated by the infirmities which are manifest in those who are His. Heb. 4:15 He is compassion personified. Where could we find one who is more sympathetic to the dilemmas which mankind faces, than one like the Lord Jesus who has been tempted in every manner such as we are. His love and concern reaches out to the most ignorant (love that word), those who are far off and away from the way of life as it is found in the Lord Jesus. For He too, was likewise surrounded by the infirmities of the flesh. There is no emotion, weakness, sin or wickedness which is common to man but what Jesus faced it and conquered its force and power. Heb. 5:2 Precious, most worthy promise:- through His mercy, love and compassionate help, we are more than conquerors. Rom. 8:37

There is nothing which is available through the Scriptures which love will not bring forth in our lives. ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE. That involves, absolutely all, from A to Z, insert, ask what you will and His love will accomplish all of His promises in our lives. He will withhold no good thing from those who walk uprightly. Ps. 84:11 Faith in the Word will receive a positive response. When the proper relationship is maintained, it works. He has made the promise, now the reception, the actual consummation of the promise is up to us. When we are in Christ and His Word dwells in us, look for action. John 15:7

With the Lord, all things are possible. Yes, He really meant, ALL THINGS, Mark 10:27 The Lord knows no impossibilities. What man cannot do, the Lord does. Luke 18:27 The Lord in His kindness and love has issued to every person a measure of faith. Rom. 12:3 Jesus said that just a mustard seed may be used as a measure to remove a massive mountain. Mt. 17:20 Inasmuch as we have such faith which has been committed to us by the Lord, lets dare put it into action and see the Lord perform mighty works in His church. The Lord Jesus lived a sinless life, most certainly He was never sick, yet when He was hung on Calvary's cross he literally became sin and sickness. Isa. 53:4 He has paid the penalty for our forgiveness, healing and release from sin and sickness. Unto Him who is able. He will keep us from sickness and sin. He will keep us. 2 Thess. 3:3

THE LORD IS LOVE. 41

God, the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit are all involved in John 3:16 and work together to make that tremendous love available and well known to the inhabitants of the world. Our theme key scripture is the brief but all inclusive statement that God is love. 1 John 4:7 The nature of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus is not only that of love but as the true Father He becomes the all sufficient one to His children. He cares for each person. On an individual basis. Jesus taught us to pray to the Father in secret. A place of very personal communication with Him. Only you and the Lord participating, as a child unto a kind, loving, heavenly Father.. A secret place, where one may pour out their heart unto the Lord. A place of deep intimacy. Mt. 6:6

There is no greater person than He who is so generous in giving gifts to those who are accounted as being His children. The ungodly know to give good gifts to their children and delight in doing so. How much more is our heavenly Father willing and able to give good gifts to those who love and serve Him. Mt. 6:26 The assured gifts which He give in great abundance, beginning with the new birth are multitudinous, too numerous to list here. He daily loads us with benefits. Ps. 68:19 His love and compassion is fresh each and every day. His love for His own is constantly being renewed. The true heart of a Father who extremely loves His children is to be found in the Father of all fathers. Lam. 3:22-23

Perhaps we should be more interested and give greater attention to those in the children which indicate that they are members of His family. Such as being willing to do His will. Not all who cry out unto the Father will find a place in heaven. To please Him, to find access to Him, is to do His will. Jesus said that He would confess such persons to be His brother and His sister, in other words, members of the family. Mt. 7:21 Observe the beauty of nature, the birds, the flowers, consider how they do not work nor strive for their sustenance but the Lord has built into nature those elements which care for them. Will He not meet and supply your every need, for you are far more important than all other things which He has created. Because of His loving care and watchfulness and His bountiful supply, quit worrying, cease fussing about it. He is Jehovah-rapha, the God of all supply. Seek first the kingdom of the Father and all, yes all, these things shall be added to you. Mt. 6:26-34 Learn to place Him in the absolute first place in your heart and you will know His all sufficiency.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 42

The great love of the Father was manifest by the surrender of all things into the hands of the Lord Jesus. John 3:35 He has been exalted to the throne of the Lord where he has been dignified by His Father. Where all authorities, whether they be of the Lord or Lucifer, are made subject unto Him. He is the extreme, the final authority. All demonstrations and miracles are under His control. Angels, likewise must follow His commands. 1 Peter 3:22 He is Lord over all. The beauty of such an arrangement is that He has and will continue to delegate that power to His disciples. Luke 9:1

The love of the Father demonstrated by the Father for His Son is perfect and full. The result of that love shaped the coming of the Lord Jesus into this world. The Son of God, became the Son of man. Having been shapened in the womb of the virgin, he was born as are all men. This He had in common with all of mankind. However, He was crowned with glory and honor and possessed the God given authority over all the works of His hands. All things, totally, completely were brought into obedience unto Him. Being placed under His feet. Heb. 2:7-8 Possessing absolute power and authority nothing, no one, is excluded from His ability to rule and dominate.

Having been introduced to His greatness and most exalted position the wonder of the enormity of love displayed by the Father and the Son in the crucifixion of the Son is overwhelming. Eternal Life, took upon Himself natural life, to provide eternal life for those having natural life. In order to accomplish that purpose, He who was Life, who had been eternally in the presence of the Father, must die. Jesus lowered Himself in becoming a man. The farthest point of His humility was in the shame of the cross and the tasting of death for every man. Heb. 2:9 We strive and struggle to enter into eternal life. Jesus was driven by the love of the Lord. Therefore He left all that He was and of that which He possessed, to go on a rescue mission. Whereby He would provide a way of redemption for mankind, which would lead to the reward of eternal life. Consider the fact that, all things were brought into existence for Him. Heb. 2:10 Not only is that so, but His is the bond holding the whole of the universe in its proper order. By Him all of nature and the universe maintain their proper arrangement. Col. 1:17 Being the very light of God, the effulgence of perfect light. Bearing the exact image of the Lord. He is the one upholding all things by the word of His power. Heb. 1:3 Still, He was willing to leave behind such a tremendous, high and holy status to save mankind. Now that is unlimited love.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 43

In the marvelous plan and objective of the Lord He has reached out to all through the great enormity of His love. He directed His love toward us when we were yet in sin. Rom. 5:8 In all actuality, that love was directed toward all of mankind from before the foundation of the world. The redeemed, the chosen, His very elect were chosen, in Him (For sound doctrine it is important that we recognize that our calling is, IN HIM).

Our redemption, our place in eternity is totally dependent on Him. Through Him and by Him we have eternal life. His love revealed in us and our response to His love will be demonstrated in the life that we live now. He has called us to be holy and without blame. Eph. 1:4 We cannot determine or use the weakness of the flesh as a standard of Christian living. His high calling is to a glorious work of righteousness and faultlessness being our life style. In life, there are things which we would not ordinarily do but to show love, we do them. If we really love Him we will do His will. Eph. 1:4

So often, under adverse circumstances we hear Paul's words quoted, that all things work together for good. There is a requirement for all things good and bad to be concluded with a positive effect. The promise is only positive in the life of one who loves the Lord. Rom. 8:28 We must also take into consideration the ultimate goal of the Lord as far as His people are concerned. His principle is to develop a people who are conformed to the exact image of His Son. A nation having the same attitude and dedication to the Father as did the Lord Jesus. Submissive to, and seeking the perfect will of the Lord. Living a life that is an example of His righteousness and holiness. Rom. 8:29 Jesus lived a sinless life. Heb. 4:15 The standard has been established and is not unreachable. He will keep those who consecrate their lives to Him from doing evil. 2 Thes. 3:3 He is also very capable to keep those who confess to be His, from falling. Jude 24

What is the secret which enables one to live as we know every Christian should live? The answer is very simple, just walk in love. His love has a constant result in our lives. True love for the Lord Jesus will cause those who are His to greatly desire to do those things which please Him. After all, isn't love made known by our thoughts, feelings which develop into actions of appreciation and love? Eph. 5:2 His love led Him to the cross. How far will we go to demonstrate our love for Him. The life of the blessings of the Lord is that life which is lived dedicated to Him. What a thrill, in grand and glorious objective He will have a Bride just like Himself. He has to be excited about that.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 44

John declared the sign of the continual presence, the abiding presence of the Lord and His love in us, to be our love and appreciation shown toward others. 1 John 4:12 Jesus went so far as to teach all who would listen to love their enemies. Love will bless, instead of curse. Do good to the hateful. Pray for those who misuse and persecute you. Mt. 5:44 Most difficult, actually nigh unto impossible for the carnal, human nature. However, when we have become the recipients of His love the condition of the heart is changed and the impossible becomes the possible. The ability to love as directed by the Lord Jesus is an evidence that we are indeed the children of the Lord. Mt. 5:45 Moreover, This manifestation of His love operating in our hearts is one of the stepping stones to full spiritual maturity in the Lord. Mt. 5:48 Its results will transform His people into His likeness with His being dwelling within. Mt. 5:48 It is a challenge but through adhering to His Word it will be brought to pass in the Bride of Christ in the end of the age. Eph. 5:27

We know that the Lord is Omnipresent, there is no created place where one might escape His presence. Ps. 139:7-10 He is the author of time and occupies eternity, both past and future. Isa. 57:15 The greatness of His person and being is far beyond the thoughts of mankind. In spite of the magnitude of the difference between the creator and the created, He constantly seeks fellowship with His people. Through His love, He dwells within that heart which is filled with His love. The acid test being our ability to express, as He does, love toward others. Even going so far as to love our enemies. It cannot be over emphasized here that the heart of love is proclaimed to be His DWELLING PLACE. (Sorry, I had to shout it).

Love as He loves and become in truth, the temple of the Lord. The destiny of every child of the Lord is to become the temple of the Most High. What a privilege. Having been purchased with the very highest and most valuable price, learn to appreciate fully His desire to transform His people into a dwelling which He may occupy eternally. 1 Cor. 6:19-20 This is not mediocre Christianity but is a completed work and maturity which the Lord will manifest in His Bride. A yielded life, body and spirit is necessary to participate in such a glorious event. The assurance of such promises is in the Gift of the Spirit. Then beginning of the full relationship is when we are

born of the Spirit and then filled as they were on the day of Pentecost. 1 John. 4:13

THE LORD IS LOVE. 45

The scriptures plainly reveal the longing of the Lord to be welcomed into the life of the believer until they are aware of His presence abiding within their hearts. He is not seeking a casual or a trifling acquaintance but one of total involvement on the part of both parties. As the temple of the Lord there must be a through cleansing and dedication to the One who is being made welcome. His presence is not to be on a temporary basis but a permanent relationship. His intention is to remain, to inhabit His temple. Why have a temple if it is not constructed to be occupied. Moreover, The Word declared that He would dwell "in them". 2 Cor. 6:16 Not only is He with us, that is close by, but when we speak the Word, it is His Word and He is that Word made flesh, so He is in our mouth and in our hearts. Rom. 10:8

Not only will He dwell in His people, but He will walk in them. If we fail; in walking the walk it is because He has not been fully welcomed and is not walking His life in us. 2 Cor. 6:16 Every one born of the Spirit of the Lord will recognize the presence and guidance of the Spirit. This is not a case of either or. Paul made a powerful statement of fact, that if the Spirit of the Lord is not in us, then we are not His. Rom. 8:9 Our love for the Lord Jesus will determine our spirituality. If we really love Him we will live according to the teaching of His Word. As we do so, the Father will love that person who follows the Word and the Godhead will come to them with the divine intention of making them to be the dwelling place of the Lord. John 14:23 We are not looking at a theory, or simply some ones doctrine, these are facts stated in the Word of the Lord which He greatly desires to accomplish in His church.

Believe and reap the benefits. The Word of Christ dwelling richly within us will result in the revelation of the will and purposes of the Lord. He must be given the first place in our hearts. Then and only then will we see the mighty demonstration of His power and ability in the church. Col. 3:16 As children of the Most High every promise which He has given is ours. All the privileges and rights given in the volume of the book are ours. We know that in the first resurrection the dead in Christ will be raised with a new,

eternal body. But, how about now. If He dwells in us, and we have evidence that He does, then His very presence will have an effect on our life. Not only spiritually but physically as well. Rom. 8:11 The quickening, the life giving force and power found in His presence can vitalize our mortal bodies in the here and now. Rom. 8:11 Having been born of the Spirit we have already experienced the quickening unto life everlasting. Eph. 2:5 Jesus is a life-giving force.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 46

Love will be tested to the nth degree. In the incident of the meeting of the unnamed young man and the Lord Jesus we find love sought and then spurned. What ever motivated the impetuous young man, deeply stirred him to seek the Lord Jesus. It is impressive to read that he came running unto the Lord Jesus and fell upon his knees before Him, while acknowledging Jesus as one who was a worthy teacher. There was obvious conviction, for he came seeking life eternal and recognized that it was obtainable only through the Lord Jesus. Mt. 19:16 This young man was a deeply religious individual for he had acquired a place of leadership and authority, even in his youth. Luke 18:18 It speaks volumes for one in his position and as well known as he would have been in the community to seek the Lord in such a manner. It is convincing of the fact of his deep sincerity. His act was not committed in a home, hidden from the eyes of the public but on a public road where all could see his actions. Yes, he was very earnest in his approach to the Lord.

Only Luke drew our attention to the words of Jesus which may have been a rebuke or at the least a gentle reminder. The young man had called Jesus "good". Knowing the thoughts of man Jesus would have known the inner most thoughts of his heart. To have taken offense at his usage of the word "good," Jesus would have seen a wrong attitude in his choice of words. Only of God may it be said that He is Good. While the scriptures acknowledge that Jesus was God in human form. There had to have been an emphasis on the natural man in the statement of the young man. Luke 10:19

Jesus then questioned him concerning his understanding of some key points of the Law. The response of the young man is admirable. The

fulfillment of these vital commandments of the Law had been his way of life from the time of his childhood. He was well versed in the Law and had the religious responsibility to follow and be obedient to the commandments. He was indeed an outstanding person. He had practiced and lived according to the Law. Had he found life everlasting in the Law he would not have been at the feet of Jesus seeking a way of life which had escaped him. Religiosity, a form of worship, will never satisfy. Works cannot appease the deep rooted longing of the human heart for reality. It is only to be found in the Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Tim. 1:10 He stood at the very threshold of eternal life and could have easily entered the door of salvation. John 10:9 So close, as to be at a point where one more step would have assured him of having achieved that, eternal life for which he had come to the Lord Jesus in the first place. The decision was entirely his.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 47

The young gentleman had a very impressive religious background and history of good works, none of them being sufficient to afford him peace of mind and spirit. Had he been thoroughly convinced that his spiritual practices were sufficient he would not have come to Jesus seeking a way into the kingdom of God. Mark writes that Jesus looking upon him, loved him. Mark 10:21 He most definitely was an outstanding young man. He had all the qualifications to become an earnest and true follower of the Lord Jesus.

One thing. Only one thing, yet it turned the man aside and caused him to go away from the Lord. A lack, a short fall, only one decision to make, and what he had so intently sought for would have been eternally his. He made the most serious and damaging choice of his life. How many in this life have found themselves just one step, one decision away from everlasting life only to turn from it and become lost in the glitter of this world. David found himself in much the same position. Then proclaimed that his desire for the Lord was so strong, that He was what he would seek after. The privilege of dwelling in the house of the Lord eternally. Something that he would spend the days of his life seeking for. Ps. 27:4 What a contrast between the two of these rich men.

Jesus, without equivocation spoke directly to his problem, his love for his riches. His possessions were not the problem, his love for them definitely was. Anything else that had been required of him, he would have performed, he no doubt would have gladly fulfilled any good works or would have even made a generous gift to the Lord Jesus. But, sell and give, become poor, release all of his goods, impossible. There was no hesitation in his decision. He departed with a heavy, sorrowful heart, as he was an extremely rich man. Luke 18:22-23

Had he made the right choice, he would have had a twofold benefit. He would have been with Jesus. He would have been a disciple of the Lord Jesus and would have benefited mankind after an eternal manner, as well as in this life. Secondly, he would have stored up treasures in heaven. The very best bank. One that will never go broke. Heavenly treasures are everlasting. They never diminish in value. Attitudes influence our lives every single day. Right attitudes are those which lead us to things which are spiritual and are only found in the Lord Jesus. He said; come and follow me. The very best life, in this life, and that which is to come is found in Jesus.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 48

Jesus laid emphasis on what He called the first and the great commandment. It is the commandment of love toward the Lord. Trying to assess the actions of the rich young ruler we find that he would be in violation of the very first commandment as well as the second. Mt. 22:37-39 Though he had kept the commandments from his youth he had never faced the reality of their consequences. In one fell swoop, Jesus tested him on both. If he loved the Lord he would have no problem consecrating himself unto the Lord. If he loved his fellow man, then the division of his possessions would have been positive proof of that love.

This young man made a decision which was to control the rest of his life. His attitude of sorrow was not frivolous, it was deep rooted and would have a profound effect on his future. As he left Jesus, he was exceedingly sorrowful, his heart was filled with grief and extremely saddened. Luke 18:23 Mark speaks of his attitude as being sad, gloomy, like being under a

dark cloud. Also grieved or in distress, great heaviness. Mark 10:22 He missed the greatest opportunity of having a life mightily blessed of the Lord, both on earth and in heaven. Except he relented and came to Jesus later on, this attitude would have stayed with him all of his life.

The ability to give of oneself and their possessions is a God given virtue. It has tremendous rewards. Jesus then listed the returns prepared for the twelve who were following him. It involved not only things in eternity, that is in heaven, but the promise included the things of this life as well. The very things which they had forsaken and given up for the sake of following Christ, would be returned to them, one hundredfold or a hundred times over. Having followed Him in the regeneration, covering everything from the new birth to the new heavens and the new earth, they would receive the most valuable of all, everlasting life. Mt. 19:28-29 The ability to give, to be generous with the Lord is not the capability of all. It is a lesson that must be taught and learned if a person is to be financially blessed of the Lord. Jesus included it in the beatitudes. When giving to the Lord with the right attitude one soon learns that we cannot out give the Lord. Consider His brief word on giving, give and it shall be given. Not in equal amount, but returned in a greater portion, jammed, agitated until more may be added, flooding or overflowing, in other words in great and wondrous abundance. Luke 6:38 Take the tithe into the storehouse. Give unto the Lord that which is our responsibility to give that the blessings of the Lord might be upon those who are obedient to His Word. Mal. 3:10

THE LORD IS LOVE. 49

In the individual whom we have been studying we have a perfect example of one who exemplifies the word of the Lord. It is painfully obvious that he was not about ready to follow the Lord. He wanted eternal life, like he wanted and purchased, for himself, everything else in life. He loved the world. John gave warning that to love the world and the things which are in the world would exclude the love of the Father from the spiritual being. 1 John 2:15 This presents a decision which all must face. Will it be the world or the Lord. The two are in competition with each other for the total attention of mankind. Jesus spoke of the impossibility of serving two masters at one and the same time. One will be loved, the other hated.

Jesus then directed His words to the problem that was so apparent in the young man, "You cannot serve God and Money." Mt. 6:24 NIV.

John did us a great favor by proceeding to define what is involved in loving the world. Basically it all comes down to a situation where the attitude, the thoughts, the emotions of the human heart are contrary to the will of the Lord. He defined three things which are all that the world has to offer. The lust of the flesh, that exceeding strong desire which drives a person into a state of mind where they are overwhelmed by their supposed need for the thing lusted after. The flesh is that totally carnal entity which is never satisfied by achieving the thing sought after, it always demands more. The lust of the eyes. A drive, a fire kindled by beholding an object which then creates a strong craving for the object seen. The pride of life. The achievements which become the life style, the conversation of the individual, not as a source of news, but something to brag about. 1 John 2:16 All of these are earthly, they are carnal and easily become the purpose of life to mankind once they grip our hearts and minds. Thoughts on each of them could be greatly expanded in their range and meaning.

It is shocking to take the Word at face value and realize that there is no gray area with the Lord. The heart is either centered on a complete and full love for the Lord or it is toward the world. One rejects the other. The two do not agree nor mix. The afore mentioned things of this world are not of the Father. All of them have their termination point and are not everlasting. That which is of the Father, His love, His eternal companionship will never cease. For infinite eternity those who participate in the benefits of His great mercy and love in this life will enjoy the fullness of His majestic love. Just the measure of His love which we receive in this present life is so wonderful that the heart desires to receive more and to know Him better. Phil. 3:10

THE LORD IS LOVE. 50

Real life, eternal life, is to be found only in the Son of God. It is a direct result of having received the abundance of His love into our hearts. The promises given far exceed the expectation of those who are in Christ today. Where we were at one time dead in trespasses and sins, He has now quickened us, that is brought us to life, in Christ Jesus. Eph. 2:1 This is the result of His exceeding mercy and the greatness of His love. Eph. 2:4 His

object being that, now, here in this life, the life of the Lord Jesus might be lived in His people. The resurrection life of Jesus is now available to all who will love Him with all of their hearts. From a life of sin which can only bring death He has raised us, quickened us together with Him. Eph. 2:5

There is a depth of the life of Christ to yet be revealed to the church where she will demonstrate the same resurrection life as was manifest in the Apostle Paul. He was stoned to such a degree that he was considered to be dead. His corpse was dragged out of the city and left for the wild animals and birds of prey to consume. While the disciples who were with him stood around, don't you think they were praying. He rose up and went right back into the city. That is resurrection life. Having been so viciously stoned his bones would have been broken and crushed, but the life of Christ was present in him. He even went back into the city and finished his sermon. Acts 14:19-21 He faced difficulties of all sorts. He even spent a day and a night in the deep. Death many times visited him. 2 Cor. 11:23-27 However, it was not until he was ready to be offered that he came to the end of his life. 2 Tim. 4:6

The most precious love of the Son of God led Paul to be crucified with Christ. His life was totally consecrated to the Lord Jesus. He had died to self and all sins of the flesh and spirit. His spiritual experience had effectively wrought the death of Christ in him. Nevertheless, he lived, but it was no longer a life lived according to his own will. It was Christ living in him. He was a vessel which was filled with the mighty presence of the Lord. The love of the Lord Jesus had prevailed in his life and he was completely sold out to Him. Gal. 2:20 He is an example of that which the Lord will accomplish in His people in the end of the age. Not a mega-church, but a body of believers in whom the Lord Jesus has taken full and complete residence, until it may be said of them . . . (*incomplete sentence ending*)

THE LORD IS LOVE. 51

The Apostle Paul made the love of Christ a very personal relationship by stating that the Lord Jesus, "loved me, and gave himself for me." Gal. 2:20 Our affiliation with Christ begins with the work of the Spirit known as the new birth. It is very much a one on one experience. Those who have been born of the Spirit are acknowledged by various means in the scriptures. Not

the least of which is the fact that Jesus called His followers, friends. The greatest demonstration of love, ever, is in the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus. He laid down His life for His friends, that is, those who are willing to obey His commandments. To be a friend is to be in on the inner circle. Love creates a close affinity between a man and a woman, usually leading to marriage. John 15:13-14 Among these who are the friends of Jesus and greatly loved there are no secrets but rather a constant revelation of the works of the Lord. John 15:15 All are invited to join this happy group of friends.

