

THE LOVE OF GOD

S119A 0917 23P

The important thing in the Christian's life is to come to know God because not only do our blessings here depend upon it; our prayer life, our faith, and everything depends upon it. Just to the extent that we know God and His great love for us, will it be easy to have faith in God, and there will be no trouble about the faith question.

Our faith will be gauged by the knowledge of His trustworthiness. All unbelief will disappear when we know God as He is, every evil thing will pass out of our lives when we have the true knowledge of God.

There is an old saying that when we look at ourselves and dwell upon that only, we are filled with doubt and despair; but, one good look at God will fill us with quietness and confidence. Our view should always be looking up toward Him continually. It is written in Isaiah 45:22, "*Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.*"

Also in Psalm 34:5, "*They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed.*" And Psalm 121:1-2, "*I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.*"

Then the confidence comes right in, Psalm 121:3-8, "*He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul. The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.*"

All through the Psalms, it is always God who is talked about and held up, and in most cases the life is a happy and victorious one. The contrast

we have is found in the book of Job, where we read about what he did and what he was, namely, that big "I" which brought him to the ash heap full of sores, while the continual looking to God and considering Him instead of "I" brought the Psalmist to a place of great victory. Although there came a time when Job got his eyes off himself and on to the Lord, and he began to grasp what God was, and he said in Job 42:5-6, "*I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.*" One good look at God turned his whole life around, and he possessed twice as much as he had before.

In the beginning of our Christian life, we often see nothing but ourselves, then go along in our Christian life in a half-hearted way; half "I" and half God; but thank God, there will come a time, when we hold steadfast, where we can be developed and our whole horizon filled with God, we forget the big "I" altogether, and have the great 'Him' before us.

That is the goal that the Holy Spirit is seeking to lead us to, where God is the greatest and most glorious Being, where one good look at Him will fill us with happiness and victory, and we will arrive at the place where He fills our whole horizon, which is Heaven itself.

If we allow ourselves to keep our eyes on Satan and his works, our temptations and trials simply magnify, they become burdensome and will overwhelm us; but, one good look at God will fill us with quietness and confidence. That is the reason Paul speaks about the Christian race in Hebrews 12:1, "*Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.*"

That word patience here means steadfastness and endurance. "*Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.*" He is our pattern, and we are to keep our eyes on Him and upon God the Father. John 17:3, "*And this is life eternal, that they*

might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

In the closing part of Jesus' prayer in the 17th chapter of John, He gives us the reason why the world is where it is today; the underlying, fundamental reason why the earth is filled with sin, strife, and sorrow, and with sickness and trouble of every kind. John 17:25, "*O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee.*" That is the reason for it all; no knowledge of God. That is a very important truth that we have in this Bible.

One great object of Satan is to keep people from finding out anything about God. If he can keep them occupied with duties and with other interests just enough to take up all their time, he will succeed. We cannot afford to allow our interests to take up enough of our time to shut out the opportunities of acquiring greater knowledge of God. We will be meeting Him someday, face to face, and we need to know Him; and if we do, it will mean eternal life as well as all the blessings of this life.

Satan loves to have people say and do things to us and then to get us upset and worried about it. His main object is to get our eyes off God and onto people. Many have said, "The cause of all my trouble was when I got my eyes on people, looking at what they said and did to me, and then I began to go down."

Every time we look at the mean things said or done to us, and discuss them, we lose ground. Those things can be changed by beholding God and become acquainted with Him, which is through His Word. It is like a mirror, where we can see ourselves as we are and where God is presented. The Word of God is the only place where His character is revealed. The Bible presents God as He is and is the only safe description of His character and the true knowledge of God is only found in that Book of Books. There is nothing outside of that great Book that can give us any idea of the character of God, as all these things may be controlled by Satan.

Many blame all the troubles of this world on God and if He is all that He professes to be, why

does He permit sin and sickness? All the evil things that happen are caused by men and Satan. God made this world as it should be and made man as he should be; God gave him the power of choice, the greatest gift He could give a created being. Man used that power of choice which turned the whole world and all in it over to the control of Satan. The evils of this world are not according to the will of God; but are the result of man's will and of turning the whole world over to Satan.