Those who have participated in His love are the redeemed, the blood washed. All who come to Christ in repentance are to be beneficiaries of the magnitude of His love and will know the exceeding great power of the blood of Christ to cleanse from sin. Rev. 1:5 In all that He does, the Lord always does a through job. In the removal of sin from the life of His friends he "cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John 1:7 His love and work of redemption is to bring liberty, freedom from all iniquity, all that is unrighteous. He is in the process of purifying a people for His own good pleasure who are totally dedicated to Him and have great desire and drive to manifest their love for Him, by their works. Titus 2:14

Those who will eventually be excluded from the kingdom of heaven because they have not been partakers of His love are listed by the Apostle. 1 Cor. 6:8-10 He then turned to the saints at Corinth and reminded them that prior to their coming to Christ, they were among this motley lot of sinners. Now, all who are in Christ have been washed thoroughly, their sins past have been completely forgiven and forgotten by His great love. They have been sanctified, purified, set apart and kept for the Masters use. They are justified, made to be right in the sight of the Lord. They stand before the Lord in absolute innocence, fully made to be just. The beauty of all this is that none need be excluded from the glorious effects of His love in our life. He is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to a knowledge of sins forgiven. Our individual choices in life determine whether or not we are enveloped in His marvelous love. Thereby possessing eternal life. 1 Cor. 6:11

THE LORD IS LOVE. 52

Strong words, yet a true test of that which dwells within the Christian heart. A positive evidence of His wonderful love ruling and reigning in the heart of the believer. No one likes to be called a liar, as a matter of fact, most people will become violently angry when thusly accused. John, unequivocally pronounced the individual who states that they know the Lord but do not follow His Word, are liars. Furthermore, he soundly declared that the truth does not abide in them. Perceptibly This is true because Jesus is the truth. John 14:6 A positive evidence of knowing the Lord, is our obedience to His will. A service of love toward Him. 1 John 2:4

Paul's words are even more difficult. We know, that even through we may not appreciate hearing things like this from Paul, if there is a truth in them, then we must hear them and benefit from them. Writing to Titus he spoke of a segment found in Christianity who profess to know the Lord. Nonetheless, their actions speak otherwise for they deny the Lord by limiting His abilities. They negate His power and the demonstration of His Word and Spirit. His description of them is certainly far from flattering. Paul was a master at the use of descriptive, cutting, hard words. He said they were abominable, detestable, actually idolatrous. He then tagged them as being disobedient, set in their own ways which were contrary to the truth. Thus, when it came to good works, they were reprobate. Attendants at the church meetings but void of a proper attitude. Their good works were wholly unacceptable and rejected by the Lord. Titus 1:16

To accomplish in our lives the will of the Lord is impossible, unless we have the power of His Spirit and the Word to direct us. Then, all things are possible to them who believe. We are never directed of the Lord to follow a pattern or life style which is impossible to achieve. He knows all too well our limitations and weaknesses and provides the authority and power necessary to work out His perfect will in us. The secret of a life of absolute victory is to be abiding in Him. Repeatedly the Word refers to such a dynamic spiritual encounter, where His presence is consistently dwelling within our spirit nature. The Christian life cannot be lived without the abiding presence, the continuous, the persistent dwelling of the living God in us. John 14:23 A truth of the gospel which must be in fact and not in theory. 1 John 3:6 It becomes more and more evident that the Lord was

extremely wise in choosing His disciples. John may be known as the Apostle of love but his words are those of a rugged fisherman. He used a two pronged hook and as matter of fact and truth, said; that those who sin, have never had a revelation of the Lord Jesus and have not known Him. 1 John 3:6

THE LORD IS LOVE. 53

John was not finished with his presentation of what one who is dwelling in the love of Christ should be, in Him. When the abiding presence of the Christ is present that person will walk as Christ walked. 1 John 2:6 They will emulate His works and life making His mighty power known to the world, through the demonstration of the Spirit in their lives. They minister and work the works of the Lord Jesus. How well we remember the words of the Lord Jesus. Greater works than these shall you do, because I go unto my Father. John 14:12 The challenge is great, the benefits are magnanimous, the results are eternal. We know, that in the natural, the work world, when we set our goals and really center in on them, anyone can be successful. In some cases it may require a Herculean effort, but success is obtainable. Apply the same dedication to spiritual things and all things are possible to them who believe. Mark 9:23

The power of spiritual light or darkness is resident within the spirit nature of mankind. There is no twilight or dawn. It is a matter of love or hate. Wherever there is a group of people gathered together for whatever purpose, even for a church service, there will be found the emotions of love and hate. A condition which should not exist among those who belong to the Lord. We are children of light. Hate is a part of the element of darkness. Where it is present, it becomes a spiritual barrier. A hindrance to spiritual growth. One may proclaim that their walk is in the light, but if we hate our brother or sister, in the Lord, we walk in darkness. 1 John 2:9 It is time to follow the teaching of the Word and allow the spirit of the Lord to produce in us a love which is without dissimulation or hypocrisy. Rom. 12:9 A true love not a cover up, but an example of the love of Christ toward all mankind.

Consider how important such a matter is in the eyes of the Lord. The individual who is able to love, in spite of circumstances, is going to continue

to walk in the light of the Word. Those who carry a grudge will find themselves in a state of darkness, doubt and unbelief. This is a very serious matter, because so many today are involved in situations which are unpleasant and sometimes extremely hurtful and damaging to the human psyche. When the Love of the Lord floods our heart and spirit we are able to face conditions which would harm us greatly and overcome them through His love. Ps. 34:19 The sustaining power of love is able to keep us from stumbling and being tripped up spiritually by the trial which we must endure and to come out victorious. 1 John 2:10

THE LORD IS LOVE. 54

There is a place, a time for hatred, in love. Ecc. 3:8 As the Lord Jesus said pertaining to the two masters, one will be loved and the other hated. The one loved will be clung to tightly, while the other will be loathed and rejected. Jesus and Mammon cannot both be served at the same time. In the case of the children of the Lord, to hate sin is to keep away from sin. Lk. 16:13 A holy hatred for all that is unrighteous will develop a strong Christian character in those who love the Lord. The greater our love for the Lord the more intense our hatred for sin becomes. It is a love hate relationship. Those who really love the Lord are instructed by the Word to hate evil. Thereby the Lord will keep, that is, guard the souls of those who live in His love. He will deliver them from the works of the unrighteous one. Liberty, freedom, deliverance are to be found in His love. Ps. 97:10 There is no greater benefit to be found in this life than to love the Lord will all of our heart.

The enormousness of the love which the Lord has for mankind is beyond our comprehension. Calvary love flows constantly from the throne of the Lord. King Hezekiah, in his affliction coined words which every sinner may voice. In place of peace, which all desperately seek, he found great bitterness of soul. However, the demonstration of the love of the Lord in his life brought freedom to his soul from the pit of corruption. Hezekiah found assurance in knowing that the Lord had taken his iniquity and cast it behind his back. It was completely removed from His sight. Never would He look upon it again. Isa. 38:17 The forgiveness of the Lord is unconditional, perfect and full. All confessed sin has been covered and completely concealed. Ps. 65:2 Never will it ever be used as a means of condemnation

by the Lord. Any feelings of guilt over the forgiven past are not from the Lord. Being in Christ we have the privilege of walking in the anointing of the Spirit, knowing complete forgiveness. Rom. 8:1

His extreme love in dealing with the sin question is expressed in many ways in the scriptures. He does a complete work of blotting out, erasing any memory of sin that He might retain. He has declared that He will no longer remember our sin. This He does for His own name sake that He might receive a people into His presence who are pure and righteous. Isa. 43:25 The extent of His love and mercy is downright endless. In the first place He issues a pardon that is irrevocable. Because He is greater than all sin, He passes by it, when it is forgiven. He never gives it a second thought. Compassionately, He is patient with us in bringing our iniquities into subjection, i.e. setting the sinner free. Then casting our sin into the very deepest recesses of the sea. Micah 7:18-19 How great is His love.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 55

The very essence of the Lord is love. He is the personification of love. Our theme from the beginning has been the declaration of the scripture which states that God is love. Any individual without either is not in fellowship with the Lord. God and love, love and God are inseparable. The person not possessing either of these in his life is totally without the Lord. Love becomes the witness and evidence of the presence of the Lord in our lives. Just a declaration of His presence in us is insufficient. There must be an actual manifestation of that love. It is a vital living factor of the Christian life. 1 John 4:8

The dwelling place of the Most High must be a residence where love flourishes. As His character is love, so He emanates love which all who are members of His great family may receive in the fullness of its virtue and power. His love is not on the level of a mere man but is unique in its makeup and demonstration. It is the unquestionable the highest form of love in existence. The beauty of His love is that it is His intent and the strong desire of His love to dwell with those who are His. We think of heaven, His throne, His presence as being above and far off. While repeatedly in His Word He has expressed His enormous longing to dwell in

the spirit and heart of His redeemed. Living in love, is the foundation, the composition of His existing, living love abiding in His redeemed. 1John 4:16

The key to what He desires in this relationship is to be made thoroughly welcomed as the major resident in the heart and life of those who are His. Hear His appeal. His people are called the church. It is an assemblage which He has purchased with His own blood. Therefore, it is His, it belongs to Him, He paid the supreme price that it might be His. Acts 20:28 He seeks to occupy in all completeness that which is rightfully His. All who are a part of that true church rejoice in the fact that He has made us to be His. He has become the head, the ruler, the one making decisions over everything to the church. Thus we are made aware of a fundamental affiliation with the Lord Jesus in a very close and loving manner. Eph. 1:22 A joining together which is necessary to complete the divine purpose of the Lord. This church is in the process of spiritual growth which will bring her to an equal rank or standing with the Lord Jesus. Eph. 4:15 Note, these are truth speaker as well as a people seeking the beautiful truth of the Lord. They are a people who are filled with and participate in the love of the Lord. They have bought the truth which they have found in His magnificent love and are not about to let it slip from them. Pr. 23:23

THE LORD IS LOVE. 56

The attitude of Christians toward others must always bear the marks of the love of the Lord. It is not sufficient to say we love but real love must be demonstrated. That is not by any chance always an easy matter. We are taught and the expectation of the Lord is that our love will be equal to His. His love cried out on Calvary, Father forgive them for they know not what they do. Luke 23:34 That love dwelling in us, will enable us to love even our enemies. Mt. 5:44-48 To be able to do so is to give evidence that we are indeed Children of our heavenly Father. The Lord Jesus declared this to be a source of the perfection which is to be found in the Father. Humankind can be made to be godly. To be like our heavenly Father it is needful that we turn aside from ungodliness and worldly lusts. While turning to that new life which is Christ. A life controlled by the Spirit of the Lord, righteous and God-like, in this present world. Titus 2:12 We need to emphasize the truth that the life that we now live in the Lord Jesus must resemble perfectly, His life on earth.

All have a past. Whether it entails a long list of misdeed or a few, it does not matter. The Lord has included all under sin that He might have mercy on us all. Gal. 3:22 In our past we conducted our life as disobedient children, living under the domination of the lusts and desires of the flesh. Eph. 2:2-3 But God, who is rich in mercy and because of His great love has quickened us, and made us to be alive together with His Son. Eph. 2:4-5 Having raised us together and causing us, currently, to sit together with Christ in heavenly places, thus showing the depths and the heights of the fulfillment of His love.

Togetherness is the expression of the love and the yearning of the Lord Jesus. How many times and in how many ways He has expressed His desire to be a God that is nigh to His people and not afar off. He has proclaimed Himself to be the Lord who is nigh unto His people. He will be as closely affiliated with His people as they desire Him to be. When we speak the Word, He is in our mouth. Consider carefully, He is in our hearts, through the Word of faith. Rom. 10:8 From the very beginning of this Christian journey we are brought into direct association with Him. We are made to be new creatures in Christ Jesus. There has to be a place of meeting with Him and where we obtain a new found relationship with Him. We are born again of that incorruptible seed, therefore that which is sown in us will direct us toward holiness and purity. Each step of growth in our salvation provides a deeper understanding and knowledge of Christ Jesus. When His Word dwells in us, we are to grow in grace and wisdom. Col. 3:16

THE LOVE OF THE LORD. 57

There is an involvement with the love of the Lord that few have ever entered into. It was evidenced in the early church on the day of Pentecost. They were of one accord. Acts 2:1, 46 It will be repeated as a last day phenomenon. A prayer for perfect, unconditional unity was a part of the prayer of the Lord Jesus recorded in John seventeen. He likened their unity to that of the Godhead. There could not be a greater example given of what the true church will be like in the end of the age. Not only in harmony among themselves but in flawless synchronization with the Lord. Knowing that as the Father loved the Son, so, with equal passion, He loves those

who have aligned themselves with the Son. John 17:21 Mind you, this is not an unemotional love, this is LOVE emanating from the One who is love personified. Were is not for the Lord, there would be no love of any kind. He is the fountainhead of all that is true love, from that love which is totally expressive of His being, to the love of a man and a woman, love flows from His throne. Love originates with Him.

Perfected love. Love at its very highest degree is between the Lord Jesus and His church, who is destined to become His Bride. The unity of a people of the Lord which will be extremely unusual will a sign of the end of the age. Love perfected will produce complete confidence in the Lord in every avenue of life, human and spiritual. 1 John 4:18 The apex of love is that which will be demonstrated between Christ and His body, the church. He gave Himself to redeem a people for Himself. He is therefore called the savior of the body. Eph. 5:23 He looked well beyond the initial purpose of Calvary as a means of salvation and saw it as a price to be paid that He might purchase unto Himself a bride. Acts 20:28 Every person, just as the Lord Jesus in whom is found the essence of love, will find a companion whom they can love. The love of Christ and His Bride is to be full, absolute love. As the Father was married to Israel and through that marriage the virgin Mary brought forth the Christ, so the Lord Jesus will marry His Bride and the results will be the man-child of Revelation twelve. Paul concluded that the fifth chapter of Ephesians was indeed a great mystery. Eph. 5:32 Mysteries are made to be solved, especially this which is recorded in Ephesians. Too often our Bible reading is casual, like that of reading any other book. Not so, with the Bible, it must be read with the precious anointing of the Spirit. He is the teacher and will open unto us the vast purpose of the Lord, particularly in the end of the age. Spiritually, the end of the age will reach a grand climax of revelation and love as the Lord completes His work in His church.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 58

When receiving a visitor, the greater the status of the person, the greater the preparation. When receiving the Lord Jesus into our hearts we are receiving the greatest of all. It is impossible for anyone greater to be found in the whole of the universe. Not only does He come to visit, He comes to

abide, to remain and to dwell with us and in us. He said, We (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) will come and take up residence within you. John 14:23

In the process of receiving this Divine presence we have noted that it is necessary to be born of the Spirit. Jesus spoke of the next step in developing this extremely and importantly close relationship as being that of water baptism. Mark 16:16 There is a cleansing, a purification in the waters of baptism. It is much more than a sign of having accepted the Lord. The high priest on entering the Tabernacle or the Temple always went to the brazen laver to wash prior to performing his duties. Ex. 30:20 This act of preparation was a life or death matter, for, if they did not wash they would have died. Water baptism is a definite imperative in the Christian experience. Jesus Himself in persuading John the Baptist to baptize Him declared that it was a step in the fulfillment of all righteousness. Please note, Jesus said us, showing that it was a step which all should take. Mt. 3:15

Ananias when praying for Saul to receive his sight prophesied of his impending ministry. Then commanded him to be baptized while calling on the name of the Lord. That there is a cleansing effect in the waters of baptism is evident in the statement made by Ananias when he spoke of a spiritual work which would be accomplished by his action. That is, "wash away thy sins." Acts 22:16 The only atonement is through the blood of the Lord Jesus, through whom we have redemption and the forgiveness of sin. Eph. 1:7 However, as with the washings of the high priest, the body of sin, the temple must be washed from its contact and involvement with the contamination of sin. We are urged to draw near unto the Lord with utter confidence knowing that our hearts have been cleansed by the blood of Christ from all works of evil and ungodliness. Plus, having our bodies washed with the pure waters of baptism. Heb. 10:22 Peter on the day of Pentecost attached a spiritual connotation to water baptism by stating that it was an act in the process of having our sins remitted. In itself water baptism is not the full work of salvation but definitely an action which should be the privilege of every one who comes to the Lord Jesus. He set the example for us to follow as did His disciples. When the purpose of baptism is properly understood there are great benefits to be reaped.

THE LOVE OF THE LORD. 59

Peter added to the subject by referring to the great flood in the days of Noah and the fact that the ungodly were completely destroyed at that time. Only Noah and his family were saved. Using it as an example he declared that water baptism now saves us. We rejoice, inasmuch as it assures of a favorable conscience which has been cleansed from all unrighteousness. Imparting a conscience void of offense, being obtained through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 3:20-21 Which brings us to an even deeper spiritual effect of water baptism.

We now come to a source of victory in Christian living which far too many are not utilizing. There are a large number of benefits available to the believer who will take advantage of them. Death is never a pleasant thing but this death pays huge dividends. Baptism into Christ is paramount to baptism into His death. Rom. 6:3 The payoff is that as Christ was raised from the dead to walk in resurrection life, so we too are privileged to live in that newness of life found in Him. Rom. 6:4 It is not something pushed off to some time, some where in the future, but now, at this moment of time. Because we are identified with Him, His life is to be lived in us. His glory is to be revealed in us. Having been baptized into Christ we put on Christ. He becomes our covering. His spirit dwells within. Gal. 3:27 We must change our thinking from that of the Old Testament where the Lord came to them from on high, to the beautiful truth that He now is living in us. It is now, Christ within those who are His. No longer do we wait for Him to come to us but now He remains in that heart dedicated to Him.

The Word of the Lord means just exactly what it says. In relationship to the manifestation of His love in use it is, "Christ in you the hope" of the revelation of the glory of the Lord in those who are His very own. Col. 1:27 Not coming to a realization that He is with us, in us, dwelling and abiding at all times is where we are coming short of the glory of the Lord. Love, His love in us, when it has gained a good root system will produce the tree of life, its fruit, its virtues as well as the gifts of the Spirit. The manifestation of His life in us develops full and complete assurance that He is indeed welcomed with great joy and love to take up continuous and consistent residence in our hearts. Eph. 3:17 The victory of the Christian is in the fact that Christ is the one who rules and reigns in our hearts giving us

knowledge that the greatest power of the universe is at home within our spirit nature. 1 John 4:4

THE LORD IS LOVE. 60

There is absolute victory over every besetting sin and temptation when Christ is within. Take heed to the power of these words, "If Christ be in you, the body is dead." Rom. 8:10 Dead to the desires and cravings of the flesh. Freed from the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. These impede the love of the Lord from dwelling within the life of those who would be His. For they show us the nature of this sinful world in which we live. 1 John 2:15-16 There is no comparison between that which the world offers and that wonderful work of salvation which the Lord will accomplish in a people who are utterly sold out to Him. The presence of the Spirit in the spirit nature of those who are in Christ brings life, eternal, everlasting life and all of its virtues. It is His life, the life of the Lord producing righteousness in the hearts of those who are His followers. An impartation, not only for the future but for this very moment of time. Now, He will quicken these mortal bodies because of His presence in us. That is a gift of power which creates the ability to do exploits for the Lord.

The people whom the Lord uses to make His glory and power known are a people who are "can do's". They know, as did Paul, that with the Lord there is nothing impossible. His motto was, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Phil. 4:13 No limitations, no impossibilities when we depend upon Him and bid Christ welcome into our hearts. Consider carefully who He is and what has been given to Him. Then realize that it is the Christ of God, the anointed one who dwells in His very own, transmitting His life to them. To the Lord Jesus all power was given of the Father to Him. Mt. 28:18 Therefore, if He possesses all power, and He is dwelling in the spiritual nature of those who love Him and serve Him. There is likewise no end, no limit to the power of the Lord which is made available to them.

As always, there is a key which will open wide the door to the treasure house of the Lord. Returning to the teaching of water baptism we find that there is an identification with the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus in receiving water baptism. The old, the carnal man is to be put to death, crucified with

Christ to the destruction of the body of sin. When this is accomplished the individual is no longer a servant of sin. A dead person cannot be tempted with anything in this life. They are free from the works of sin. So it is with serving the Lord. We want liberty, we want the very best that the Lord has for us. He wants to give it to His people but the standard of the scriptures must first be met. Rom. 6:6-7

THE LOVE OF THE LORD. 61

The desire of the Lord Jesus was plainly stated by Him in His prayer found in John seventeen. The explicit union which He had with His Father is used as an example of what He was seeking in relationship to His people. Then that bond was to be the same between Himself and His followers. There is no more perfect union than that of the Godhead. He requested that those who love Him would not only have the same unity among themselves but they were to be one in the Lord, in everything and in all ways. John 17:21 Those who will become His bride are they who have reached the absolute perfection of being unified with each other and with the Lord. John 17:23

Jesus, knowing that He was coming to the end of His life on earth assured His disciples of His continued presence with them. While He promised another who would come to be a solace unto them, He also affirmed that He would come to them. John 14:18 As the fullness of God is in Christ, so the same completeness is in the Father and the Holy Spirit. A perfect harmonious cooperation which may only be found in the Lord. Inasmuch as we were created in the image (as a shadow) and likeness (form or shape) of the Lord, Gen. 1:26 mankind is a triad, body, soul and spirit, joined together to make a human being. We are one, yet three. While we can identify each part of man and separate them verbally, physically, if just one is separated from the others then all die. In order to have life we must remain a triad. Therefore when the Holy Spirit came upon them on the day of Pentecost, the completeness of God took up His abode in them.

The sign of true love on the part of the Christian is obedience to the Word of the Lord. That, then enables the Father to truly love the disciple of the Lord Jesus. Where there is this beautiful evidence of true love there will be a Divine visitation, resulting in the abiding presence of the fullness of the Lord. Jesus noted that not only would the Holy Spirit come but He said, we

will come. Verifying that all which comprises the Lord would continuously remain in that one who had such a glorious visitation. John 14:23 We have the Son, through the person of the Holy Spirit. Our confession and possession of the Son is our assurance that we are also the dwelling place of the Father. Having been blessed and privileged to receive the Lord Jesus as our Savior and Redeemer and thereby becoming the habitation of the living God, we continue to honor that Word which from the beginning brought us into new birth. 1 John 2:23-24 We have not yet seen the mighty workings of the Lord in the measure with which they will be revealed in these last days. We rejoice in His precious promises.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 62

The whole of the human race is loved of the Lord. Those who have come to know Him, now truly love Him, and are filled with His love. To know Him personally is to love Him greatly. He is the very essence of love and loved us from before the foundation of the world. 1 John 4:19 The enormity of the love that the Lord has for those who desire to become His beloved is far beyond our capability to comprehend. It is far better experienced than it is explained. His proof of that love is the commissioning of the Lord Jesus to descend in to this world and to become the savior of those who would receive Him. Though we were yet embroiled in sin and iniquity and had little to do with Him or to even think of Him, yet He died for sinners. Rom. 5:8 His love is further manifest in the fact that He sent His only begotten Son, the only one born of the heavenly Father, to be the one and only propitiation, there is but one atonement for sin and that is the precious blood of the Lord Jesus. 1 John 4:10 The sacrifice of Christ opens the way for all to obtain eternal life through the love manifest through Him and by Him.

John gave witness to the sure evidence of the dwelling place of the Lord being in those who are filled with His love. We are genuinely assured of His presence because of the gift of the Spirit which He has so graciously given to us and who now dwells within. 1 John 4:13 It is He whom Jesus promised He would send to His church and that the Spirit would reveal the things of Christ unto the church. The word of our confession that Jesus is the Son of God is another evidence of the continuous presence of the Lord

in His people. 1 John 4:15 To dwell in His love is to dwell in Him and to have the Lord dwelling in us. 1 John 4:16

Even under the Old Testament order the Lord expressed the association that He desires with His creation. He spoke through the prophet Isaiah and sent a declaration from the high and lofty One who inhabits eternity. There could not be a greater personage than He who lives on high and is lifted up above all others. Exalted above all that has life, for He is very life itself. Only the Lord is everlasting and eternal. There are none in eternity or the universe who can even begin to be compared to Him. It is note worthy that He who is Holiness dwells in a holy place. Therefore He will only be found dwelling in a people of holiness. The broken, the crushed those who have acquired the meek and lowly spirit and nature of the Lord Jesus will find that His presence will bring revival and abundant life as found only in Him. Isa. 57:15

THE LORD IS LOVE. 63

He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Ps. 91:1 One cannot enter in to the secret place without experiencing a drastic change in their life. The first thing we note about the Psalm is that it speaks of the dwelling place. A place of rest and tranquility where one feels entirely at home, comfortable and at ease. The word in the Hebrew bears the connotation of remaining, settling down, even marriage. The last being the most important to our study. It shows a close attraction and love between the Lord and those whom He calls unto Himself.

We need to consider an example of one who found this dwelling place. Even though it was an awesome experience for Him, the benefits were wonderful. Moses was called by the Lord to climb to the top of Mount Sinai. The glory of the Lord had descended upon the mountain until the whole appeared to be on fire. Smoke like that of a volcano covered it and the mountain shook as with a mighty earthquake. The trumpet of the Lord sounded increasing in volume and the Lord called Moses to enter into His presence. Ex. 19:18-20 Had this display of power been a natural occurrence that would have been awe striking enough but this was a

manifestation of the power and the glory of the Lord. A dark, heavy cloud covered the mountain while peals of thunder and lightning were heard and seen. A common storm of such nature is a fearful thing to some. This was far greater for it was the presence of the Lord, causing the people of Israel to fear and tremble. Ex. 19:16 The presence of the Lord is either a wonderful thing or frightful, depending entirely on the spirituality of the people involved. Wonderfully, the eternal throne of the Lord has the same manifestation. Rev. 4:5 Don't fear, it will be glorious.

The giving of the Law was a glorious occasion. The experience of Moses was tremendous for he literally became immersed and saturated with the glory of the Law. So much so, that when he descended, the glory remained in him and shone forth from his face. Even the glory seen in Moses was too much for the children of Israel. It became necessary for him to veil his face except when he went in before the Lord. Ex. 34:33-35 As majestic as all this was Paul said that the glory of the Law was to cease. It has been replaced by the glory of the Spirit which is so much greater that it makes the former to appear as nothing. 2 Cor. 3:7-11 The veiled glory was to cease but the glory of the Spirit is everlasting. The experience of the Bride of Christ will be not only equal but far greater than that of Moses for it is the most excellent glory of the Lord manifest in His people.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 64

The glory of the Lord as revealed in the days of Moses was indeed a wonder to behold. Unfortunately the glory of the Lord first appeared to Israel at a time when they were murmuring against the Lord. In this instant it was a negative and positive sign of His displeasure with them. Also, evidence that He was able to supply their every need. Ex. 16:7-8 The second recorded rebellion of the people became so heated that they were ready to stone Moses and Aaron and return to Egypt. Num. 14:10 The glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle and they were spared any harm being done to them. Had it not been for the intervention of Moses the history of their journey out of Egypt would have been much different. His prayer was one of deep intercession and persuasion as he sought the Lord on their behalf. His prayer is interesting, be sure to read it. Num. 14:11-20 Moses persuaded the Lord to pardon the children of Israel according to the context of his prayer.

The Lord then promised Moses that the earth would be filled with the glory of the Lord. Num. 14:21 Aaron and his sons were consecrated unto the service of the Lord. Incidentally, the Lord looks for full hearted consecration unto Him. More so today, than in the days of the Law. They were sprinkled by blood and oil, redemption and anointing. Has anything changed? Lev. 8:30 Having fulfilled the process of consecration to their office, as promised the glory of the Lord appeared. Lev. 9:23 Miraculously, the fire of the Lord emerged and consumed the prepared sacrifice. Lev. 9:24 The fire lit in such a manner was to be maintained continuously, it was never to go out. The fire of their tabernacle altars originated from the Lord. Indeed, our God is a consuming fire. Heb. 12:29 The same was true with the temple of Solomon. At the conclusion of the prayer offered by Solomon when he dedicated the temple, the fire and the glory of the Lord appeared, filling the temple, and consumed the sacrifices. The priests were unable to enter in because of that tremendous glory. The people bowed themselves to the ground in worship unto the Lord. 2 Chr. 7:1-3

What tremendous anticipation we should have in our hearts when the Lord, under the Law of Moses displayed His glory and power in such tremendous ways. We remember the words of Paul when he said that what was seen of the glory of the Lord then was as nothing when compared with that which the Lord Jesus will accomplish in what Paul called a glorious church. A people of His glory and beauty. Eph. 5:27 There is yet a manifestation of the fire and the glory of the Lord to be revealed in His Bride which will supersede any and all of the Old Testament instances where His glory appeared.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 65

The glory of the Father was powerfully displayed in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Even so, we are called upon to walk in that same newness of life. Having been baptized, buried with Him, we are privileged to possess His life. We are assured of resurrection at His coming, however the promise involves our life now as well. We are to walk and to be in the similitude of His resurrection. In other words, resurrection power and life giving force is ours in the Lord Jesus. Rom. 6:4-5 Seed planted will grow and multiply many fold. The potential of the same ministry found in Jesus is

to be found in the church, if and when, we recognize all that He has purchased for us.

The glory of the Lord is seen where there is faith in the words of the Lord Jesus. John 11:40 Jesus never uttered an idol word. Every one of His promises will be fulfilled in those who believe them. He promised that the believer would do greater works for He was about to go to His Father. The possibilities are endless of a mighty manifestation of His glory as we approach the end of the age. John 14:12

The Lord is determined to reveal His excellent glory unto a people who are completely His. That is, His Bride. She is the ultimate joy and love of His heart. The revelation, the light of the Lord, is beamed directly into our hearts through the Word which has been made flesh. That glorious light dispels darkness and despair. Replacing it with a through knowledge and understanding of the person and the purpose of Christ. The light of the glory of the Lord is then revealed in the presence of the Lord Jesus. 2 Cor. 4:6 This Jesus, is the absolute effulgence, the complete brightness of the glory of the Father. He is the exact and perfect example of the Father. In all things, He bears the precise representation of what and who the Father is, without being His own Father. Identical in all things, working in perfect accord, living eternally in supreme agreement, yet each their own personality. Their unity and diversity may only be discovered and comprehended fully by the Word of the Lord. Heb. 1:3

The Lord has established some tremendous, wonderful and best of all achievable goals for His people. In order to help us complete these objectives He has made available the unfailing strength which is the total power of His glorious workings. Col. 1:11 What He wishes to accomplish in His church will not be available some time in the future, it is available now! The church is so prone to put off the vital elements of the glory and the power of the Lord that we miss what He has for us now. We are now to be partakers of the full inheritance of all that Christ purchased for us. Col. 1:12

THE LORD IS LOVE. 66

The true children of the Most High have been, present tense, delivered from the power and grip of the kingdom of darkness. In the process of their

transformation they are translated, introduced and received into the kingdom of the loving Son of God. Col. 1:13 Kingdom rights and powers are a definite part of our inheritance in the Lord. Mt. 25:34 Because the Lord is the eternal King, His kingdom has always been in existence. We likewise know that there will be a Kingdom established on this earth for a thousand years which will continue eternally in the new heavens and the new earth. However, Jesus stated that the kingdom of God is currently in existence and on this world. Those who were touched by the healing virtue of the Lord Jesus in the day of His ministry and also that of His disciples experienced an element of the kingdom, for He said that the kingdom of God had come nigh to them. Luke 10:9-11 They had experienced kingdom virtue. Those who are truly in the Lord Jesus and are led by the Spirit will not be deceived in the end of the age into following false Christ's for they have the kingdom within them. Luke 17:21

The new birth, being born of the Spirit opens the Spiritual eyes of the individual to the truth that there is such a place as the kingdom of God. John 3:3 Those who have been born of the Spirit enter into a marvelous time of the revelation of the status of the kingdom of God. It is utterly amazing the things that are made known to them about the Lord and His purposes in our lives. Those who would try to gain heaven some other way can only fail. Only through the new birth can one enter into and begin to enjoy the kingdom of God. John 3:5 Jesus strongly declared that any trying to gain entrance any other way than through the door are thieves and robbers. Strong language but it shows the importance of coming before the Lord in the prescribe manner.

The kingdom of the Lord is the only one of absolute power. Ultimately all others will be brought into subjection to it. It is not maintained by the reckoning's of man nor by their religiously and philosophical reasoning's. 1 Cor. 4:20 It is not comprised of the things of this world but as Paul said, it is first a state of righteousness, right living, moral character as taught by the Scriptures. Secondly, it is the result of the first, a condition of peace and tranquility. A sure knowledge that the sin question has been settled between the Lord and the individual. Thirdly, it is that exuberant joy and gladness which may only be found through the power and filling of the Spirit. Rom. 14:17

THE LORD IS LOVE. 67

To know the love of Christ is the greatest experience that a person can have in this life and in the life to come for that matter. There is no greater love expressed anywhere, at any time, by any one, other than that which is available to all in the Lord Jesus. To know something which is beyond the scope of man's understanding is to enter into the wisdom and knowledge which is found only in the Lord. Human, worldly comprehension cannot grasp the magnitude of His love. Only when we are the beneficiary of His love, which is far beyond the scope of human love, may we know that which is unknowable. Eph. 3:19 The result of the manifestation of that love in mankind is the thrilling part of it's purpose. His very own are to be filled to fullest degree with His eternal presence.

Already we have seen from the scriptures that His Bride will be the beneficiary of all of His intents and works of redemption. The highest rewards possible will become hers as He finishes His work of salvation. Physically and spiritually she will be in His likeness having been brought to the implementation of the perfections which are found in Christ. Col. 2:10 As in the Tabernacle and Temple, the furnishings brought these structures to a completion. When dedicated the glory of the Lord entered the buildings filling them to capacity with His mighty presence. These types have a glorious history and are often alluded to as examples of what the Lord will make known in His church. She will be far more glorious than the man made edifices. The Bride is His final and most marvelous project of all past places of worship. She is living and is bone of His bone. An integral part of Him. He is not complete without her, nor is she without Him. The two are to become one. Eph. 5:30

The message of the love of the Lord is one of unity. The prayer of Jesus will reach it's climax in that perfect church. There cannot be unity except where there is absolute harmony. One mind, one purpose motivated by the love of the Lord which far exceeds every other type of love common to humanity. John 17:21-23 Accompanying His full display of love in His church is the perfection which such binding together will achieve. His love has not been without a definite goal and it is to be seen in the fulfillment of His prayer for the church and for the moment of time when the absolute fullness of God occupies His greatest work, that is, a dwelling place of righteousness and

holiness which is as eternal as He, Himself. His church is the vessel of His glory and will be placed on display throughout the coming eternity as that magnificent Bride, the new Jerusalem. Eph. 3:21

THE LORD IS LOVE. 68

Your body, the house of your soul and spirit. The entities which cause us to be similar, yet drastically different. Each of us being body, soul and spirit but individualistic in nature and character. No two persons are identical, not even so called identical twins. It is utterly amazing that of the millions born into this world no two have the same finger prints, voice, eyes or DNA. What a God of great variety we serve. These bodies, corporeally are honored and desired to be used by the Lord as His Temple. "Your body IS the Temple of the Holy Spirit." 1 Cor. 6:19 Thus we find another evidence in the Word that the Lord has called a people unto Himself in whom He desires to dwell, by His Spirit.

Solomon being chosen to build the Temple in Jerusalem recognized the fact that no building can be built to house the Lord. Even the heavens of heavens, with all their extreme expanse cannot contain Him. Where is there a building which He will occupy? He Himself is building His house, His Temple comprised of lively stones, a gathering together of building materials, a process which He is already working on. As we have already noted through the person of the Holy Spirit the Lord will occupy His Temple. He will be in those who are committed to Him as a gift from the Lord. Acts 2:38 It is an essential that we thoroughly comprehend the time element of this promise. It was not just a one time occurrence in Jerusalem but the promise is extended to those who would come to know Christ in the far future. Even to all whom the Lord would call unto Himself. Therefore none were to be excluded. Most definitely that includes we who live in this day. Acts 2:39

Peter having been divinely led to and preaching in the house of Cornelius declared that he recognized that the Lord was no respecter of persons. This was a breaking away from the spirit and attitude of the church in Jerusalem. Up to and until that time the gospel was presented exclusively to Israel. The convincing factor that the gospel should go to the Gentiles as well was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon these who heard Peter.

Obviously it was totally unexpected by Peter and those with him, for they were astonished at what the Lord had done. The evidence of their experience was when they spoke in tongues and in so doing magnified the Lord. Acts 10:44-45 From the very beginning of this dispensation of the Spirit the Lord has chosen to manifest His power and His glory in the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit who brings the reality of all that the Lord desires to accomplish in His church to light and to our understanding. He takes the things of Christ and reveals them unto us. John 16:14

THE LORD IS LOVE. 69

There is no greater discrepancy than that which exists between the Lord and the powers of darkness. The Apostle made it very personal and real with the questions about, and his comparisons between, things godlike and conditions which are ungodly. 2 Cor. 6:14-15 Then, in no uncertain terms, he places the children of the Lord, those who believe His Word in the position of being the temple of the living God. A living Temple for the dwelling place of a life giving and ever living Lord. This is the real and final purpose of the whole work of salvation. The Lord's finding of a people who are fully dedicated to His will and objective. In living reality He will live in and through them. He will become their daily life and walk. Every step being in complete accord with His perfect will. He will be God, all and in all, to them and they will be His people. A spiritual people from every tongue, tribe and nation. The true people of the Lord. His nation chosen not after a natural seed but the seed of the Lord.

Therefore the call of the Spirit is, that these who would be His and want the very best that He has to offer would give evidence to their great desire for Him by separating themselves from the works of unrighteousness which are common to those who do not follow Christ. The cry of the Word and the Spirit is to come out, depart from all works of iniquity. Not a popular message but vital if we are to gain the great victories which are ours in Christ Jesus and to literally be His Temple. 2 Cor. 6:16-17 Being all that one can be for the Lord is cheap at any cost. Nothing is ever given up for Him but what there is a far greater value in the reward given.

As we approach the time of the perfecting of the church there will be a stronger and more urgent moving of the Spirit to totally leave the type of life

exemplified by the world and to live more and more that new life which is found only in the Lord Jesus. Just think of it, He will find a people who make up His Temple and who are holy and without blemish. Eph. 5:27 The voice of the Word and the Spirit will become stronger and stronger calling His people unto a perfect likeness of the Lord. The Temple will be the house of perfect holiness occupied by the Lord who is the very essence of holiness. Therefore the call is to be holy as He is holy. If the Temple is not holy it cannot receive the Holy One. 1 Peter 1:15-16 Human reasoning's, the will of the flesh, may not like the calling of the Lord to walk in His likeness, but we are urged to cleanse ourselves from the filthiness of the flesh and spirit in the mean time perfecting holiness in total reverence to the Lord. 2 Cor. 7:1

THE LORD IS LOVE. 70

When one's being and circumstances are omnipresent where and how can they be contained. The Lord posed the question, "where is the house that you would build unto me?" Isa. 66:1 All over the world there are beautiful, sometimes huge edifices built as houses of the Lord, but He occupies none of them. He cannot be restricted to a man made building. The Lord proclaimed that heaven was His throne and the earth His footstool. The impossibility of limiting such a Being to a building is obvious. Even so, it is His purpose to fill a people, the Bride of Christ, with the fullness of all that He is, the completeness of His personality, character and Spirit. The true church is a literal, living, Spirit filled body of believers. The Lord not only sees them as one body but also as individuals, all of whom have achieved the same level of spirituality. The Holy Spirit is the factor uniting the great and extensive body of Christ into a functioning unit. Having been purchased with the greatest price ever paid, or that ever will be paid for any commodity, this body has become His and is the sole possession of the Lord Jesus. None other should be able to lay any claim upon her. She belongs to Jesus and to Him alone. 1 Cor. 6:19-20

Left alone to wander in the ways of this world and sin we become the pawns of Lucifer. The one who has come with the intent and wicked purpose to steal, kill and destroy all of humanity which he may persuade to follow him. That is all he has to offer us. John 10:10 Jesus has come revealing the only way to possess eternal life. A full and abundant life now

and everlasting life in the glorious presence of the Lord. The value which He has placed upon each individual is priceless. His heavenly position and glorious status had to be put aside that He might become one with us. He risked everything which He ever had been, or ever would be, for the redemption of mankind. He purchased His church, His Temple, His Bride with the price of His own blood. Acts 20:28 He has assured us of the coming day of total redemption, that is the redemption of our physical body. We have definite knowledge that we are His prized purchased possession inasmuch as He has gifted, to all who will receive Him the Holy Spirit. Eph. 1:14 His greatest desire is to treat each and every person as the wonderful heavenly Father which He is. However, that kind of acceptance is conditional on our separating ourselves from the worldliness which surrounds us. Leaving behind those things which are impure and unholy for they can only hinder our walk with the Lord. He leaves no question as to the spiritual requirements necessary to receive the very best of His blessings in our life. 2 Cor. 6:17-18

THE LORD IS LOVE. 71

The house of the Lord is not a man made structure but a living organism, the house hold of faith. The place where the Lord has chosen to manifest His power and glory. Paul identified it as the church, the meeting together of those who have been called to serve the living Lord. It cannot be limited to a religion, church organization or to a successful local church. It is the universal body of Christ which encompasses all who are born of the Spirit. It stands as a pillar embracing the truth of the Word of the Lord. It's people are those who embrace the Word of the Lord with their whole heart and life. 1 Tim. 3:15

It is a great house and incorporates all language and nationalities. While it is all one house the decorations of the house vary greatly. There are the most prized vessels of gold. Their value is greater than any other. Surely, vessels of gold would represent the very highest of spiritual achievement. We would anticipate that they symbolize those who would be in the Bride of Christ. Silver, while valuable does not carry the worth of gold and is of less value. It is in the house but not as notable as the gold. With wood articles there is even less value, nevertheless it's presence is among the furnishings of the great house. The great varieties of wood and the vast

difference in their price demonstrates a class of people who are in the house but not too spiritual. Then we come to the last, just old common clay. While it is true that we are all but dust, nevertheless the pottery is the least valuable of all. The house of the Lord draws together every kind of a personality possible, for it is a great and expansive house. Some of these vessels are for honor and others to dishonor. 2 Tim. 2:20

David contributed great wealth and gathered the materials for the Temple but it was his son Solomon who constructed the house of the Lord. Every bit of material which was to be used in the final construction of the Lord's house will have to under go the final test of the fire of the Spirit. Those which can stand the test will be thoroughly purified while that which is of the works of the flesh will be destroyed. 1 Cor. 3:12-15 John the Baptist prophesied of one coming who would thoroughly winnow the wheat with the fan of the Spirit, that is, the Holy Spirit and would eliminate the chaff. Luke 3:16-17 There is a sanctifying move of the Spirit destined to be revealed in the end of the age which will bring the Bride of Christ to its fruition. The end is not yet, there is a mighty work reserved for the latter days which will be the last opportunity for those in the house of the Lord to shape up and get into the true flow of the Spirit. He is a mighty God.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 72

In response to some who in that day may have remembered the majesty of the house of the Lord built by Solomon. Now saw the current effort as being far inferior. So much so that it appeared to them as useless and wasted effort. Hag. 2:3 The Lord promised that the glory of the latter house, the rebuilt Temple of the Lord, in the days of Haggai was to greatly exceed in beauty the former house. Hag. 2:9 The Lord declared that He would fill this latter house with glory. Hag. 2:7 We have here a foreshadowing of the work which the Lord will accomplish in the last days. The move of the Spirit yet to come will be far greater than any which have preceded it. Peter, on the day of Pentecost quoted from Joel 2:17 concerning the visitation of the Spirit in their day. Now, we have come to the closing days of the end of the age. As the Lord proclaimed the latter house to be greater than the former so it will be. With a latter day call to the world to repentance the Lord will once again pour out of His Spirit in His fullness.