The devil rightly told Jesus, that he would turn the whole world over to Him if He would worship him, for he was controlling it then and is still controlling it today. He said in Matthew 4:8-10, "*It is in my hand to give it to you, if you will fall down and worship me.*"

It is also written in 1 John 5:19, "*and the whole world lieth in wickedness.*" (The wicked one) Jesus also said in John 14:30, "*for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.*"

However, there is a Prince of peace Who is coming and Satan is going to be cast out and the world restored to its rightful place; then we will understand just what it means to have the will of God done in this world, to know God's will, because He says in Habakkuk 2:14, "*For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.*"

The only place we can receive the knowledge of God is from this precious Word of God, which reveals Him, His true character, just what He is and what He will do. The love of God is the most beautiful part of His character; in fact, 'love' is the most beautiful attribute of any character, human or divine, as it always does its best for the loved one. However, human love, in most cases, is tainted with selfishness and marred with sin.

God's love is pure, unadulterated, unselfish, untainted; a love that is just as pure as He is Himself. The real character of God expresses love, 1st John 4:8, "*for God is love.*" His whole character,

His whole being, His whole nature, expressed in one word would be 'love'.

Love is the very essence of God, He cannot help loving, any more than the sun can help shining; nor water running downhill. It is pure and untainted, without a flaw in it. It is indescribable to describe what a blessing it is to have One with us Who loves us so greatly, to grant all blessings upon us so lovingly.

In 1st Corinthians 13:4 we read what that love does. It is written 'charity,' but in the original it is written "love." "Love suffereth long and is kind." That is the remarkable thing about love. When you really love anyone, and if you have the 'love of God', which is untainted and pure, no temper about it, and no possibility of any change, what an influence that love would have on others.

"Long suffering" ---suffers long and hard, suffers cheerfully and is always kind with it; never gets angry or upset at anyone, never says 'you are wrong and I am right,' that is Divine Love.

"Love envieth not." It makes no difference what anyone else may possess or how much they may have. Love is never envious of what others may have; it is delighted to do for others and see them prosper.

"Love vaunteth not itself." Never spends time talking about itself; never uses the big letter "I" and elevates it, never boasts about what it has accomplished: it makes no difference what position it holds and never gets puffed up.

"Is not puffed up." Not heady nor high minded, never thinks itself better than anyone else. When we really acquire the 'love of God' we will see everybody on the same level. One of the best evidences of real, divine love would be to have no respect of persons in our heart. The great example that we should follow is that of our God in Heaven, Who is no respecter of persons, and when we have the 'love of God' in our hearts, no thought of respect of persons comes into our heart. That is one of the

greatest evidences of Christianity---to treat everybody alike, no matter what color or how rich or poor, everyone is to be treated the same.

"Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own." Not always driving the best bargain, not trying to get ahead of the other person. Real divine love desires the loved one to get the best end of the deal.

"Is not easily provoked." The original translation expresses it better. "Does not get angry at what is said or done, it suffers long and is kind."

"Thinketh no evil." That is a valuable part of love and has a wonderful meaning. It never looks at the bad side of anyone. Satan likes to get us to think someone has something against us. As his name, "devil" means 'separator' and he is always trying to cause separations, always trying to get us to see the bad motives, that someone is trying to do things against us deliberately. But true Divine love always gives the loved one the benefit of the doubt, it always tries to find the good side of their fellow man. 1 Corinthians 13:6-7, "*Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth*"

"Love knows how to be silent." What a valuable asset to God's children to know how to be silent. As nothing will defeat the devil in home trouble better than to stop the argument and be silent. Such an attitude puts an end to Satan and his works, nips it right in the bud, it takes someone to answer back to keep up a quarrel. Divine love not only knows how to be silent, but it is delighted to be silent, it has no trouble to be silent.

Without this Divine love we find it very difficult to hold our tongue; but Divine love finds pleasure in doing so; it chooses to be silent, that is the beauty of Divine love and that is the kind of love God has for us.



www.fcqchurch.org

*Be on our free mailing list--contact:

PO Box 24283 Philadelphia, PA 19120