It is important that we consider the timing of this prophecy given to Haggai. The Lord never speaks out of turn but always with a purpose. The time element given is at the conclusion of the feast of Tabernacles. The next day was to be a Sabbath, a holy convocation. Hag. 2:1 The feast of Tabernacles represents the last day revival and the very special anointing of the Spirit in His fully occupying the true Temple of the Lord, the Bride. 2 Cor. 6:16 There is no work of the Lord which is ever circumstantial or happenstance. He determines what He will accomplish and then He will do what He has in mind. Nothing can hinder or deter the things which He desires to accomplishment. Ps. 46:8-10 That very special Sabbath day coming on the heels of the feast of Tabernacles is a reminder of the Sabbath of the Lord or the Millennial reign of Christ on this earth for a thousand years. Rev. 20:4, 6

Also to be noted is the promise of the presence of the Holy Spirit and a word of encouragement not to fear. Our confidence is in the Lord and is never stronger than when we realize His presence in our lives. Hag. 2:4-5 Accompanying the comforting promise of His constant presence is to be found words of warning. The signs which were given to Haggai resemble those of which the Lord Jesus spoke during His mount Olives discourse with His disciples concerning His second coming. Signs and wonders taking place on the earth and in the whole of the universe. Earthquakes culminating in a cosmic quake at the time of His coming. Heb. 12:26 In that day His glory will be so radiant and dazzling that men will attempt to hide from Him. Isa. 2:19 All will fail in their attempt to hide for every eye shall see His coming. Rev. 1:7

THE LORD IS LOVE. 73

David posed a question pertinent to our subject by asking who would ascend into the hill of the Lord. The mountain top, the apex of the glory of the Lord. There to dwell in His Holy Place. His vision embraced more than just a visit to the Temple. He was looking to that city that Abraham left Ur to find. A City, a Temple which is yet in the process of construction. Ps. 24:3

David responded to his own question with the proper answer. The New Testament Temple, the Tabernacle, the Holy Hill, the New Jerusalem are all one and the same. He introduced the eternal dwelling place of the Most

High. In the days of the Tabernacle in the wilderness, none, aside from the appointed and anointed High Priest dare step into the Holy of Holies. Even Moses refrained from going in when the glory of the Lord was present. Ex. 40:35 That tent was the place of the awesome presence of the Lord in the midst of the Children of Israel. This established a precedent showing that only those who meet the Divine requirements may stand in the glorious presence of the Lord. Not only will they be in His presence but He will take up His habitation in them. John 14:23

The Lord has set aside the last day, the seventh period of one thousand years as the Sabbath. Those who have ascended the mountain of the holiness of the Lord, who are blessed and holy, will find themselves in that glorious kingdom of God on earth. They will have a part in the first resurrection and are among those who are living and caught up at the time of the second coming of Christ. They are to be kings and priests unto the Lord and will live an reign with Him for the thousand years. Rev. 20:6 We are often told that all Christians will escape the tribulation period. However we find that there will be a segment of those who partake of the first resurrection that were martyred, actually beheaded, during the reign of the antichrist for their consistent witness of the Lord Jesus. They will be brave people who having missed the deliverance of the Bride. Rev. 12:6, 14 They are noted as being the remnant of the woman's seed. Rev. 12:17 They will be constantly hunted down and murdered. They will hold true to the Word of the Lord. Refusing to worship the beast or his image. Likewise, would not take the mark of the beast in their hands or in their forehead's. Rev. 20:4 The first resurrection takes place at the end of the tribulation period and is comprised of all those who died in faith, who were born of the spirit as well as these who die during the tribulation period. The first resurrection could not take place at anytime but at the close of the reign of the antichrist who will be destroyed by the glorious coming of our Lord Jesus. 2 Thess. 2:8

THE LORD IS LOVE. 74

There is a standard of righteousness established by the Word of the Lord to which everyone who would receive of His full blessing must adhere. The beauty of it is that He will enable those whose desire is toward the things which the Lord the has established as holy and righteous, to live

accordingly. The power of a righteous life is not in the hands of man but in His hands. He will live His life in a committed heart and spirit. The rich blessings of the Lord are reserved for those who follow the pattern of life which Jesus introduced and lived. Those who want His blessings must first live in His righteousness. Ps. 24:4-5

This is the generation of extremes. As we draw closer to the end of the age there will be a constant increase of unrighteousness and those ungodly things portrayed in the Word as indications of the coming of Christ. At the same time this is the generation which will seek the Lord in a manner such as none other. Ps. 24:6 To seek His face is to enter into His awesome presence where the fullness of His character and glory are revealed and received by observing the very glory of His face. The outcry of the Psalmist, O Jacob is not without significance. Of the three Fathers of faith, Abraham is a type of the Father. Isaac a type of the Son. Jacob, a type of the Holy Spirit. Therefore the call, the desire of the heart of this generation of seekers is for the fullness of the Spirit to come upon them.

This is the generation which will achieve the high calling of Christ. They are a chosen generation. Choice, in every sense of the word. They are the people of the double portion. The house of His glory which will far exceed the earlier house. They are those who will participate in forming the Bride of Christ. Eph. 5:27 This is that nation who exemplify the holiness of the Lord in every avenue of their life. These are elevated to a ministry involving both that of a priest of the Most High and will reign together with Him as Kings. A purchased and prepared people, one hundred percent sold out to the Lord. The last generation of the redeemed of the Lord are the most privileged of all, because of the mighty work which He will accomplish through them. Spiritual darkness, ignorance of the knowledge of the living God will prevail in the time of this generation. Contrary wise, it is in His people that He will shine forth with the great glory of the Lord. Moses literally received that glory and it was visible in him. Jesus on the mount of transfiguration before His disciples began to glow with the glory, the light, of very God Himself. That same presence, the identical glory will be revealed in the generation chosen by the Lord, as the last. Ye are the light of the world. 1 Peter 2:9

THE LORD IS LOVE. 75

The King of glory is seeking entrance, who would not open their doors and greatly welcome such an outstanding and distinguished guest to enter in. Five times in Psalm twenty four, verses seven through ten, He is given this title. Five is the number of atonement. He cleanses, sanctifies through His blood that He might find access in all of His fullness. Eph. 1:23 We have before us an invitation to prepare for the entering in of the King of all kings. In this Psalm the key words are in the plural, heads, gates, doors. Each of these are at times in the scriptures symbolic of Christ. However, here it is a symbol of His body, the church. He is seeking fellowship and relationship of the closest kind with His people. And why not, if we love Him as He loves us, then we would want to be in His presence constantly. Ps. 24:7

Israel was some four hundred years without the voice of a prophet until John the Baptist appeared on the scene. The church of today has entered into an era of apostasy. This is the people who demonstrate the attitude and spirit of the church at Laodicea. Jesus, too often is left waiting at the door while we become deeply involved with the things of this life. Can we deny the fact that He is standing at the door seeking entrance. He is knocking and that quite loudly. It is time to awaken from slumber and bid Him welcome. Lift up the head, for our redemption is drawing nigh. Let us open wide the gates and doors of our hearts giving Him first place, the place of deepest honor. Rev. 3:20

His presence is the most assuring feeling in all of the world. It creates confidence and knowledge that all is in His hands and He does all things well. He is Jehovah. His perfect will toward each member of His great family is that He might show Himself to be strong on their behalf. He is our victory. He has already triumphed over every enemy that could possible come against Him. Col. 2:15

As the King of glory he is known as the LORD of hosts. Ruler supreme over all. He rules in absolute supremacy. The powers of darkness are subjugated by Him. In His timing, He will utterly destroy the powers of darkness and death. Heb. 2:14 The starry host seen in the heavens are all under His guidance and control. Ps. 33:6 Ps. 8:3 Included also are the heavenly hosts as well as the hosts of humanity. Being all that He is, it is a

totally amazing thing that His desire is toward His creation. For He is seeking to create from the highest form of His creation, a permanent, eternal dwelling place. The church, His Bride, having bid Him welcome from the depths of her heart and spirit will be filled to fullness with His glory. Her love for Him will make it possible. Eph. 3:19

THE LORD IS LOVE. 76

Greater love has no man than this. John 15:13-14 The exact ultimate of love always is centered in the Lord Jesus. When taken into consideration all that He had been in eternity past. His high and holy status in heaven. To lay it all aside and be born into this world was a huge step down. But, He was driven of love. He humbled Himself to such a degree as to become a sacrificial atonement for all men, even while knowing that all would not receive Him, that was the epitome of love. Those who receive Him as Lord and Savior are declared to be His friends, they are those for whom He truly died. He well knew that in dying He would open a love relationship with those who would believe on Him which would be eternal.

The scriptures state that the life of the flesh is in the blood. Lev. 17:11 As the blood is the very sustenance of life for the human body, so the blood of Christ is life to the Spiritual body, the church. Jesus proclaimed that eternal life is in His blood. It is the only blood of redemption. There is no salvation outside of the blood of Christ. To be a recipient of His grace, to be forgiven of, and to be cleansed from sin requires the blood of atonement, the blood of Christ, the blood of love. Eph.1:7 Finding fellowship and knowing the Lord is only available through His blood. It is the substance of full and complete reconciliation with Him. Here we find peace with the Lord. No more animosity, now granted the opportunity to be in perfect accord with the Lord. Col. 1:20

Jesus, in being born of Mary took upon Himself the total nature of mankind. As a man, He was tempted with every temptation with which all of mankind is tempted. In all points He was faced with the same temptations as we are. Heb. 4:15 As a man, He too could only enter into the Most Holy Place (Heaven) through the medium of blood, His blood. The very blood of God. Heb. 9:12 The only means of the remission of our sins is through the blood of the Lord Jesus. Aside from His blood all other ways, used by man,

whereby they attempt to approach unto the Lord are in vain. There is but one way. Heb 9:22 There is but one covenant and only one who has the right to mediate that covenant, that is Jesus. 1 Tim. 2:5 He is both the promise of the covenant and the mediator. The Lamb of God who is the sacrifice and the High Priest presenting the plea of the petitioner before the throne. Heb. 12:24 Therefore we come to the Lord now, under the better covenant established by the Lord Jesus. To a most excellent ministry assuring us of eternal life, through the blood of His covenant. Heb. 8:6

THE LORD IS LOVE. 77

The ministry of the high priest in the cleansing of the leper under the old testament, was a type of the redemption found in Christ Jesus and the propagation of that message to others. First, we note the number five in the two birds, the cedar wood, the scarlet and the hyssop. Lev. 14:4 Five is the number of the atonement. The two birds symbolize Christ the sacrifice and His church the witness of blood and water. The birds were not only alike in their kind but also were to be clean, pure birds fit for the purpose of the cleansing of the leper. The cedar with its red color reminds us of the bloody cross upon which the Son of man was slain. The scarlet typical of His Royal status as the King of kings. The hyssop is associated with His sufferings.

The bird of sacrifice was to be killed in an earthen vessel. He who was the Word became flesh, took upon Himself an earthly vessel, that He might die for all of mankind. The living bird was released with the wood and hyssop tied to it by the scarlet thread, after having been dipped in the fresh water with which the blood of the first bird had been mingled. The living bird was then released with the testimony of the cleansing of the leper, the forgiveness of sin as found in the Lord Jesus. Lev. 14:5-6 The blood and the water were sprinkled seven times (the number of Divine completion) on the leper who was as a result cleansed from his illness.

The witness of the superb love of the Lord is Calvary. The Lord Jesus with a loud cry fulfilled His previous words where He had stated, that no man took His life but He laid His life down. John 10:17-18 The Father, who understood the tremendous sacrifice and the extreme price that Jesus paid as only He could, loved Him greatly because of His obedience. On the

cross Jesus committed His spirit into His Father's hands and brought His earthly life to a conclusion. Luke 23:46 Stating that His work had been accomplished, it is finished, He bowed His head and gave up the ghost. John 19:30 After His crucifixion and death, a soldier pierced His side from which flowed blood and water. John, when writing his first epistle made reference to that fact that Jesus came by blood and water. 1 John 5:6 Everyone born into this world and into natural life is brought forth by water and blood. Thus referring to the evidence of His natural birth. Which incidentally fulfilled all the promises made in the old testament as well as prophecies made and the expectations of others concerning His birth as the Messiah. He was the visitation of God made manifest in the body of a man, just like the body of any other individual born into this life. 1 Tim. 3:16

THE LORD IS LOVE. 78

Jesus came by water and by blood, signifying His natural birth. The human genes which determine the blood of every person originate from the father, therefore the very blood of God flowed through His Royal veins. His life's stream, His blood which was to be shed for every one born into this world. The door to His ministry on earth was opened when He approached John the Baptist to be baptized in water. Jesus made water baptism to be an imperative for all who would follow Him by declaring it to be an act of righteousness. Mt. 3:15 He established the pattern for all who would follow the Lord. Birth involves water and blood. New birth also involves water and blood.

The body which has been soiled by carnal, unrighteous living needs to be washed. The high priest must first have visited the brazen laver for washing before he offered the sacrifices. It was not an act which they could disregard for to do so carried with it the penalty of death. Ex. 30:20 Water carries with it the thought of cleanliness, sanctification from pollutants. The Lord spoke to Ezekiel about clean water, cleansing from all filthiness that He might give them a new heart and a new spirit. At the same time removing the hard heart and giving them a heart of compassion. In so doing they would learn to walk in the ways of the Lord. Eze. 36:25-27 In order to wear the garments of the high priest they must first bathe thoroughly, then put on the garments of their office. Lev. 16:4 Paul identified the work of the Spirit in the new birth as being the washing of

regeneration, that is, spiritual birth and renewal. Titus 3:5 Ananias commanded Saul to be baptized, “and wash away thy sins.” Acts 22:16 Peter incorporated water baptism as an important element in the cleansing of salvation. Baptism itself will not save but it is definitely a part of the spiritual transaction which takes place in the process of salvation. 1 Pet. 3:21

Paul is not slipping back into his former religion which included many washings when he writes of the proper and an effective manner of approaching the Lord. He too recognizes the need of a washing, a purifying of the flesh that we might be accepted of the Lord. Heb. 10:22 Those who come to the Lord must approach with a true, an honest heart. Being fully persuaded, having full and complete confidence, that He will perform all of His promises on our behalf. The heart, the inner man, the spiritual man, having been thoroughly cleansed and sanctified has no questions about the precious promises made available to the believers.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 79

Jesus came by water and by blood. 1 John 5:6 No question but what this is a statement made in reference to His natural birth. He was absolutely unique. Only through the virgin Mary was the Word to be made flesh. There is no other birth such as His where God is joined to man to produce one who is God born in the flesh. Paul called it the mystery of godliness. 1 Tim. 3:16 The giants in the land of Canaan were not propagated or fathered by angels. Angels neither marry nor are they given in marriage. Mt. 22:30 Only in Jesus is there to be found any link between heaven and earth. After having been eternally in the form of God and being equal with His Father, He laid aside all that He always had been to become a servant, a savior for all of mankind. Phil. 2:6-8

There is however a secondary meaning which is of vital importance. The Lord Jesus not only came by water but He brought water of an eternal, life giving power. Ironically, He offered water to the Samaritan woman, after she had given Him water from the well. Just one drink of the water which He offers will result in an artesian well springing up from within. A spiritual fountain ever flowing with the sweet waters of the Word of the Lord leading to eternal life. John 4:14 That water is a part of the great river which has its

beginnings in the throne of the Lord and of the Lamb. It is a pure, unadulterated, beautiful sparkling clean flow of life everlasting emanating from the Lord who is the very essence of life everlasting. Rev. 22:1

We have an excellent type of the provision of abundant waters in the supply which the Lord provided for the children of Israel in the wilderness. The Lord always demonstrates His ability to perform miracles out of the most dire circumstances. They were in the desert and in need of water. The Lord sent Moses and the elders to a place called Horeb, meaning desolate. Moses had been there before, for there the Lord appeared to him in the burning, yet unconsumed bush. Ex. 3:1 How desperate could the situation become? Moses said the people were about to stone him.. Moses was to take his rod with him. A tested and tried rod for when he lifted it up over the Nile the waters were turned into blood. Ex. 7:19 That rod was a rod of power and authority. It is also a type of the Lord Jesus. The comfort and strength of the Lord is in the rod and the staff. Ps. 23:4 The church in the end of the age will be measured by the rod of the Lord, the Lord Jesus. Rev. 11:1 Know ye not that Ye are the temple of God. 1 Cor. 3:15 The true church must be measured by the one who brought her into existence. The church is challenged to be found equal with the stature of the man, Christ Jesus. Eph. 4:13

THE LORD IS LOVE. 80

The revealed, the manifest love of the Lord embody in the true Lamb of God. The Passover lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ, had arrived in Jerusalem to celebrate and fulfill the Feast. The emotions of the Lord Jesus are evident in His words to His disciples. There was a strong, perhaps even a vehement desire burning within Him to fully accomplish the will of the Father. This gathering and supper with them was of vital importance to Him. Among the many subjects which are recorded in His teaching at this time of His life was the all important meaning of the Passover Lamb. The pressure of the climax of His life was already upon Him. Luke 22:15

His teaching concerning the true importance of the Passover or the Communion table was given to them at this time. Taking the bread into His hands He said, "This is my body." The participant is to receive it as just that, His body. The bread does not change its substance but by faith the one

partaking will remember the crucified Christ and His sacrificial offering of Himself for all of mankind. Luke 22:19 The after dinner cup was presented as His shed blood the witness and testimony of the new covenant.

Luke 22:20

“In remembrance of me.” Paul used these words of the Lord Jesus to give instructions to the Corinthians as to the manner in which this act of worship should be conducted. The importance and attention must be on the person who is being remembered and not the elements used in remembering the death of Christ. It is a moment of spiritual commemoration and fellowship with the Lord Jesus. 1 Cor. 11: 24-26 It is not a ritual but rather an life giving experience. It should renew our comprehension and vision of Calvary and all that Jesus accomplished for us. It is a factual means whereby an impartation of the life which is in Christ is passed on to those who eat and drink discerning His body and blood. It is crucial that in participating we recognize and emphasize the reality of eating and drinking of Him. 1 Cor. 11:29 It is termed the cup of blessing by the Apostle and rightfully so. When we properly discern the body and the blood of the Lord we inter into a fellowship with Him which is only possible by this means. There is a unity, an accord, a joining together where He is ingested by those who have rightfully and properly partaken of Him. 1 Cor. 10:16 The whole of those taking the bread and cup of communion are receiving the link which joins the whole body of believers with the body and the blood of Christ. Thus by one, are all made to be one. 1 Cor. 10:16

THE LORD IS LOVE. 81

Another aspect of the love of the Lord which we are too prone to ignore, is correction. An age of permissiveness has produced a church of permissiveness. The attitude of, “if it feels good, do it,” has unfortunately become the stance of the church of today. To be blessed of the Lord requires correction. To participate fully and in a manner which is pleasing to the Lord, it is necessary that those who participate in the communion table are disciplined, by the Lord and by themselves. Chastening by the Lord is a definite sign of being fully adopted as His son. Heb. 12:6-7 Every son must undergo sessions of correction in order to learn the will of the Lord in all the avenues of life. To be without the chastening of the Lord is to be an illegitimate child. Heb. 12:8

With that prospect in mind, we return to the communion table. Partaking of the body and blood of our Lord must be a time of deep introspection. We are instructed by the Word of the Lord to have a session of self examination. Then, to partake of the bread and the cup. It must be a time of absolute honesty, before the Lord and to our own hearts. 1 Cor. 11:28 Were this practiced we would save ourselves a peck of troubles. The spiritual attitude of the heart toward the body and the blood of the Lord Jesus is vital at this moment of the communion. It must be honored, revered and evaluated for exactly what it is. It is the glorified resurrected, eternal communion of the Christ of God. 1 Cor. 11:29

It is here that true discernment of the spiritual condition of our inner man is necessary. If there is a need for repentance. He is faithful and just to forgive, providing we confess and forsake our sin. It is then that we once again experience His abundant mercy. Prov. 28:13 To participate with anything but a clean, whole heart may bring about dire circumstances. The Apostle called it "damnation to himself." 1 Cor. 11:29 A situation which most definitely should be avoided at all costs. This does not mean that one should bypass the opportunity to partake of the communion. It does explain to us that here are certain criteria which must be met before we can participate and expect the blessing of the Lord from it. It is far easier to judge and discipline ourselves than to wait until the Lord disciplines us. It is not necessary that in fulfilling the Word we downgrade ourselves but it is a time of soul searching and complete honesty in rightly evaluating our spiritual life. The object of the Apostle was not to cut them off from the table but for them to participate with the fullness of the blessing of the Lord. That has not changed, there are special blessings to be received through the communion.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 82

The Christ, OUR Passover. 1 Cor. 5:7 The anointed One, The Messiah The only means whereby mankind may be redeemed from their sin. There is no other sacrifice which could possibly be accepted by the Lord. No longer a lamb chosen from the flock but the true Lamb, the Lamb chosen and commissioned by God. The only begotten of the Father. Deity, taking on the form of man that He might redeem mankind from their fallen estate. Never

before had there been one born into this world like Him, never again will there be another. He rises up like a high mountain far above all others who have passed this way. One of a kind, unique, matchless and eternally magnificent. Most wonderfully, He is OUR Passover. He has given the lamb of Passover meaningful personality.

His love is true love. He is the very essence of love and has demonstrated it to the highest degree. Who among us, being in the very likeness of God would chose to be born of a woman and become one like all other men. Who being eternal, would by any means take on the similarity of a being upon which the sentence of death had already been passed. Where is the individual who knowing full well that they would be grossly misunderstood, mistreated and humiliated more than any other person ever born into this world, yet would chose to fulfill all the desires of God. He stands tall, Jesus is exalted far above all who have come and gone upon this earth. His tremendous love is still stirring the hearts of those who seek Him. His love, demonstrated in the hearts of humanity is the only true joy of life.

The lamb chosen for Passover was to be well inspected and accepted only if it were faultless, inside and out. It had to be perfect. If any blemishes were found in it, it had to be rejected. The Real Lamb of God was noted for the fact that though He was born in a body subjected to sin and tempted to the greatest degree, He was without sin. The perfect and everlasting sacrifice. Heb. 4:15 Christ Jesus is the true example for all those who have been born of the incorruptible seed, the Word of the Lord. 1 Peter 2:21 It would then be expected that those who are following His example become more and more like Him. Therefore, it is time to purge out the old leaven, which symbolizes sin, that when we participate of the Communion table we come without leaven. Just a minute measure of leaven will spread throughout the whole loaf and thoroughly become a part of the whole. We are to become a new lump, new creatures in Christ Jesus, living His life here on this earth and showing forth the high praises of our Lord who has done so much for us. 1 Cor. 5:6-7

THE LORD IS LOVE. 83

The Lord God is the God of love. That is a title and position which belongs only to Him. He is all things, to all of mankind, at all times. He reigns

supreme over every area of life. All of the great variety of the phases of life are in His hands. Love originates and emanates from Him. Where His love is lived and displayed, love on a human scale is elevated to a higher plain. It takes on a richer meaning because of the dwelling of the God of love in the heart of a child of the Lord. To know Him is to know His love and to learn to love as He loves. 2 Cor. 13:11

Love is a sure covering for the sins of mankind. Prov. 10:12 He does not hide them but where there is repentance sins are not only covered they are obliterated. The Lord has proclaimed that He is the one who has blotted out our transgressions, for His own sake. He has no reason to remember them nor to hold them against us. He will never recall them, forever, throughout eternity, they are gone. Isa. 43:25 Through His abundant love, mercy and grace He not only forgives and blots out but along with it there is also the consolation, the eternal encouragement of the Lord. 2 Thess. 2:16 In His compassion he blesses His own for He Himself was made subject to every temptation common to mankind. When Israel of old went through times of affliction, just like anyone who cares about another, the Lord suffered with them. Isa. 63:9 And so it is today, He is touched by the feeling of our infirmities. Heb. 4:15

As children of the Lord we are to show a mirror image of that precious segment of the nature of our heavenly Father. To have us love as He loves is the ultimate goal of His Spirit and Word working in us. From the depths and with a whole heart we are to forgive those who trespass against us. Mt. 18:35 S He has readily forgiven all who have sinned against Him and have sought forgiveness, so should we forgive. It is not easy but it is a blessed feeling to rid oneself of feelings toward others. Most unfortunately, the person who is carrying something against others will suffer greater consequences than those against whom they have bad feelings. We hinder ourselves by our attitudes which may not be Christ like. He set the perfect example for all to follow. When coming to the Lord and in the mean time remembering that there is a problem with another, leave the altar, be reconciled with that person and then return in full assurance that what you present to the Lord will be well received. Mt. 5:23-24 Love is not always manifest in the big, the great things of life but in a multitude of small things which in the end will complete the perfection to be found in love.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 84

The power of the Love of the Lord knows no limits. It overwhelms the sin of mankind through the blood of the Lord Jesus. There are no situations in life which can demonstrate a greater force or power. The Apostle asked a question, "Who can separate us from the love of Christ." Rom. 8:35 He then presents seven circumstances which take place in the world in which we live. All of these in his list he had experienced since he had come to Christ. So, he was speaking from a standpoint of experience and knowledge. We can take comfort in that he faced these things and found the love of Christ to abound under all conditions. His anticipation was that all who face such problems would find the same deliverance which he had found. The love of Christ, resident with in the spirit of the person causes them to be more than a conqueror, to triumph greatly. That is, in a positive and complete manner. Rom. 8:37

In reading the history and the writings of the Apostle Paul it is evident that he was a man of strong character. He was most definitely a stalwart in the faith. Even so, his strength was in the love of Christ which had so bountifully been revealed to him. He give a us a list of ten things which pretty well cover all that will be faced in this life. None of these, not one has the force nor ability to bring about a separation from the love of God which is revealed in the Lord Jesus. Rom. 8:37-38 Of this fact he was fully convinced that the love of Christ enables, us in all situations, to be victorious in grand fashion. Love conquerors all, especially His love.

It is sometimes difficult to comprehend, nevertheless it is true, that all things work together for good to those who love the Lord. There is a lesson to be learned in each and every adversity which we face in life. Just as the Lord sends the rain on the just and the unjust, so all who pass through this life will find that there are trials and troubles. They are all learning experiences and help shape the character, either making it better or worse. Some react in a negative manner to problems and thereby create even more problems for themselves. The called, those who serve the Lord, will come out of life's perplexities stronger and closer to the Lord, because they depend on His great love to see them through. At times the Divine reason is immediately apparent. Then again, we may not see any practical purpose in what we go through. It is all in His good will for us and the

ultimate intent is to reveal once again the great and marvelous love which the Lord Jesus has for His people. Remember, he said "All things." Rom. 8:28 Even the most difficult.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 85

Love versus temptation. James does not give much credence to the idea that the devil made me do it. In a manner most straight forward he makes it exceedingly plain that we are tempted along the lines that we lust after. In other words, our weak points. Lust creates temptation. Temptation creates sin and the ultimate of sin is death, that is, eternal separation from the Lord. James 1:14-15 It is important that we consider that temptation does not originate with the Lord. He Himself cannot be tempted with evil neither does He tempt any man. Temptations begin with the individual who is tempted. We ourselves are responsible for the sinful predicaments we find ourselves in. James 1:13 Where there is a true love for the Lord, there is certain victory. It is when our love for Him, cools off that we find ourselves in trouble.

The victor has a very special reward, that of a crown of life, eternal life in the glorious presence of the Lord. James 1:12 These crowns, given at that time were mere wreaths of leaves. It was not the substance of which they were made that counted. It was the honor and the glory of having won the prize that caused those who participated to expend great effort to win. What the Lord is offering is of far greater value than any earthly reward, for it is everlasting. Yet, the commitment of the athletes of that day and of those today, in order to win had to be one hundred percent. The crowns so valued by the champions of that day were crowns that all too soon would dry up and perish. They establish an excellent example for those who would win the crown of life. There must be even a greater sense of purpose for those who would win the incorruptible crown of life. In this case Paul is emphasizing the one who is zealous to obtain this most valuable crown must practice temperance and self restraint in all areas of life. 1 Cor. 9:25

The Lord Jesus in His letter to the church at Ephesus connected the gift of the crown of life with tribulation and persecution. We sometime forget that one of the signs which Jesus said would signal the last days was that of persecution. One of the signs which He said would take place was that

there would be those who afflict and even kill believers in the end of the age. This was not to be limited to one country but Jesus said all nations. We see smatterings today but it has not yet reached its climax which involves the whole world. This will be evident during the great tribulation and reach it's pinnacle at that time. As they are faithful unto death they will be given the crown of life. Rev. 2:10 These are Christians who entered the great tribulation and maintained their faith. They are martyrs. They will be beheaded for their witness of the Christ. Rev. 20:4

THE LORD IS LOVE. 86

Paul expressed a strong desire, establishing an example, which should be followed by all who have a burning aspiration to draw closer to the Lord. It had to have been his hearts cry. "That I may know Him." Phil. 3:10 In the Lord Jesus, and only in Him, is to be found such profound love. A love which exceeds the ability of mankind to comprehend the magnitude of such majestic love. Measure by measure, as we seek Him, we receive of that agape love, only to discover that there are yet depths of His love which we have not yet experienced. The impact of the revelation of that love in the life style of those who receive it is life changing. Not only immediately upon entering into it but consistently and constantly there are deeper revelations of that love. It is inexhaustible. There is no limit to be found in its manifestation to those who will love the Lord Jesus. Eph. 3:19

May the Lord in His mercy enable all to comprehend the ultimate of the impartation of that love to those who reciprocate His love. It is the door to the eternal objective of the Lord. That is, a people whom He can fill to the fullest with the fullness of Himself. The consummate intention of the Lord is shown to be that of full occupancy of the object of His love, His bride. Repeatedly the scriptures show that He will eternally manifest Himself to and in His church. She is to be filled with ALL THE FULNESS OF GOD. Eph. 3:19 As unbelievable as it may be, it is stated in the Word in several different ways.

John noted that those who come to Christ receive of, that is a measure, a portion of the grace of the Lord. As the individual who has been born of the Spirit progresses in wisdom and knowledge of the Lord they continue to receive of His inexhaustible grace. John 1:16 As with all of the works of the

Lord there is a moment where His object is completed. In this case the moment of fulfillment will be the unlimited occupancy of the perfected church with the same fullness which was in the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Col. 2:10 Salvation is not a game, it has a destination that is eternal. The final work of His Spirit will elevate the church to a position of unequivocal unity with the Lord Jesus. Her eternal destiny is to be His wife in the most conclusive sense of being one, unified, for she is His body. That which is called a member of His body is one with Him. There may be many members but only one body. This is a great mystery, that is openly revealed in the Word. Eph. 5:30-33 Let him that hath an ear to hear what the Spirit is speaking to the church of today. The night is far spent, the dawning of a new day is at hand. It is time to awaken from spiritual slumber and seek the Lord.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 87

This is eternal life. Research of every kind is under way trying to increase the life span of mankind but everlasting life is found only in one, the Lord Jesus. The ability to positively know the true and living God is to be in possession of a full and complete understanding of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. John 17:3 Obedience, motivated by love is the great indicator of a real relationship between two parties. Jesus exemplified the depths of love, His love for His Father by His willingness to do the bidding of the Father. Jesus responded perfectly to the commandments issued by the Father. John 14:31

As with the Father and the Son, so it is between the Son and those who would be His disciple. Love is the bond and obedience is the evidence of the power of that love. Those who embrace and follow His will and commandments are demonstrating their love for Him. Consequently the Father will love them also because of their adherence to the Word. John 14:21 The fulfillment of the promise of the coming of one who was named by the Lord Jesus as the Comforter, was dependent on love and obedience. He is the Spirit of truth. The great teacher revealing the hidden things of the Lord. His presence was to be of the most intimate nature for He will not only dwell with us but be in us and abide forever. John 16:15-17

But we have the mind of Christ. 1 Cor. 2:16 What a tremendous statement. The implications are endless. The ability to accomplish great works for the Lord are absolutely limitless. When His name, Christ is used in the scriptures they are writing about the Messiah, the anointed One, and in this case, His presence in His people through the person of the Holy Spirit. Again, it is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Col. 1:27 The more and the better acquainted we become with the Holy Spirit, who is the mind of Christ in us, the greater our consecration to the Lord. The more intense our desire becomes to know Him and to be constantly filled to capacity with His presence. When, "this mind" that we find in Christ Jesus is in His people, there is perfect love and obedience. Phil. 2:5 His mind is the mind of God and reflects on those things which are spiritual. It is the mind which brings life and peace under all circumstances, be they good or bad. Rom. 8:6 The perfect church, the end time church, gloriously united by the Spirit will have the mind of Christ pertaining to every teaching and doctrine to be found in the Word. The prayer of the Lord Jesus will yet be answered. He did not pray frivolous prayers. His prayer for the unity of all believers in to one will be accomplished. John 17:22

THE LORD IS LOVE. 88

The works of salvation may be most easily summed up in two words, love and obedience. Where there is true love obedience will always be in evidence. That there is to be great caution in the progression of our salvation is evident in the words, fear and trembling. Not that we would fear the Lord nether come before Him with trembling but making certain that our works follow precisely His will for us. Phil. 2:12 In building the house of the Lord we are not constructing a shack but a Temple of great beauty which He will occupy to the fullest. Therefore, take care as to the materials used. The Lord will occupy a spiritual Temple not a religious temple created of the usual building materials of this world.

The impartation of His love to His very own has definite rewards. The Spirit which He has bestowed upon His church does not live in fear, but in the consolation and comfort of love. Phil. 2:1 We well know that when traveling this Way, the Way of Christ, there are many potholes and uneven roads which must be traversed. When we seek the Lord in times of adversities we find a strong, a most positive, the mightiest consolation in the Spirit and the

Word of the Lord. Heb. 6:18 His solace is everlasting, springing from eternity past on to the eternity which is to come. It covers every aspect of human experience and far beyond. Great, glorious words of comfort from the Majestic Eternal One. 2 Thess. 2:16 Such comfort does not come from a worldly source but is a consequence of the love which expresses the very being of the Lord.

There is no place so reassuring as the everlasting arms of the Lord. Where else would we flee seeking solace and love but to Him, who is love personified. He is our hiding place and our victory. Through Him we conquer. Deut. 33:27 His eyes are ever watching after those who are His. Not one sparrow falls to the ground but what He is aware of it. How much more does He observe His own and their activities. His ears are always open to their hearts cry. Only to the evil does He turn His face away. 1 Pet. 3:12 The relationship between the Lord and His people is through the person of the Holy Spirit. It is a real affiliation and must be strongly active in the life of every one who would please the Lord. None can manifest such depths of sympathy and caring consideration more than the Lord Jesus and those who have been born of His Spirit. Phil. 2:1 The nature and character of the Lord Jesus is that which is birthed in that person who has been born again. It is impossible to really know Him without finding oneself emulating Him.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 89

“Greater love has no man than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends. You are my friends if you do whatever I command you.” John 15:13-14 As we approach the season of the commemoration of the manifestation of His love, that is the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, it is well that we consider carefully His actions. Friendship with Jesus is measured by obedience to His Word. The spiritual choices made by each and every individual will determine the depths of this friendship. He has opened the door of friendship with the whole world. Mankind will make their own decision as to how closely they want to follow Him.

Never has there been a man, born of a woman, who was so much a person of such extremes. The prophet’s description of Him contained interesting

detail of His being. He is the revealed arm of the Lord. Isa. 53:1 When seemingly none cared nor was concerned, then the arm of the Lord was made known. He is the only intercessor, past, present and future, no one can ever match Him nor replace Him. He is, at one and the same time the sacrifice and the Priest offering the sacrifice. His arm is the arm of redemption and holiness. Isa. 59:16 He is the right hand and the arm of the strength of the All Mighty. All power has been surrendered to Him. Isa. 62:8 He will come a second time by the revealed and mighty arm of the Lord. His voice will be heard. The shining forth, the lightening flashes which accompany His appearing will be instantaneously world wide. His coming in flaming fire will circle the globe and be visible every where on earth at basically the same moment of time. Isa. 30:30 There is but one arm of such force and power.

“He shall grow up.” Isa. 53:2 Strong’s word Dictionary gives this statement many meanings. Among them, dawn, breaking of day or morning light. Gen. 32:24 The Lord Jesus is identified as the bright and morning star. Rev. 22:16 He has brought into being the dawning of new life and the light of the Lord, for Jesus is the light of the world. John 8:12 He displayed a nature of true tenderness in all of His ministry, culminating in the great manifestation of His love by submitting to death by the cross. In spite of the injustice of their acts, He prayed for their forgiveness, for they were acting out of ignorance. Luke 23:34 He is the real root of the tree of life, coming out of the dry ground, for Israel had gone through some four hundred years without a prophet, then Christ appeared on the scene. Those who are in Christ Jesus are privileged to be united to the root and to draw sustenance, the olive oil, the tree of anointing. All peoples are made to partake of one and the same life giving source. Rom. 11:17

THE LORD IS LOVE. 90

From the prophecy of Isaiah we are made to believe that physically, there was nothing outstanding about the appearance of the Lord Jesus. He had no form. He was without any physical features which would make Him stand out in a crowd. He was not a handsome man, there was nothing about His looks which set Him apart from others. No comeliness. When He appeared on the scene, there was nothing about His physical presence that would appeal to both men and women and cause them to want to follow

Him and believe in Him. Isa. 53:2 When He ministered in the area where He had grown up, they remembered Him only as the son of the carpenter and Mary, His siblings they all well knew. Rather than having the spiritual ability to see Him as the Son of God, they remembered only His childhood and were incensed at the mighty works which He was doing. Mt. 13:56-58

The attitude of the world toward Him is well spelled out by the prophet. Isa. 53:3 Take note that the words of Isaiah, though pointing to the time of the Lord's visitation on earth, are yet true today and he intended them to be understood in that fashion. What we might place in the past, Isaiah presented as a continuing condition. "He is," despised, even to day. For instance, His most precious name is spoken in blasphemy by mankind. Why His name, other than it is in the heart of humanity to degrade the only Savior of men. He was and is rejected by multitudes to the harm of their own souls. At the time of His crucifixion, as He hung on the cross the spirit and attitude of the people of that day was evidenced. From the highest religious leaders to those who were in the same predicament, the two thieves all ridiculed Him, even as mankind does today. Mt. 27: 39-44

He was to be a man of sorrows, one who would know a measure of grief and pain such as borne by no other man, ever. In spite of the fact that all, even those who love and serve Him today, at one time or another disregarded or degraded Him, He still carried, for us, the negative things of this life. Events which come to all, such as calamities, sicknesses, anguish, pains and sorrows, the heartaches of life He bore for all, that we might find solace in Him in times of difficulty and problems. Isa. 53:4 Completely misunderstood is His compassion and mercy in wanting to take upon Himself the suffering of humanity, to take our place that we might be delivered. He is considered to have been judged by God in all of His sufferings. Those who actively crucified Him considered themselves to be individuals who were performing the will of God by eliminating one whom they considered to be an imposter.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 91

He was wounded, His body pierced by nails, thorns and a spear. All painful acts of desecration against the Lord Jesus. The powerful Messianic Psalm of David states that His hands and His feet were to be pierced. Ps. 22:16

Those who crucified showed Him no compassion, only anger and the heat of the wave of hatred which swept over the people of that day. He suffered five major wounds on the cross. Inasmuch as the number five is the number of blood atonement He purchased full and complete salvation for the whosoever will. His wounds were extremely painful, both physically and spiritually. Guiltless, sinless the only man ever to live a life of true holiness in this world. Our sinfulness, our transgression sent Him to the cross. The power of His love for humanity overcame all reluctance that He May have had. Isa. 53:5

The iniquities of mankind caused Him to be bruised, beaten, and crushed not only physically but mentally and spiritually as well. Jesus was grossly mistreated by the high priest, they spit in his face, an act of utter contempt. They struck Him with their hands and buffeted Him about. The soldiers smote Him in Pilates judgment hall. John 19:3 The Jews did the same when Pilate delivered Him to them. They also smote Him on the head with a reed while mocking Him. Mark 15:19 The emotions of His inner man are expressed by the words of the Psalmist, "my heart is wounded within me." Ps. 109:22

Chastisement was heaped upon Him, that we might know the peace of God which passes understanding. Phil. 4:7 The titles of peace which are His to bear are many. He is the Lord of peace, He always has been and always will be. The peace whereby He blesses us is a peace which has been fully paid for by the vile treatment to which He was exposed. 2 Thess. 3:16 He came to give peace to the troubled hearts of humanity. When He gives peace, He gives of Himself. John 14:27 He is the author of peace. It is His nature and being. The beauty of that is, that when He imparts peace to us He is taking of Himself and establishing peace in His people. 1 Cor. 14:33 Of all the titles which we might want to give Him we cannot leave out the fact that He is the King of peace who appeared unto Abraham. Heb. 7:22 Peace is a vital factor in the life of every Christian. The Lord Jesus paid a tremendous price that peace might rule and reign in our hearts. Then He turns around and gives it to those who follow Him as a free gift whereby we may live in peace in a world filled with turmoil. To be spiritually minded and mind the things of the Spirit is life and peace. Rom. 8:6

THE LORD IS LOVE. 92

“With His stripes we are healed.” Isa.53:5 Some would like to limit the healing spoken of here to the forgiving of sin, the healing of the spirit nature in man. However, even the most casual look at the ministry of the Lord Jesus and we see that He preached the gospel of the kingdom and then demonstrated it by healing every type of sickness and disease. Mt. 4:23 In commissioning the twelve disciples to go preach the gospel of the kingdom He gave them power and authority over all devils and the ability to heal the sick, even to the raising of the dead. Mt. 10:7-8 They believed Him and consequently spread abroad, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere. Luke 9:6

Peter, looking back at the judgment and crucifixion of the Christ of God, placed healing as an act already accomplished, “by whose stripes ye were healed.” 1 Peter 2:24 King David speaking prophetically declared that He would forgive “all iniquities” and “heal all diseases,” Ps. 103:3 It was Pilate who gave the command to scourge Jesus, prior to His release into the hands of the high priest. John 19:1 The flesh of His back was grossly lacerated by the cat-of-nine tails use as a punishment. He paid the total, the full price for the diseases and sickness of the whole world. Forty stripes was the maximum and He most definitely bore the full penalty. Deut. 25:3 His back became like a plowed field, broken and bleeding from the beating administered. Ps. 129:3 Isaiah, prophesied that He would give His back to those who would smite Him and would not resist the plucking of His beard and the spittle of His persecutors. Isa. 50:6 There is healing in the atonement, through the shedding of His blood. He suffered that we might be well and healthy.

With one command, Jesus forgave sin and healed the man sick of the palsy. The super religious watching the scene, in their hearts accused Him of blasphemy. The response of the Lord Jesus was, which is easier, your sins are forgiven or take up your bed and walk. Neither of which these religious persons had the power or authority to do. As a sign of the right vested in the Son of man, Jesus assured him that his sins were forgiven and that he could take up his bed and walk, which he promptly did. Mt. 9:2-8 It is James who expanded the theme by giving us a system whereby the sick may be healed. It involves the elders of the church, the anointing

with oil, prayers in the name of the Lord, the prayer of faith and results are thereby achieved to the praise and glory of the name of the Lord. Accompanying the healing will also be the forgiveness of sin where there has been sin. James 5:14-15 Consider also, v.16 as a benefit to the process.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 93

It pleased the Lord. Isa. 53:10 Under ordinary circumstances such a reaction would be very understandable and most welcomed. These words spring from the greatest of all tragedies of the worlds history. The death of a Son, the only begotten Son of the Father. As with all things pertaining to the Godhead, there is to be found an intimacy, a comradeship, a unity which is far beyond the comprehension of mankind. Eternally, the Father and the Son had enjoyed the closest companionship. Jesus is identified by the term, "my fellow," thus expressing the absolute union between the two. Zech. 13:7

Jesus, speaking with Mary Magdalene, immediately after His resurrection declared that He was about to ascend to, My Father, indicating the very closest of relationships between Jesus and His Father, that of a loving Father and Son. He then added that God was not only His Father but, My God, as well. John 20:17 This is the man, Christ Jesus, whom they accused of making Himself equal with God, His Father. John 5:18 Paul verified the position which He enjoyed by stating that Jesus, "thought it not robbery to be equal with God." Phil. 2:6 God, the Lord Jesus has a God, the Father.

And now, it pleased the Lord. To send the all together righteous one, to die for the totally unrighteous. The sinless, spotless sacrifice of one who lived in this life, yet without sin, being put to death in the place of the unrighteous, the ungodly, even those who hated and despised Him. The exchange is incomprehensible. It is to the highest degree unequal. The Holy One of the Father, the Lord Jesus, He who is very life, sacrificing His life that even the grossest of sinners might find life everlasting. Love, the love of the Lord, was the motivating factor which drove the whole development of the redemptive act of Calvary. Rom. 5:7

So, it pleased the Lord. Does this mean that He enjoyed the extreme action necessary to redeem mankind. Not at all. When I think of Calvary the cry of the forsaken, the eternally lost, the forlorn which came from the lips of the Lord Jesus when He cried out, My God, My God, why have you forsaken me. Mt. 27:46 It was the cry of a shattered, eternal relationship. The Father, for that brief period of time turned His back on the Lord Jesus. Holiness could not look upon sin. Hab. 1:13 Those who had been the very closest to Him and had seen His mighty works, all of the three and one half years of His ministry, forsook Him and fled. Mark 14:50 Now, the final straw, His very own Father and eternal companion turned away from Him. What a grievous and hurtful moment of time it was for the one whose very nature is life and love. There is no greater love. John 15:13

THE LORD IS LOVE. 94

It pleased the Lord to make His soul an offering for sin. Isa. 53:10 As gruesome as the events leading up to and including the death of Christ were, the end results are glorious and wonderful. The beauty of the whole occurrence is that it's achievements are still in effect today. The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son cleanses from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:7 With these statements of the scriptures, substance is given to the soul life being resident in the blood. For all the sacrifices made under the Law, none of them could cleanse from sin. There is no possibility that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sin. Heb. 10:4 The Lord tolerated the offerings made under the Law but derived no pleasure from them. Heb. 10:6,8 The futility of the Law is evidenced by the fact of it being but a shadow, of good things to come. Which will we chose the shadow or the substance? The Apostle made it very clear that the Law absolutely cannot accomplish the will and purpose of the Almighty. Heb. 10:1

Christ came to remove forever the first Covenant, the Law, that He might establish the second, the Covenant of grace. Heb. 10:9 This He accomplished by meeting all the demands of the Law and fulfilling them completely. Mt. 5:17-18 Jesus, voluntarily offered Himself to be the one true offering for sin. All sacrificial offerings, from the beginning, pointed to, and depended on, the once for all sacrifice of Christ. Since His death, burial and resurrection, we look back to the offering of the Lamb of God on Calvary's tree. No man, no power of evil, had authority over Him to take His

life. He said; I lay it down and I will take it up again. John 10:17-18 The witness of His precious blood in the most holy place, i.e. heaven is our assurance of eternal life. His blood, and only His is the seal of our eternal redemption. Heb. 9:12

A question. Seeing the total involvement and the full commitment of the of the Lord Jesus in providing for the salvation of mankind, will He ever revert to accepting the old covenant again? Not if Isaiah was speaking according to the Word of the Lord. Will He bless another house of sacrifice? The prophet stated that the Lord had totally rejected any other sacrifice. For the person offering an ox, was considered by the Lord as being a murderer. Those who would again sacrifice lambs, in the sight of the Lord ,were offering an unclean animal, or a dog. They, who under such a practice brought offerings would be considered to be offering the blood of a pig. While those burning incense were considered to be blessing idols. Isa. 66:3 What has been, the Lord will not re-establish.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 95

The Father satisfied, by beholding the travail of soul which is identified with the Lord Jesus. Isa. 53:11 Note His soul was in great travail. A situation which increased more and more in intensity as He neared the Cross. Calvary was to reveal His great purpose in coming into this world. While the word travail covers many of life's trying and wearisome moments of this life, we are going to emphasize the deepest meaning, that of bringing children into this world. Under the New Testament economy all who participate in His salvation will be born of the Spirit. As the progenitor of the eternal family of God, the Lord Jesus is given the title of the captain of salvation, The chief leader. He was brought to perfection through the things which He suffered. Heb. 2:10 While we always recognize His Deity, we must never lose sight of the fact that He was also very human. He humbled Himself to become one with us. He well understands every heartache and sorrow which we face in this life, He has been there before us.

The shame, the reproach of the cross He bravely faced, while at the same time despising all that He would take upon Himself as He hung between heaven and earth. In so doing, creating a bridge, a passage way whereby mankind could find entrance into the Kingdom of God. The builders of the

city of Luz rejected the very stone which became the staircase unto heaven. Gen. 28:12 Israel was about to crucify their Messiah.

The travail of the eternal ages was in Gethsemane, meaning olive press.

Mt. 26:36 The Lord Jesus was entering into the most punishing time of His life. The prophetic utterances of Isaiah pertaining to the sorrows and sufferings to which He would be subjected were about to come to pass. The pressure of the horror of what He was about to experience was coming upon Him. He needed to find a secret place of prayer. Ironically it was in what is called a garden, the history of mankind started in garden. New life, eternal life was about to be brought into existence by the consecration made in Gethsemane, a garden. He chose three of His disciples as companions and witnesses to go deeper into the garden with Him, but when it came time for Him to pray, He went to the extreme and was alone. Mt. 26:37-38 Now, the signs of travail of soul and spirit are evidenced. Jesus became sorrowful or distressed with overwhelming heaviness in the inner man. Emotions which every person would feel had they a knowledge such as Jesus had of His immediate future. We must repeatedly remind ourselves that this Jesus is the Son of man as well as the Son of God. Therefore His feelings would be the identical to ours under the same circumstances.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 96

The magnitude of the events about to take place in the immediate future of the Lord Jesus are far beyond the comprehension of man. Physically, He was to endure pain and anguish to a far greater extent than any other man would ever suffer. The real anguish which He was to face was in the spiritual realm. He who is life, was about to be plunged into death and to bear the consequences of the sin of the total population of mankind who will ever populate the earth. He was about to find Himself in the very heart of a great clash between the unseen powers of darkness and light. 1 Cor. 15:55 There was no doubt as to the outcome but the conflict would be grievous.

Such enormous pressure had a terrific effect on the physical man until He began to sweat great drops of blood. Though rare, this is a physical

problem which is present under excruciating circumstances. Luke 22:44 In a prophecy addressed to Jerusalem and recorded in the book of Lamentations, there are three statements which may give us a bit of an eyesight into what was transpiring. O LORD, behold my affliction, for the enemy has magnified himself. Lam. 1:9 His affliction was to bare the full brunt of the filthiness of sin and the corruption of all sickness. Mt. 8:17 As he did previously in heaven, Lucifer chose to exalt himself over the Lord God and His throne. Isa. 14:13 That there was greatly increased activity on the part of the powers of darkness is never in doubt. The crowds in Jerusalem which participated in the crucifixion of Christ were filled with a spirit of great anger and vengeance.

The second is found in the statement, I have become vile. Lam. 1:11 Despised and hated by the very ones He came to save. In some ways, the world has not changed since that day. He was ridiculed and scorned by those who hated Him in that day. When His Father forsook Him, that was the greatest blow of all. A wound of the deepest kind, yet something that had to be. Mark 15:34 It is the cry of one who is totally forsaken and forlorn.

The third gives insight into some of the depths of activity which occurred behind the scenes and is not too visible. The LORD has afflicted Me in the day of His fierce anger. Lam. 1:12 The physical afflictions of men in that day, though horrendous, were minor. Compare them to the fact that He not only bore our sins and sicknesses but He was subjected to the fullness of the wrath of the Lord. Not just separated but judged as a guilty condemned sinner of the worst sort as He took upon Himself all that which was rightfully ours. He completely took the judgment, the punishment, of every human being but it does us no good until we accept Him. 2 Cor. 5:21

THE LORD IS LOVE. 97

The tremendous burden, the exceeding weight of the spiritual battle facing the Lord Jesus caused the unusual reaction in His flesh. The strong and extreme emotions expressed by such travail of soul and spirit can only be partially understood by those who may have experienced the same depth of prayer. Paul made mention of an unusual form of prayer, in the Spirit, where the one praying may not fully comprehend why they are urged by the Spirit to pray but the Spirit is exercising them in a special prayer. It is called

a prayer of intercession, that of becoming an advocate. A prayer that would be made in most extreme and needful circumstances. It is a situation where the entire individual, body, soul and spirit are involved. The weight of the burden may be of great proportions. Also accompanied with sounds, groaning, similar to that of anyone who is going through physical suffering of an intense sort. It can be an extremely awesome experience but remember it is a prayer of the Spirit and in the Spirit. Rom. 8:26 The prayer and dedication of the Lord Jesus brought a deep and full satisfaction to the Father's heart. Isa. 53:11

This session of prayer makes manifest the uniqueness of His office and character. It reveals and elevates the office of the priesthood of Melchizedek and limits its personnel to one person, the Lord Jesus Christ. The priesthood of Melchizedek was not of the descendants of Levi who were set apart to be the priests of the Most High God. Melchizedek was proclaimed to be a priest forever, with an everlasting ministry. There is none other to be found in the same category. Heb. 5:6 Furthermore, we have no record of Melchizedek performing the same works as Christ in Gethsemane. Melchizedek ministered to Abraham. Were these two not one and the same person, the priesthood of Christ would have had to have elevated the office of Melchizedek to an everlasting, heavenly status. The Lord Jesus, because of His eternal life and continuous ministry has a status before the throne which is unchangeable, nontransferable, for it was not intended that it be passed from one to another. That leaves us with the only conclusion which can be made and that is that Melchizedek is a Theophany of the Lord Jesus and the two are one and the same person. The Lord Jesus alone may be considered as the great high priest. Heb. 4:14 He is both the sacrifice and the administrator of the only way of salvation and that of course is through His blood. He is the only one born of a virgin and is the true Son of God. He has preceded the redeemed into the eternal kingdom where He is ever making intercession for all who will come to Him, seeking salvation. Heb. 7:25

THE LORD IS LOVE. 98

Unlimited access. Periodically when driving we see a sign alongside of the road, limited access, indicating that there are certain restrictions applicable to that section of the road. Because of the offering of Himself and His

continuing ministry as the only high priest, we have immediate access, at all times and under all circumstances to His mighty works on our behalf. He is an ever present help in times when we desperately need Him. Ps. 46:1 Because He has plainly shown the way and widely opened the door of heaven, we have the unearned right to come with boldness to the throne of grace when we are faced with the needs and necessities of life. We are not to come begging but as children who have full privileges. Not brazenly, but with full faith that He will respond and He does. Heb. 4:16

It was necessary that He become a man that He might thoroughly understand all the emotions and experiences in life, as felt by all humanity. Having become one with us, He not only ministers in the office of restoration but He is restoration. We are brought into fellowship with the Father through the mercy and grace of the one and only true priesthood. He is faithful in administering the requirements of salvation, in the Holy Place, before the Father. Heb. 2:17 There is no one in time or universe who is as compassionate as the Lord Jesus, our high priest. He is well able to empathize with the frailties of mankind. Even so, He set an example for us having been tempted by every sin common to the human race, but was without sin. Heb. 4:15 A victorious life is the right and privilege of every child of the Lord. Because of His constant intercession we are to be more than conquerors through Him who loves us. Rom. 8:37

Now, as to this one who is an eternal priest after the order of Melchizedek. We are introduced to Him on the return of Abram from his victory over his enemies. Everything about Him is type, symbol or revelation. The meaning of His name is of great significance, king of righteousness. That in itself should identify Him as none other than the Lord Jesus. Gen. 14:18 The writer of the Book of Hebrews in a very positive manner confirms the meaning of His name. Heb. 7:2 In the prophetic vein Jeremiah foresaw the coming of one who would descend from David and would be a king. As a matter of fact, he even gave us the glorious name whereby He would be called, that is THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Jer. 23:5-6 Thus, we find a very strong link between the one who is called Melchizedek and the Lord Jesus. No mere man would be of sufficient Godlike nature to be placed in such an important position.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 99

Melchizedek is also the king of Salem, or the king of peace. Gen. 14:18 Isaiah, under the inspiration of the Spirit of prophecy pronounced Jesus to be the Prince of peace. Isa. 9:6 As such, all true peace originates with Him. The book of Hebrews leaves no doubt as to whom the reference is being made, for here too, He is called the King of Peace. Heb. 7:2 The Lord Jesus, the Prince, the King of peace imparted His peace to his disciples and for that matter, to all who will follow Him. John 14:27 This is most certainly a strong point in identifying Melchizedek.

Adding to this, the food which was presented to Abram has a positive affinity to the Communion. The bread and the wine were a portion of the blessing which was pronounced on Abram. Paul called the Communion cup, the cup of blessing and identified it as the Communion of the blood of the Lord. He then spoke of the bread as being the body of our Lord Jesus Christ. Bread and wine, the body and the blood. 1 Cor. 10:16 The similarity is too apparent to pass by and not call particular attention to it.

It is also imperative that we take into consideration the fact that this Melchizedek was the high priest of the most high God. Gen. 14:18 That would make him to be a legitimate priest. One who ministered before the Lord according to the will of the Lord. His allegiance, his worship was unto the true God. Not only that, but He was in the unique position of holding two positions of leadership at one and the same time. Hidden, yet plainly seen, in a Messianic prophecy given by Zechariah we find this dual leadership. The individual, the Lord Jesus, who is to build the temple of the Lord is to be at one and the same time a Priest and a King. Zech. 6:12-13 Amazingly enough, He will rule over a kingdom that is completely peaceful.

Abram was God's man. Called and directed by the Lord. Gen. 15:7 As one who had been separated from his people for the purpose of the Lord, He would see to it that what ever priest blessed Abram, would be of a legitimate order and one chosen by the Lord. This Melchizedek likewise was in a position where He had the authority to pronounce the blessing of the Lord upon Abram. Now there can be no question but what the lesser (Abram) was blessed of the greater (Melchizedek). Heb. 7:7 Abram was so fully accepted of the Lord that He had chosen him to be the progenitor of

the people of God. He possessed the promises of the Lord. Heb. 7:6 Obviously he was of no small consequences before the Lord. Of the two, Melchizedek was of far greater authority and status.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 100

And he (Abram) gave tithes of all to Melchizedek. Gen. 14:20 It is well to remember that this was an act performed by the one who is known as the father of all those who are of faith. The children of Abraham. Gal. 3:7 Tithing was not brought into being by the Law but was clearly practiced by Abraham. It is a system of consistently giving unto the Lord which He greatly blesses. Particular attention is focused on the fact that Melchizedek was a personage of great stature. The one to whom Abraham gave one tenth of all the spoils. Abraham would not have reacted in this manner with a person of lesser importance than himself, therefore he recognized Melchizedek as one of greater significance. Heb. 7:4

Tithing was incorporated into the Law and it was to be given to the sons of Levi or those of the priesthood. Those who received the tithe were commanded to receive them. This would also make the giving of the tithe a commandment. Heb. 7:5 In the case of Abraham and Melchizedek, the birth right had no bearing on the situation for this man was not a descendent of Levi. As a matter of fact Levi or the tribe of Levi did not exist at that particular moment. Heb. 7:6 Abraham, the one who received the eternal promises of the Lord was blessed by Melchizedek. The promises come alive with the blessing of the Lord pronounced upon them. The one who blessed, had a blessing to impart to Abraham. Abraham, as great as he was, is placed in an inferior roll in the presence of Melchizedek who is termed to be the better. Heb. 7:7 With all this evidence we can only come to one conclusion and that is that Melchizedek was none other than the Lord Jesus. The Lord in making promise (covenant) with Abraham could find no greater person than Himself to certify the promises, therefore He vowed, using Himself and His name. Heb. 6:13 Melchizedek blessed Abraham.

The Levitical priesthood proved to be lacking and insufficient. It did not nor could it achieve perfection. Therefore, after and in exchange, of the Law there was to arise another priest after the order of Melchizedek. A priest

who would not be a descendent of Aaron, or a Levite. Heb. 7:11 The Lord Jesus and the office of the order of Melchizedek are unified in the most specific manner by the evidence given us that it is God's Son, the perfect sacrifice, who is the author of eternal salvation. He is the one who satisfies the need for a high priest who would fit into the demands of the position. Called to be the true priest chosen by the Lord to occupy the place of the one who bears the title of the priest after the order of Melchizedek. Heb. 5:8-10

THE LORD IS LOVE. 101

The author of the book of Hebrews aptly identified the true High Priest as being none other than the Lord Jesus. Thus forging another link in the revelation of the man, the high priest called Melchizedek. In ministry, the Lord Jesus had a dual office. That of the Apostle and the High Priest Heb. 3:1 In fulfilling the responsibilities accompanying these positions he ministered the Word as an Apostle and offered the perfect sacrifice as the true mediator between God and man. Jesus came with a message which introduced good things and the inauguration of the more perfect, actually the absolute picture perfect, eternal Tabernacle. One which is not the work of the hands of men nor is it of the same composition as the building materials of this world. Heb. 9:11 At His entrance into the heavenly, everlasting Holy Place, by His blood, He obtained never-ending redemption for us. Heb. 9:12

As the progenitor and the creator of the house, the family of the Lord, He is the director, the High Priest, ruling over the whole household of faith. The high priest of the tabernacle and temple entered into the most holy place with much trepidation. Only after great preparation and inspection dare they enter into the awesome presence of the Lord. Now, and in great contrast, we come boldly to the throne of grace, knowing that His sacrifice has opened the way into the very throne presence of the Lord. As the veil of the temple was torn apart at His death to reveal that most holy place, (Mt. 27:51) so, we today have access through the body of the Lord Jesus to the Mercy Seat of the Lord. Heb. 10:20-22

There is no comparison between the religious leaders of the days of the ministry of Christ on the earth and the true High Priest whom they crucified. He is the very essence of compassion. He is moved by the human emotions and sufferings which are a part of the life of every person on this earth. He completely understands and will respond with great empathy and comfort to our hearts cry. Heb. 4:15 There is no solace like His. The Word of the Lord and the anointing of the Spirit enable us to find a place of consolation second to none. He too, as a man, faced the frailty and spiritual weaknesses of the flesh but was victorious over them all. He was not of a stronger spiritual strength than any other man. He overcame by the Word of the Lord. We have an example set before us whereby we too can be triumphant. His susceptibility to temptation was absolutely the same as ours, He was human in every aspect of the word. Therefore was redeemed by His own blood, even as we are. Heb. 5:2-3

THE LORD IS LOVE. 102

The LORD, Jehovah said to my Lord (adon) sit at my right hand. Ps. 110:1 The Eternal, Everlasting, Living One declared works of victory to the Lord, The Master, the Guide, the Ruler by giving Him a place that is over and above all. Due to the perfection and completeness of His sacrifice and resurrection Jesus, of whom Melchizedek is a type, has been exalted to the right hand of the throne where He is given fullness of power and authority. All that are in heaven and on earth are made to be in subjection to Him. 1 Peter 3:22 His exaltation is not confined to this life but is forever and ever. He will remain in His position of authority in the new heavens and the new earth, time without end. Eph. 1:20-22

There is only one mediator between the Lord and man, the man Christ Jesus. 1 Tim. 2:5 Inasmuch as the Lord Jesus is that one mediator, there could not possibly be another. The priesthood of Melchizedek is fulfilled by but one person, and He is Jesus. The order of the priest is important but of much more importance is the person who occupies that position. Jesus, having been appointed to be the priest after the order of Melchizedek elevated the office to the very highest degree. He was called of the Lord to establish a perpetual ministry. Heb. 6:10

Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness, or the nature and being of the Lord. 1 Tim. 3:16 Even so, we find that the Lord is constantly revealing Himself in various ways. In each of these situations where He disclosed a certain aspect of His nature we become better acquainted with Him. Jesus rejoiced because His disciples, whom He called babes, were able to comprehend the things of Christ. In the mean time, the learned of the Law, the priests and scribes, in all of their studying of the Law, were not able to understand that they were living in the very fulfillment of what they had anticipated in the coming of their Messiah. Luke 10:21

Shocking, unbelievable, a man suddenly appears on the scene who has no father, mother or genealogy. It is not a case of the record of His ancestry being unrecorded or lost, but it was none existent. At the time of the appearance of Melchizedek, the Word (the Lord Jesus), had not been born of man, therefore He had neither father or mother. Heb. 7:3 The witness and testimony of the scriptures identify Him as being much more than the king of a small city who existed in the days of Abraham. It is not unusual for a man of the Lord to receive heavenly visitations.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 103

By way of illustration of a very positive Theophany we look at the experience of Abraham. The scripture explicitly declares that the LORD (Jehovah) made a very personal appearance to Abraham. Gen. 18:1 This introduction leaves no doubt as to the persons involved in this visit of the LORD with Abraham. He became aware of three men standing before him. Gen. 18:2 We see here the unity of the Godhead in the fact that it was the LORD who appeared to him. That there are three persons in the Godhead is evident in the three men who were present before him. One God, three Persons.

They (plural) inquired after the presence of Sarah. Gen. 18:9 Then He (the LORD) Promised that He (singular) would return and that Sarah would bear the son of promise. The LORD had promised Abraham and Sarah a son but now they were beyond the age of child bearing and no doubt they had long given up any hope of having a son and heir of their own. The LORD never forgets His promises. He may seemingly delay an anticipated answer but He never forgets. In His time He always keeps His promises. He waited

until they were as good as dead, then rejuvenated their life producing forces and fulfilled His promise to them. Heb. 11:11-12

Now back to the features which reveal that Melchizedek could have been no one other than the Word (the Lord Jesus). That Word was not made to be flesh until He was born of the implanted seed, the living Word of the Lord. Of whom else but the Lord could it possibly be said that He was without a beginning of days. That says to us that He, as Melchizedek, was already eternal and had no starting place of life for He always had been in existence. Days, relates to time, but Melchizedek was timeless. Time had never ruled His life. He could not have been an ordinary man for all men born after the similitude of Adam have the sentence of death pronounced upon them. 1 Cor. 15:22 Again, anyone who is without end of life, is eternal. This could not possibly be said of a mortal man but of one who is very life itself. John 1:4 Life everlasting is found in the Son, the Lord Jesus. 1 John 5:11 Jesus, our great High Priest is not fashioned after Melchizedek but Melchizedek is fashioned after The Lord Jesus. Melchizedek is but a type, a shadow while the Lord Jesus is the true, the real High Priest upon whom the whole plan of salvation rests. Melchizedek is seen momentarily in meeting with Abraham but the priestly ministry of the Lord Jesus is continual. Melchizedek ministered to Abraham, Jesus ministers to the whosoever will.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 104

The ministry of Melchizedek was to one man. The only record of His activity as a high priest is on this one occasion. From the documentation given He appeared but this one time. As Melchizedek, His ministry was limited to the particular purpose of blessing Abraham. He introduced and established an order of priesthood which was not according to the Law of Moses. The Law, with its Levitical priests did not lead the people to spiritual maturity. Therefore there existed the necessity of a change, the calling of another priestly line which would be of the order of Melchizedek. Heb. 7:11

The Lord Jesus brought a change, a great contrast to that which was in existence at the time of His ministry. His whole approach was after the workings of the Spirit of the Lord and the ability to live a new life in Christ Jesus. Heb. 7:12 A New Covenant was introduced and put into effect. The

Old Testament had not produced the proper results. There was an urgent need for a method of worship which would bridge the gap between the Lord and man. The Law had its season. It is declared to be a schoolmaster which was to bring its followers to a recognition of the Messiah at His appearing. Gal. 3:24 It is Christ Jesus who came with the order of Melchizedek and demonstrated its power and authority through His death, resurrection and ultimate ascension into the Most Holy place in heaven. He came giving evidence of one who had the power of life everlasting. Eternal life, to such a degree, that though He was crucified, died and was buried, He arose from the dead to fully accomplish His continuous intercession before the Father. Heb. 7:16

Had the first, the Law, satisfied the Lord by producing a people who would totally love Him and serve Him, there would have been no necessity for a second. All of its weaknesses and frailties were seen in its complete lack of any ability whatsoever to establish a life of righteousness in those who followed its order. The statements made by the Apostles were not very complementary when they wrote concerning the Law. Hebrews speaks of it as being weak and unprofitable. Because of its inability to bring its followers into the glorious presence of the Lord, it was annulled, canceled and set aside. Heb. 7:18 Taking its place, is this glorious and marvelous hope which is found in the Lord Jesus. It is listed by the writer as being the better hope. Heb. 7:19 More than that it is the only hope which we can possibly find in this life of ever possessing life everlasting. It is the only means given whereby man may come into the presence of the Living Lord and feel right at home.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 105

The priests under the Law received their office by being born into the lineage of Levi. They were established in their position by a ceremony where an oath was made by others who were priests. Heb. 7:20 Therefore, the Lord Jesus was established as the true High Priest after the order of Melchizedek by an oath. This oath was not ministered by a man but the Lord Himself proclaimed the coming and ministry of One who would be the only and the eternal, everlasting Priest. Ps. 110:4 this was a swearing in, a setting in office from which there would be no change or alteration. It was to

be continuous, Heb. 7:3 everlasting, Heb. 7:17, 21. This is a plan which had its beginnings in the contact between Melchizedek and Abraham showing that there would be a Priest who would minister to those who are of faith, for Abraham is called the father of all who believe. Rom. 4:11 The Law had a multiplicity of priests, faith has but one, the Lord Jesus Christ, our Melchizedek.

Because it was the Lord who instituted the oath it is an oath of truth and one which cannot be changed or broken. It has as a guarantee, the life, death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. It is sealed by the precious blood of Jesus and the power of the Lord demonstrated in His triumph over the last and final enemy of man, death. He has created not only a better Covenant but one that is far superior. He is not only the assurance of the new but also of the old. The Law pointed to Christ. The ability of the Law to grant eternal life rested completely on the one and only sacrifice acceptable to God, which was the offering of His Son, the Lord Jesus. Heb. 10:1, 14 All those who depended upon the Law and its animal sacrifices are made acceptable into His kingdom based solely upon the sacrifice of the Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus. Heb. 9:15

The Lord Jesus has not only produced the better Covenant but we see in the scriptures that it is far superior and fully acceptable to God. There is no other means of salvation nor will there ever be. That which He has accomplished is eternally established. He has created the more (most) excellent ministry as the great High Priest and has founded it upon that better Covenant. Heb. 8:6 He is the only mediator of the New Covenant. All other intercessory efforts are but in vain. He has given us the right and privilege of approaching the throne of grace by calling upon His name. His name is Jesus, Savior, when we learn to use His name properly we find that it is a name of great power and authority. Mark 16:17

THE LORD IS LOVE. 106

The order of Melchizedek is elevated, exalted by the fact that it is made to be effective and eternal through the Lord Jesus. Aside from Him, the order would have had its brief moment in history, been recorded and then passed by as an event in the life of Abraham. Jesus is the heart and soul of the order. None other can obtain the everlasting status of the Lord Jesus. He is

the crux of the entire plan and purpose of the Lord. When compared with all others, only of Jesus can it be said that He is the surety, the assurance, the only one who has made it possible for all to obtain eternal salvation by taking their place. He died for all, each and every sinner. He took the condemnation of sin for all. He tasted of death for all. Heb. 2:9 Now, He is the guarantor of everlasting life to all who will come to Him. He is everything and all, from author to finisher of the new and far better (the exceedingly best) Covenant. Heb. 7:22

The office of the priest of the Law was fulfilled by many for they all followed the path of all men and died. But this one, Melchizedek/Jesus is continually served by but One, the Lord Jesus. He did not receive it from a predecessor, nor will there ever be anyone who will replace Him. It is an unchangeable order. It will never be passed to another. The effect of its power and authority will never cease. Heb. 7:24 He is the faithful Priest who would know the heart and mind of the Lord and react accordingly. He would be the priest over an established household, one which would be eternal. A ministry which is anointed of the Holy Spirit. 1 Sam. 2:35

His ministry is one of complete, full salvation for all who come to Him. It makes no difference how deeply they have plunged into the sin and iniquity of this world, He has the ability to completely pardon them. He is the only intercessor between God and man. He lives with the Divine objective of acting as an advocate representing each individual who will seek His help before the Father. Heb. 7:25 He freely offered Himself as the only sacrifice. He was raised from the dead and exalted to the right hand of the Father. There, in the intimate presence of the Father, He represents the cause of every individual. Rom. 8:34 His ministry was not according to the Law but He has entered into the Most Holy place, that is into heaven itself, where He appears in the presence of the Lord on our behalf. Heb. 9:24 We do not utilize our rights and privileges as we ought. What would we ask of a person who promised us whatsoever we would ask for? Jesus promised that our requests of the Father, in His name, would be granted. John 16:23-24 Are we ever short changing ourselves by not believing that He meant just exactly what He said.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 107

The disposition of the Divine is made manifest in the ministry of the great high priest, our Melchizedek, the Lord Jesus. Heb. 7:26 Only His actions and sacrifice could accomplish the removal of our sin. All others were but shadows and types of the true which was introduced in Christ. Under the Law they offered a multiplicity of sacrifices and that repeatedly day by day. The futility of these sacrifices is that they could never remove sin. The Lord Jesus by His one sacrifice paid the full penalty required, not only to give forgiveness for our sins but to cleanse us from sinning. Heb. 10:11-12 In the giving of Himself He has opened the way whereby He may receive the richness, the completeness of the depths of His desire and longing, and that is a glorious church without spot or wrinkle. Eph. 5:27 A bride as pure and holy as He is. She is the ultimate result and the goal of the whole plan of salvation and its fulfillment. Heb. 10:14

The Lord bypassed the order of Aaron for the simple reason that it was not producing the results which were the reason for its existence. If it had the capability of bringing forth the perfections of the Lord in those who practiced it, there would have been no need for another order to arise. When He sought to establish a way whereby He could bring forth a people who would satisfy His desire He called one after the order of Melchizedek. Heb. 7:11 Abraham is seen in the scripture as the Father of those who follow the Lord by faith. Rom. 4:11 Faith was prior to the Law and continues after the Law. This places Melchisedec under the mantle of faith. Jesus came with a message requiring faith in Him and all of His accomplishments in order to be saved. Acts 16:31

The tabernacle and the temple and all of the equipment used in worship had to be sanctified by the sprinkling of the blood of sacrifice. Sin cannot be remitted without there being a blood sacrifice. So important, so vital is this act of sacrifice that in the ultimate it required the blood of God which flowed through the veins of the Lord Jesus. Jesus was the Lamb, the vessel of sacrificial blood which would not only cleanse sinners from their sin but very heaven itself was to be purified by His blood. Heb. 9:23-24 Now, once, He has come into the world to establish true worship and to bring mankind into the wondrous presence of the living God, through His sacrifice. Notice the challenge, He came to put away sin. To completely remove it from the

life of those who would come under the cleansing effect of His most precious blood. His priesthood affords us not only forgiveness but cleansing, the eradication of sin. Heb. 9:26

THE LORD IS LOVE. 108

Jesus is the very fundamental nature of the God of holiness. He is the prime example of holiness. He is holiness itself. When thinking of this aspect of His being we must also remember that He was just as human as we are. He was tempted in every way and manner which we face, yet without sin. Heb. 4:15 The Lord never presents a challenge to us but what He will also enable us to accomplish His will. He has called us to salvation. The work of salvation in us is to make us to be like Him and He is holy. So we find it written in the Word that we are to emulate His holiness. 1 Peter 1:15-16 Be ye holy for I am holy presents a great challenge to every one who would live for the Lord. In and of our selves we are quick to recognize the improbability of that happening, except the Lord help us. With His help, all things are possible. If, when in prayer, we will apply the same fervor to gaining His holiness as we do to our daily wants and needs, we will see the glory of the Lord manifest in His church.

To receive anything of the Lord it is necessary that we follow His instructions. The fullness of the blessing of the Lord is always available. He is always very accessible for it is through the action of faith in His Word, which is in our mouths and hearts, that we receive of Him. Rom. 10:8 Then Jesus taught that when we seek first those things which are of the kingdom of God, such as His holiness, that all other needs and necessities will automatically be add to us. Mark 6:33 Too often our prayers are for the situations which arise in our daily life. It is very apparent that the secret of the Lord responding to our hearts cry is to have given Him the very first place, to seek Him and His righteousness rather than our daily desires. The good things of this life will come to those who walk before Him in an upright, or righteous manner. Ps. 84:11c

The Lord Jesus, the harmless one. Heb. 7:26 He did harm to no man but diametrically the opposite, blessed and did good things to those who came to Him for help. Multitudes found new life from His touch and prayer for them. Acts 10:38 There was no evil to be found in Him. He came with the

explicit purpose of seeking and saving lost humanity. Luke 19:10 With such a goal in mind He had to be filled and directed by the great and eternal love which is the Love of God. No doubt, many an innocent person has been put to death by those in authority. However, never a man of this caliber of perfect, absolute innocence. The words of the representative of the Roman government, Pilate make manifest the absolute harmlessness of the Lord Jesus. I find no fault in Him. John 19:6

THE LORD IS LOVE. 109

The Lord Jesus, the undefiled one. The ways of sin were not to be found in Him. As the Lamb of God who was to be offered for the sin of the world it was necessary that He be completely free from all the defilement of an unrighteous life. Heb. 7:26 The Passover Lamb. Which was a type of Jesus was to be chosen because of its perfect condition. It was to be without blemish. There could not be any fault of a physical nature, inwardly or outwardly, in the Lamb which was to be used. Ex. 12:5 The requirements and restrictions on the animals sacrificed may be found in the book of Leviticus. Lev. 22:19-24

By man (Adam) sin became the destiny of everyone born into this world. In Christ, the Lamb of God, that curse is reversed and we find complete pardon in Him. Through Christ (the last Adam) we are the recipients of the glorious grace of our Lord. Not only did it settle the question of sins past, but placed us in a position where we reign in righteousness, through the mercy and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. 5:12 It is a righteousness that is not of ourselves but is His gift to those who will faithfully follow Him. His grace is an impartation of His life that we might have the ability to live the same sort of a life which He lived. Challenging, yes, never the less true. As with all things in Christ, the manifestation of His righteousness in us, is an act of the faith of Christ in operation in us. Phil. 3:9

The key to living the life that is to be found in Christ is to die to sin. The Apostles understood this and the subject is found sprinkled throughout their writings. One of the features of having the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:16) is the knowledge of His will for our life. We hotly pursue those things which are personal to us, such as what, how and where we should go and what we should do. These things are secondary and will all work out providing

we have done the first things, first. The call of the Spirit and the Word is to be separated from those things which are unclean and impure. 2 Cor. 6:17 This carries a promise of being received of the Lord. The mind of Christ working in the individual will bring them to a place where they cease from sin. Peter made this quite plain by stating that there is a status in Christ where sin no longer dominates the child of the Lord. 1 Peter 4:1-2 As spiritual beings we need to allow the Word of the Lord, the mind of Christ, to set our goals in our spiritual life. The ultimate of His work in the life of the church is to produce that church which is without spot or wrinkle. A people who bear His likeness in all things. Eph. 5:27

THE LORD IS LOVE. 110

The man of a sinless nature. Separate from sinners, that is He was pure from sin of any kind. As we well know it was not because He was never confronted by sin but because He was victorious over every temptation thrown His way. Heb. 4:15 Immediately on being filled with the Spirit He was led into the wilderness where He underwent a period of forty days of temptation and a personal encounter with the devil. His response to every appeal presented to Him was from the scripture. The Word was that which enabled Him to be triumphant. Luke 4:1-13 Satan lost that skirmish but we note that he departed from Jesus for only a season. Inasmuch as He faced every type of sin that the devil could present before Him, He well understands the enticements which all face and is well able to enable us to be victorious. Heb. 2:18

After having completed the work of being the sacrificed Lamb of God and having been raised from the dead He was exalted above the physical heavens to reign on high. His eternal status is at the right hand of the Majesty on high. There He reigns supreme as the brightness, the effulgence, the brilliant shining forth of the glory of the eternal God. All light begins with Him. It is the very glorious appearance of the Lord. Remember, He is light, (1 John 1:5) a light with a brilliance which no man has ever seen. He is the original, the source of light. Not created light, the type which surrounds us in this world but a blazing light which supersedes the very imagination of mankind.

He lives in an atmosphere of light which is unapproachable to man. 1 Tim. 6:16 The throne of God is one of continuous manifestation of this particular aspect of His being, that is light. Light, lightning, fire all demonstrate and give off a luminosity, a glow enabling us to see. We know the benefits and the dangers of these elements but when it comes to their eternal and Godly character they are highly beneficial. John on Patmos saw the awesome spectacle of the throne and described it using terms which are familiar to us. Rev. 4:5 This display of the power of the Lord emanating from the throne will not be the same elements which are displayed to us on earth. This is heavenly, eternal and is the manifestation of the glory of the Lord. It is not meant to be offensive or frightening but it is the flow of the presence of the Lord sweeping over the occupants of heaven. It is the source of the fullness of joy, blessing and the everlasting pleasures of the might and power of His presence. Ps. 16:11

THE LORD IS LOVE. 111

The magnitude of the little word SO has never been, nor will it ever be, expressed in a more explicit manner than when used by the Lord Jesus in relationship to the Love of the Lord. John 3:16 The greatness, the pre-eminence of the Lord is expressed in many ways throughout the Word of the Lord. One of which is the way He has chosen to manifest Himself as being light, and thus manifesting Himself, in a light like glory. When He created light, He took of His own intrinsic quality and placed it on display for all to behold. Gen. 1:3 He had not yet created a residence for that light but brought it into existence in a fashion which would lighten every person born into this world. John 1:9 Following the pattern of the natural world, without light there would be no life. Without the spiritual light which emanates from Him, there would be no life after death. Only in Jesus may be found the light of eternal life. Both natural and spiritual life exist because of Him. He is the light of the world. He is the light of life. John 8:12

The beauty of the plant life, the flowers, the greenery, the beautiful colors of life are not contained in the plants or the flowers but only in light is color to be found. The beauty of color which we see is created by the pigment found in the article reflecting the light when it shines upon it. There is no color in darkness. There is no sight without light, at least, not on one

occasion, for they had no capability of moving about in the total darkness which came upon them for three days. Ex. 10:21-23

The conversion of the Apostle Paul was probably the most spectacular of all of time. In his case the Lord was dealing with a bigoted, stubborn, hard hearted, hateful individual. So, He manifested Himself to Saul in a drastic manner. Saul suddenly found himself surrounded by a heavenly light. A very convincing manifestation of the power of the Lord to him. There had been no forewarning that anything out of the usual was about to happen. Acts 9:3 So powerful was the presence of the Lord that Saul fell to the ground. He was well aware that this was a most unusual visitation of the Lord. His ignorance of spiritual things is evidenced by his question as to the identity of whom this person doing this to him. At the same time he called Him Lord. An acknowledgment that he was being encountered by one who was of greater authority and power than himself. Acts 9:3-5 The light which Saul saw that day was so brilliant that he was blinded by the same. It gives us a notion of the power and brilliancy of the fullness of the light which is seen when the Lord is revealed in light. God is light. There is no other source of light but that which comes from Him or that which He has created. 1 John 1:5

THE LORD IS LOVE. 112

The light of the Lord and the manifestation of His glory are one and the same. Frequently, in the old testament we read of the visible materialization of the glory of the Lord. The call of the prophet Isaiah was for a people to be stirred up and to arise from their spiritual lethargy for the light has come. Isa. 60:1 Most assuredly we can declare that the light of the Lord has appeared to all. Every possible means is being used to propagate the gospel of the Lord Jesus. Today the Word of the Lord is emailed, blogged, and twittered, etc. Every new thing that is developed is immediately utilized to spread the Good News. The electronic age has spurred a great increase of the presentation of the Lord Jesus to the whole world. Now we look for the glorious appearance of the glory of the Lord.

The light, the revelation of the Word has come to the church that a through understanding of the residing glory of the Lord might be understood by the church. We have had enough of the frivolity, froth and foam of a ridiculous

and insubstantial manner. The call of the Spirit to the church is to seek and come to a full knowledge of the glory of the Lord as it is revealed in the face of the Lord Jesus. 2 Cor. 4:6 We are living in a time that demands some serious seeking after the visible display of the glory of the Lord. The glory of the Lord was on the mount, in the cloud and pillar of fire. The tabernacle and the temple also were filled with the glory of the Lord. The shepherds saw His glory. The Lord Jesus was filled, He was the vessel of the glory of the Lord as seen on the mount of transfiguration, thus demonstrating to us that the same manifestation may also dwell in His church. The last day church is the church of His glory.

It is the privilege of every child of the Lord to spend time before the looking glass of the Lord beholding the evidence in the Word of His manifest glory. 2 Cor. 3:18 Desire, hunger, a longing will usually drive us to activity of some kind in order to satisfy the need of the physical man. The Lord said that we would find Him when He was sought with the whole heart. Jer. 29:13 When we comprehend fully all that He has, and desires to demonstrate in and through His church today, there will be drastic changes.

The church will progress from glory to glory. From change to change. Until she has been completely made over into the exact image and likeness of the Lord Jesus. The Spirit of the Lord, if allowed to work in the life of the church, will produce beautiful and marvelous demonstrations of the glory of the Lord. See His glory and be changed. 2 Cor. 3:18

THE LORD IS LOVE. 113

It is well established by the scriptures that the temple of the Lord, the dwelling place of the Most High is the redeemed church of the Lord Jesus. To be more explicit, that which is destined to be the Bride of Christ in the end of the age. If men have established criteria as to the method and materials which are used in the building a structure, how much more the Lord. He is constructing a temple for a permanent dwelling place of His eternal glory. It is built of living stones, that is those who are alive, both naturally and spiritually at the time of its completion. It is a spiritual house, one thoroughly furnished with the very richness of all that the Lord is. The Word has completely washed and made them to be in the exact image of

the Lord Jesus Christ. They are elevated to the office of priests of holiness offering spiritually acceptable sacrifices unto the Lord. 1 Peter 2:5

The desire of the Lord and the intimacy that He will have with His Bride is both wonderful and astonishing. Unfortunately, too many make it to be a casual thing, not to be taken too seriously. Please take notice of the words written by Paul where he expressed the intent of the Lord Jesus in the blessed relationship between Christ and the church. The Lord has declared His purpose of this last day body of believers to be a dwelling place for Himself. 2 Cor. 6:16 Amazing, astonishing, shocking, Solomon in his prayer when dedicating the temple said of the Lord that the heaven of the heavens could not contain Him. How then could the temple be sufficient for Him to dwell in? 1 Kings 8:27 Furthermore, He stated that He would walk in them. That is really walking the walk. He will be their God and they are to be His people. They have become the nation and people which He has sought after from the very beginnings of His dealings with mankind.

In His Revelation letter to the church of brotherly love, Philadelphia, He identified this church as the one in whom is to be seen the revealed glory of the Lord. They are a people who live in spiritual victory having conquered the demands of the flesh life. They will become a permanent fixture of beauty in the house of the Lord and will eternally continue in that position. Much issue is made today over microchips being the mark of the beast, however the word mark denotes an etching, or a stamp on the skin and not a chip inserted under the skin. Inasmuch as Satan imitates and tries to duplicate that which the Lord does he will follow the example seen here. Rev. 13:16 For the Bride will have the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and the name New Jerusalem written in their foreheads. An eternal acknowledgement of just exactly who and what she is. Rev. 3:12

THE LORD IS LOVE. 114

It is not unusual to find statements in the Word which pertain to the last day work of the Lord in manifesting His glory in His people. They seem to be in rather an obscure setting at times. One of them is His promise to glorify the house of His glory. Isa. 60:7 Thus we see that He will make known the fullness of His glory in the house, the church, which He has designed for the explicit purpose of being the vessel, the container of His glory. Among

other events which Haggai prophesied relating to the end of the age there is the promise of a great and mighty move of the Spirit of the Lord. It is associated with the shaking of the nations and the nations have been shaken. First by a world wide recession which has been experienced by every nation on earth. Now the declaration of a pandemic called the swine flu. The vastness of the effect of these two events show us how much the world has progressed toward becoming the one world seen in the book of Revelation. Rev. 17:17

In the midst of these cataclysmic events the Lord will fill His house with His glory. Hag. 2:7 It is well that we remember that the tabernacle and the temple are but a type and shadow of that which is being built, even now. Christ has a house. Not a building or a structure made with the hands of men and of the materials commonly used in the erection of a worldly house. This time it is a spiritual building which He will occupy and fill with all the fullness of Himself. Eph. 3:19 Incidentally, our attention is drawn to the magnitude of His love which will be experienced by those who comprise this latter house of the Lord. His love is far more intense than any other love that mankind has ever experienced. It is true love, holy love, a love that passes the ability of any to even imagine, let alone know at this time. He is love. 1 John 4:16 He is the essence of love, the source of love, the heart of love. His glorious love will flow like a mighty stream over His beloved throughout the ages of eternity.

The statement made by the Lord through Haggai is simple in its verbiage but profound in its ultimate accomplishment. It is a prophecy and a promise pertaining to the true house of the Lord in the consummation of His mighty works designed for the gathering together of that which is called the Bride of Christ. Hag. 2:9 The intentions of the Lord are well spelled out through the volume of the scriptures, leaving us with a hope and a vision of the mighty works of the Lord as a last call and opportunity for the world to come to Him in repentance. Heb. 3:6 His house is well kept, it is pure and clean. A house of holiness and righteousness.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 115

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Lord of glory. Not only is He the revealed glory of the Father, He dispenses and desires greatly to share His glory with His redeemed. James 2:1 We understand that the glory of the Lord has a brightness which accompanies it. Therefore, when the scriptures speak of a people who possess the glory of the Lord, it is relating to the shining forth of the light which is the Lord. An evidence of His presence which is manifest in a bright scintillating light. A real love for the Lord is the key to finding and possessing the revealed glory of the Lord. The song of Deborah and Barak contains this appeal for the exhibition of the glory of the Lord in those who love Him. May they be as the sun when he goes forth in his might. Judges 5:31 Thus we are introduced to that which we may anticipate when the glory of the Lord becomes a revealed glory. A brilliancy, a pulsating living light whose effulgence is equal to that of the sun. Yes, the scripture really does say that. Those who are wise, who follow and serve the The Lord are destined to shine in glorious brightness (brilliancy). Those who turn men and women to righteousness will eternally shine as the stars of the heavens, all of which are blazing suns. Dan. 12:3

The LORD God is a sun. Ps. 84:11 We have also noted that He is light.
1 John 1:5 These prevailing rudiments of His nature and being help us to understand the greatness of His person. Our light originates from the sun and is vital for life to exist on planet earth. What a marvelous evidence of the handiwork of the Lord in placing the earth in the exact place in space so that it might sustain life. Closer we would cook, farther away we would freeze. Divine intelligence placed it in the perfect spot in the universe for it to thrive and sustain life of all kinds. With the One who is His Word, He spoke, and the universe with all of its contents was brought into existence. Ps. 33:6

One of the subjects to which Jesus applied the principle of the hearing ear was this very subject. He informed us that the righteous would shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of the Father. Mt. 13:43 we have not yet seen the complete intention of the Lord in that which He will accomplish in His people in the end of the age. As sons of God, living in the midst of a generation which is daily growing more and more wicked we are challenged in a greater fashion than any previous generation to shine forth

as lights in this world. Giving evidence of our relationship with the Lord by an exemplary life that is harmless and blameless. Phil. 2:15

THE LORD IS LOVE. 116

As with any structure, Solomon was thoroughly involved in the building of the temple, from the laying of its foundation until its completion. It was then stated that the house of the Lord was perfected. It was made ready for dedication and worship. 2 Chr. 8:16 Now, in our time, the Lord will thoroughly furnish the temple of His delight and love, that is His church, that she may partake fully of His perfections. 2 Tim. 3:17 Her destiny is to fully bear His image and likeness. Inasmuch as He is love, and she must be made to be like Him, she is to be filled with that agape love which emanates from the Lord. That love is put to the test by our attitude and love toward our fellow man. Love is the evidence of the indwelling presence of the Lord having taken up His abode within our spirit. The end result is that His perfect love is perfected in us. 1 John 4:12 Those who make the grade and pass the test will be built up, perfected, completed to become the eternal temple of the Lord.

Paul wrote of three vital elements necessary to anyone who would know and follow the Lord. Faith, hope and charity or love. It is impossible to have the life of Christ without these three having the preeminent place in our life. He elevated love as being the most important, the greatest. Faith and hope are both motivated by love. 1 Cor. 13:13 When mankind responds to the love of the Lord he begins to walk and live in that atmosphere of love. He is no longer a stranger or one who is without that marvelous love but will become known by the Lord. 1 Cor. 8:3 That person will be made a son of God, a friend and a close associate of His. No longer strangers or foreigners but accepted into the well beloved, made to be citizens of the heavenly kingdom of the Lord. Eph. 2:19

The impartation of the love of the Lord is made through the person of the Holy Spirit. Rom. 5:5 As a matter of fact, all things which are accounted to be spiritual benefits originate and are communicated to us through the revelation of the Word by the power of the Holy Spirit. How extremely necessary it is that every believer be filled with the fullness of the Spirit. Jesus promised that He would send another comforter identical to Himself

and that He would become the one who would direct and teach the church the eternal truth of the Lord. John 14:16 He is the guide leading the church to the complete truth. John 16:13 The only way that the agape love of the Lord may become a part of our spiritual life is through the functioning of the Spirit. Whatever past experiences may have yielded none have reached the magnitude of that which will be between Christ and His last day church.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 117

Many terms are used in the scriptures in determining the relationship of love which we have with the Lord. We are honored to be called the children of the most high. Ps. 82:6 Through the Lord Jesus we are adopted with the intent that we will be made to be sons of God through believing on Him. A work of the Spirit which is accomplished through the power of His name. John 1:12 The acceptance of the sinner as a candidate to become a son of God is an evidence of the tremendous power of His love for mankind. The Lord grants the repentant a new life in Jesus. Where we were once one with the world now as a child of the Lord we find the world exhibiting a different attitude toward us. They do not like the change because it brings a conviction of sin. 1 John 3:1

Now, as a son or daughter of the Lord, there will be an evidence of the traits of His love. His Divine character will become apparent. There will be a definite course of direction evidenced in the life of a son of God. Even in the daily, ordinary course of life we become aware of the definite leading of the Lord. Who has not asked Him to help them find a mislaid object and eureka, lo and behold it was right where we put it. He is just as capable and more than willing to help us in the big issues of life, especially those which pertain to the Spiritual side. Rom. 8:14

Sons of God shine forth with the glorious light of the Lord. The darker the night of sin becomes, the brighter they shine. Depending entirely on spiritual status, the future is destined to be come exceedingly dark or filled with the blazing and glorious light, which is the very character of the Lord. The moral fiber of the last day church is again depicted as being without blame, no immorality to be found in her. She is the very epitome of

innocence and purity, so much so that she is without rebuke or blame, no fault to be found in her. Phil. 2:15

Perhaps not all will reach the apex of salvation. For some it will be a case of not having a knowledge and revelation of the plan of the Lord. With others it will be just spiritual laziness. Our guide and standard is the Word of the Lord. In conjunction with the honor of being accepted as a son of the most high there is a criterion which must be met. The Lord knows no impossibilities, with Him all things are possible. Jesus issued a directive which is filled with challenge. Be what your heavenly Father is. Bear His absolute character and the perfect image and reflection of His perfection. Mat. 5:48

THE LORD IS LOVE. 118

One aspect of the personality of the Lord which we would expect to find is that of establishing His people in a family relationship. David spoke to this when he said that the Lord was a father to the fatherless and an advocate for the widow, taking those who are alone and lonely and placing them in families. Ps. 68:5-6 When we look on the modern day church, we see only its multiplied differences. The Lord sees among them those who are defiantly His. There will be found certain indications and characteristics which identify them. For one thing, the Lord knows full well the hearts and life style of those who are His. They have a sure foundation upon which they are building a spiritual life. The seal of the Lord is upon them as a sign of recognition and acceptance into the beloved. It is also important that we see that they are those who are willing to live a life of holiness by departing from all iniquity. They also know and understand the importance and great value of the name Christ, or the anointed one. 2 Tim. 2:19

It is not surprising to find that those who are in His family are called after His name. The whole family, the true family, will acknowledge that while He is God, that is not His name. There are a great multitude of people, objects and things which are called God by the peoples of the earth. The true and living God has made known His name and is identified by the same. Therefore we know who we worship when we come in adoration and worship before Him. The complete family, those who have preceded us into the eternal kingdom and we which are yet living on earth are greatly

privileged to be able to acknowledge and bear that glorious name which is above every name that is named. Phil. 2:9-11 That name is repeatedly declared in the Word as being the Lord Jesus Christ. Eph. 3:14-15

The Father loves His name, as a result, Jesus came declaring the name of the Father, which is LORD. Not only in His personal ministry was the name of the LORD proclaimed but now, through His church that name is worshipped and exalted. The recognition, the acknowledging of that precious and most wonderful name is a key to the manifestation of His love in His family members. It is the absolute expression of the same love which is to be found between the Father and the Lord Jesus. Where that mighty love is in residence, the Lord Jesus is also present bringing with Him that majestic love which fills and floods the whole being with the blessed presence of He who is Almighty. John 17:26 This love is not an abstract love but is one of which touches the full and complete ability of mankind to express and feel love. Emotional! You bet you, it is highly emotional. Isn't natural love emotional? How much more the expression of His love in us. Love me LORD.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 119

In a family there are many similarities shared by all but there are also some differences of character and actions found in the conduct of its individuals. Paul likened it to a great house. His exhortation to them was that they depart from iniquity. 2 Tim. 2:19 He then likened the members of the family to earthly items, made of the elements of the earth. Things which are used to decorate or enhance the house. 2 Tim. 2:20 He has listed them in a descending order of value. Those of greatest value are the gold and the silver which must be tried by fire and separated from all dross. Therefore beloved do not be troubled by trial by fire which come your way. It is a process of purification and may come in the form of problems and difficulties. It may also be a work of the Spirit for the baptism is a baptism of fire. Mt. 3:11 One extremely unpleasant, the other diametrically the opposite, of great pleasure. The fire of the Spirit is most glorious and exceedingly wonderful. The family oriented members yield to the work of the fire and come forth refined. Zech. 13:9

Wood and earth are necessary to the house but do not have the high value of the metals. It is very apparent that the vessels of honor are those of silver and gold, while those of wood and earth do not have the same value nor do they supply the same beauty to the house. The process of purging is an absolute must, in order for any vessel to become a vessel of honor. The choice is left to the discretion or the spiritual desire of that particular family member. Vessels of honor are vital to the purpose of the Lord and are used accordingly. 2 Tim. 2:21

However, the very most expensive, the vessel of extremely fine workmanship is still formed from earthly elements. That which is to be found in these vessels may be of intrinsically greater value than the vessel itself. That is definitely so when related to the treasures of the Lord such as His presence, His Word and His Spirit. Of all treasures, earthly and heavenly there is none greater than His presence abiding in the vessels which He has prepared for that very purpose. 2 Cor. 4:7 He is not a God who lingers away off somewhere in the azure blue but is nigh, is at home, dwelling in His people. Rom. 10:8 The promise of the Lord Jesus was that of the constantly, continuous abiding presence of the Spirit not only with us, which is wonderful, but more gloriously, He is to be in each and every member of the family of the Lord. John 14:17 If we are not watchful we can become spiritual paupers while having great spiritual riches available to us.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 120

David had a heart for the house of the Lord. He was well aware of the great advantage of being in the house of the Lord. It was a longing which was uppermost in his heart. He expressed a two fold desire, first to behold the beauty of the LORD and then to seek to know Him in a more complete manner. In this, he established an example for all. Ps. 27:4 What greater spiritual aspirations could one have than to be able to behold the LORD as He is revealed in the Word in all of His majestic glory. Then to come to a place where the constant opening of our understanding and knowledge of Him is made available to us as our daily bread. Not just in devotions but also in the perfect revelation of all that He is. All that we need to know for the present time is in the Word. The fullness of its revelation has not yet

been exploited by the household of faith. It is a living book, ever unfolding.
1 Cor. 2:9

David did not have the privilege which is granted to the family of the Lord in this gospel dispensation. No longer do we go to the house of the Lord but by His love and grace, we are the house of the Lord. He wants to dwell in His house, His temple, His people, with His family. Eph. 3:17 The irony of our attitude and prayer is that, at times we pray for His presence to come in our midst, while and if, we are His prized possession, He is already with us. He has not left us. He abides in His temple, even now, and does not go and come. As to the preparations which He has determined to grant to His very own, we are not left in the dark. Too often 1 Cor. 2:9 is used as a crutch for not having a more complete understanding of the Word of the Lord. It is in His Word that all of His plans for His family, while on earth, are revealed. He does not want us to abide in ignorance as to the future and those things pertaining to His dealings with His church.

Revelation is a nasty word in the vocabulary of some, for the simple reason that they do not have a living, Spirit led, ever increasing knowledge of the Word. The various phases of growing up in a family are likewise experienced in the spiritual family. At last we reach an age where we are included in the adult decisions which are made by the family. So it is in His family. Spiritual maturity, adulthood will bring an ever increasing knowledge of the Lord Jesus and His plans for the family and the future. It is necessary to include 1 Cor. 2:10 with verse nine that we might know that He does not want us to continue with the mere knowledge and revelation of the Scriptures, which is common to the immature but to begin to receive our share of the revelation of Himself. The hidden will be made known. The invisible may be seen. John 16:13

THE LORD IS LOVE. 121

Where else would we expect to find the greatest, the most all-embracing love but in the Lord Jesus. There is no love superior to that which He displayed in giving His life for every person ever to be born into this world. In the mean time knowing very well that not all, by any means, would appreciate His act of love and compassion and accept it as a work of redemption. He still loved and gave Himself to be the Savior of the world.

The history of mankind yields no greater example or action of love than that which was demonstrated by Jesus. John 15:13 He loves each and every individual with the same measure of love and will display that love in all who will come to Him. Sharing in His friendship is an important segment of spiritual life.

Friends are an important part of everyone's life. Friendliness begets friends. Prov. 18:24 Then there is that person, the friendliest of all, Jesus who has the aptitude of being always with us, closer than a brother. No one can equal His acts of friendship and companionship. He is the friend who continues to love, regardless of the circumstances. Others who call themselves friend may forsake and no longer desire to continue what has become an embarrassing friendship but not Jesus. He loves at all times. Prov. 17:17 Jesus identified His friends as being persons who worked at being friendly. Persons who not only acknowledged Him but were more than willing to do His will. Friendship is a two way street, as He has loved us, so those who would be His friend should love Him. John 15:14 Friendship, is sharing as is love.

Knowing the Lord Jesus drastically changes the status between Him and us, from that of being a servant, without knowledge of the masters intentions, to knowing full well, as a friend, the Divine objectives of the Lord. The friendship of love is one of thoroughly knowing that particular friend, loving and appreciating them when they open their hearts to us and reveal their innermost and secret thoughts. The ultimate joy and beauty given to the person who would be the friend of the Lord Jesus is in the fact that we can know the thoughts and plans of His heart. The friends of the Lord Jesus are in a process of spiritual growth and the revelation of ALL things which were made known to the Son, by the Father. John 15:15 It staggers the imagination to realize the magnitude of such a statement and promise which was made by Jesus that He would reveal to His friends, ALL, that the Father had made known unto Him. What a vast repertoire of wisdom and knowledge He has made available to His friends.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 122

The Friend of God. What an impressive name to be given anyone. In this case it indicates the intimacy which was to be found between the Lord and

Abraham. In looking into this relationship there is to be found the faithfulness of the Lord in performing His Word. He made covenant, gave promises, to Abraham which not only were a part of his life but were passed on to his descendents. Heb. 11:9 On Abraham's part it is declared that he believed God. He was a man of faith with the ability to see, by faith, into the future. James 2:23 At the call of the Lord, he left his homeland setting out on a journey which was uncharted. He was of sufficient spiritual understanding to recognize that the blessing of the Lord was to be obtained by obedience to the Word of the Lord. He was a wise man for he was looking for a city built by the Lord Himself. He did not walk by blind faith but through faith he looked for an eternal city built by the Lord. Heb. 11:10

This was a friendship which had great rewards for Abraham. His faith in the Lord was his means of salvation. It became his source of righteousness and consequently his link, his unity with the Lord. It is written of him that he was strong in faith. May the Lord grant us the ability to exercise that very same faith. Rom. 4:20 He was neither ungrateful nor unthankful in having received the good results of his faith and was faithful to give praise and the glory to the Lord. He was fully persuaded that the Lord had the capability to produce good results for all the promises which He gave him. Rom. 4:21 His faith resulted in righteousness. The two are companions, walking hand in hand. True faith will always produce works of righteousness. Faith in the Lord Jesus places all of mankind on an equal basis. There is no difference, on His part, between Jew and Gentile. Rom. 3:22 All must approach unto Him by believing that He is and will reward those who will diligently seek Him. Heb.11:6

In Moses we find another example of one who developed an excellent relationship with the Lord. His experiences were of an entirely different nature than those of Abraham, yet there was a similarity. Both were involved in leading the people of the Lord. In it, Moses was afforded the honor of being in the austere and holy presence of the Lord. Ex. 33:9 The Lord saw fit to communicate with Moses in a manner which is called face to face by the scripture. In other words, in very close quarters. It was here, in the tabernacle, in the glory of the Lord that the Lord saw fit to converse with Moses in such a beautiful manner. Awesome, fearsome yet altogether a glorious experience to be in His mighty presence and to hear His wonderful voice. Ex. 33:11

THE LORD IS LOVE. 123

Here is a lesson in friendship which Jesus taught but is seldom utilized. It is an invitation to recognize the truth of an extreme method of prayer, which definitely produces results. While Jesus taught in parables, each parable will correspond to a divine truth. The parable we are considering today is a situation which developed among friends. However, friendship was not the heart of the story. It could easily have developed into an end of what had been a close and meaningful friendship. Placing the setting of the narrative in that time and realizing that they probably were accustomed to going to bed not too long after sundown and up, perhaps even before sunrise, a midnight intrusion of this nature would take a lot of nerve on the part of the perpetrator. The irritation of the householder is evident in his response to the loud and persistent knocking at his door, the family was in bed, the door is shut and no doubt locked. Quit troubling me, go away, I cannot arise and help you. Luke 11:7 Picture if you will his irritation, perhaps even anger at such a breach of good manners, even amongst the best of friends, this was unthinkable.

The hour is impressive. Luke 11:5 The midnight hour. Oddly enough foreshadows the end of the age. This makes the essence of the parable of great interest to those who are living in that period of time. The midnight hour was an hour of deliverance for the Israelites who were in bondage in Egypt. It was also an hour of judgment for their taskmasters. At midnight, the first born of man and creature died. Only where there was a blood sprinkled door was there deliverance from the death angel. Ex. 12:29 It was an hour of deliverance or death, depending entirely on whether or not they believed the message and warning of Moses and prepared the Passover as the Lord had instructed them.

Because of the conditions of the world during the phase of the “midnight hour” the technique in prayer as it is illustrated in the parable will be common place. The prayer of importunity is one of insistence and persistence. Luke 11:8 It is demanding almost beyond reason. Anyone praying in such a manner must be very convinced that what they are requesting is the perfect will of the Lord. It indicates a supplication which borders on clamoring. None the less it is a teaching which was given by the Lord Jesus, therefore is applicable to certain situations in life. The

importune friend was himself under great pressure to keep custom by supplying a meal for his visitors. So he was driven by circumstances and prevailed because of his importunity. There is a prayer of absolute desperation which is bold and productive.

THE LORD IS LOVE. 124

Jesus also gave reference to this strange type of prayer in another parable. This time persistent prayer is illustrated by a story which pitched a fearless, hard hearted judge who thought of himself as not fearing man or God, against a woman. His opponent was a meek but unrelenting widow who came to him seeking justice because of some individual who was her adversary. He continually brushed her off and refused to hear her case. Luke 18:2-4 Eventually it dawned on him that this was a woman who would not quit coming into his court room until she had received her request and her case had been settled. It is well that we remember here that Jesus is teaching a technique to be used in determined, resolute prayer, to the Father.

She was a source of irritation and constant frustration from day to day for the judge. We could well assume that he would dream about her coming into his court and in the morning perhaps would feel reluctant to go to his court, knowing that she would be there seeking the help of the judge. Her continual appearing before him paid off for he was growing weary of her presence from day to day and feared that his annoyance would only increase until it became unbearable. Luke 18:5

Now for the amazing subject presented to us by the Lord Jesus. The judge is the Father God. The widow is any and all of those who have entered into salvation, the blessed meekness of the Lord. It gives us license to be as persistent, as pestiferous with our petitions before the Lord as the widow was before the judge. Jesus urged them to consider most thoroughly the words of the unjust judge. I will avenge her case. I will pass positive judgment in her favor. Luke 18:6 Jesus immediately gave them the meaning and purpose of story and likened it to those who belong to the Lord and have difficult situations which they were facing. Just saying prayers will not work under some conditions. There must be what is almost a violent prayer. A prayer of perseverance where the petition is repeatedly

presented to the Lord. Not just for a day or two but over a prolonged period of time. Luke 18:7 If our request is something which would be detrimental to our spiritual life we may find that the answer from the Lord is no. He is not required to respond in a positive manner to everything we may ask for. He can and will say no to things which harm our spiritual welfare. It is His Word and His desire to satisfy His own with benefits which are daily made manifest in our life here on earth and in that eternal kingdom which He has prepared for all who love Him. Ps. 68:19

THE LORD IS LOVE. 125

One of the marvelous and very special effects of the love of the Lord is that He wants to share it with those who will love Him. Not only does He love mankind but it is His will that His love be imparted and become permanently established in His people. Therefore, the love of God is shed abroad into our hearts, by the Spirit of the Lord. Rom. 5:5 How vital it is that we have the Spirit of the Lord to guide us and to impart or implant that love, that agape love, in our spirit nature. In His great and wonderful love, He has shed abroad, poured or sent gushing, like a mighty stream the power and glory of His Spirit upon all who will receive Him.

He will send forth the Spirit like a immense flood. According to the magnitude of our thirst for Him, we will be blest. He is the water of all spiritual life. Wherever His flood waters flow there is a breaking forth of new life. Isa. 44:3-4 As it is in the natural world, so it is in the spiritual world. It is noteworthy that the first fruit mentioned in the listing of the fruit of the Spirit is love. Gal. 5:22 Love is the foundation of all things pertaining to the Lord. His love motivates and moves mankind to reach out and know, to become acquainted with the source of such glorious and majestic love. What a tremendous blessing is manifest in our life when we are filled with His love. A love which is holy, pure, and sanctified. It is far more intense and real than any other love which may be experienced in life. Often, the love of a mother is used as an illustration of His love. It however cannot even begin to compare to the same content and measure. There is no greater love than His. Nothing can measure up to His love.

We are about to embark on the road to a great and yet ever so simple evidence of the presence of His love and what hopefully is a deep respect

for that blessed love. The confirmation of the presence and value of that love is obedience to His Word. Not a profound discovery for if we really love we are going to please Him, or at the very least, make an attempt to do so. When we do those things which we know, from the Word, that please Him we are manifesting the depth of His love in us. Our reaction to that love is something which is observed by all who see and know us. 1 John 5:3 The love of the Lord dwelling in a persons heart is felt by all who come in contact with them. How often it is said; I knew there was something different about that person. As Jude said; keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. Jude 21. Walk, live, dwell, enjoy the many benefits of His incredible love. Amen.

*PS: The Lord willing we will be starting a study of excerpts from the book of **Ezekiel**. Tell your friends. Have them send their address to pendita@aol.com and they, too, will receive these upcoming lessons on Ezekiel.*