

I Give Thee My Loves

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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INTRODUCTION

“Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves” (Song of Solomon 7:12).

Here, the bridegroom (representing Jesus Christ) said to the bride, “Let’s go to the vineyard to check out the vine and see if the tender grapes have appeared.” In John 15, Jesus declared, “I am the vine, you are the branches.” He wants to see if there is fruit. He desires the tender grapes, which have to be squeezed in order to produce the wine that brings joy, “that maketh glad the heart of a man” (Psalm 104:14-15).

What else happens in that vineyard? The pomegranates bud. A pomegranate is fruit that keeps on reproducing itself. It contains scores of seeds and each of these seeds produces another pomegranate with scores of seeds.

Song of Solomon 7:12 concludes with this great statement: “There will I give thee my loves.” The verse does not say, “I will give thee my love”—singular. Rather, it says, “I will give thee my loves”—plural. It is so beautiful when we understand this in its context. The vine produces many grapes, the pomegranate produces many seeds, and our lives can reproduce many loves as we follow after God.

When we see someone whom we have not seen for awhile and we embrace, we are sharing love. It is just like giving a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple (Matthew 10:42). It is a moment recorded in eternity, because as God has given us His loves, we give out those loves. This booklet will explain that everything we do in the activity of the fruit of the Holy Spirit reveals a special love from God, in this life and in the life to come.

Chapter One

GOD'S PROCESS OF INSPECTION

“He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none” (Luke 13:6).

Jesus goes to His vineyard to inspect fruit. He looks to see if Christians are living in the unity of the Spirit or in the discomfort of cognitive dissonance. A person will experience cognitive dissonance (a psychological phenomenon that has been researched since the 1950s) when his actions do not line up with what he has been taught and what he knows to be true.

As a Christian, one of two things needs to happen for me to avoid mental problems associated with cognitive dissonance. Either my behavior lines up with what I know to be true according to the Word of God, or I need to change my belief system. Sadly, many people choose the latter. A Christian who suffers from

cognitive dissonance becomes indifferent to the opportunities of faith and the promises of divine provisions. Therefore, he cannot experience the reality of resurrection life in a personal way.

Jesus said, "I will give thee my loves." In Song of Solomon 2:6 and 8:3, we have a beautiful picture of the bridegroom embracing the bride: "His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me." I kiss my wife good-bye in the morning, and that is an exchange of love from God. It is a special love. I don't do it out of duty. It is the fruit of God's love, which He has given and I have received.

"I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jeremiah 17:10).

In this passage, the Holy Spirit said that the Lord searches the heart. The heart includes the individual's motivation for communication, for thinking, for planning, and for being. The search uncovers our ways or motives. Then He says, "I try the reins," which refers to the emotions. The word "reins" (or kidneys) was used as a metonym to describe the emotions. (At that time, there was not a specific word for emotions.) Just as the kidneys are vital organs designed to simply re-

spond to what they receive, the emotions were made to appreciate and respond what we receive through our thought processes. Colossians 3:12 speaks of “bowels of mercies”—a metonym that also describes the believer’s response to the special love—mercy-love—he has received from God.

Two Sides, Two Emotions

“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

“While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal” (2 Corinthians 4:17-18).

The word for emotions is plural because we have two of them—a left emotion and a right emotion—just as we have two ears, two hands, and two feet. The left emotion is connected with the human spirit to appreciate the eternal things of God. The right emotion is connected with the natural man and it responds or reacts to the temporal issues of the world’s system.

The Hebrew word for reins is *kilyah*, and it gives a picture of the inner man. When we are

filled with the Word of God and allow it to dwell in us richly, then we are living in our left emotion. There is no depression, no suicidal temptation, and no moods or negativity. Why? It is because the human spirit through the Holy Spirit receives and then feeds the inspiration of the Word of God to the five parts of our soul: the mind, emotions, conscience, self-consciousness, and volition. Our old sin nature is not absent, but it is dormant because of the Cross.

Second Corinthians 4 reveals the battle between the temporal and the eternal. God help us, because there are way too many Christians who live in their right-side, temporal emotions. We need to have our hearts set apart by the Word of God in order to live in the left-side, eternal emotions of Christ (see John 17:17).

“And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them” (John 17:26).

So the beautiful principle revealed in Jeremiah 17:10 is that God first searches the heart (the premise and motivation of our thinking in the essence of our being), and then He tests the emotions (the responder and appreciator of what we have received). Those results deter-

mine the fruit of our doings, the special loves that He gives us and that we give out to others.

Chapter Two

LOVING OTHERS
WITH GOD'S LOVE

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

“This is the first and great commandment” (Matthew 22:37-38).

“So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

“He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

“He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou

knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep" (John 21:15-17).

What I want you to see is this: God teaches us that He wants to be loved. Then, He teaches us how we want to be loved. After that, He teaches us how to love others the way we want to be loved. That is what Jesus was communicating in John 21. Peter had witnessed two post-resurrection scenes with the Lord. But on that beautiful morning, while Jesus Christ had breakfast with the disciples, Peter was weighed down with all manner of guilt and shame. Then Jesus said to him, "Simon, son of Jonas, do you love me more than these?"

This passage compares the difference between *phileo* (human love) and *agape* (God's unconditional love) in the Greek text. Twice Jesus asked him, "Do you love Me with the same *agape* love I have for you?" So when Jesus asked him a third time, "Simon do you love me with natural, limited *phileo* love?", Peter was troubled and disturbed. "Yes, Lord," he said. "You know that I love You with *phileo* love," a love that is limited by mutual desires, mutual attractions, and mutual plans and purposes. Peter was not ready to love with divine love, the love of God,

the so-love that died for us while we were yet sinners (John 3:16).

Let's just make this practical and personal for a moment. Jesus was saying, "Peter, love Me."

That is why, in Matthew 22:37, God asks us to love Him with all our heart, all our soul, and all our mind. He wants to be loved.

Love Brings New Things

"Do you love Me?"

People have a tremendous desire to be loved. A forty-eight-year-old man I know on the West Coast watched his father die. This man had never received love from his dad, and at the casket he could be seen pleading over his father's body, "Daddy, love me, love me, love me!"

A woman in our ministry had a very serious problem with neurosis and psychosis. She was extremely emotional, and the reason was that she and her husband never had a relationship with intimacy. At her husband's funeral, she cried out, sobbing, "All I ever wanted was for you to love me." What she needed—and what all of us need—is to let the Bridegroom embrace her and to receive His unlimited, unconditional loves.

A couple in Florida just fought all the time. There was separation after separation after separation. But on my most recent trip there, I looked out into the congregation and there they were—holding hands! I told their pastor, “Some couples have a reconciliation and hold hands occasionally, but I never remember seeing this couple hold hands, even when they were on good terms.”

“You’re right,” the pastor said. “This is totally new. It really is.” They had started to love each other with God’s special loves.

It is a beautiful thing to be loved by the Holy Spirit—to have God’s love shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Spirit. All you have to do is let God, who is in you, have the freedom to love you.

God’s Love Bears Fruit

As a young pastor, David Wilkerson went to New York City and met gang member Nicky Cruz. Many of you have probably read the book, *The Cross and the Switchblade*, about the encounter between these two men. Wilkerson went to places where even the police would not go. There were such wild gangs that no one would go in to try and help the situation.

As I recall it, Nicky Cruz pulled out his switchblade and told Wilkerson, "I would like to cut you into a thousand pieces. I can do it, and I am not afraid to either."

"You can do that, Nicky," David Wilkerson told him. "But every one of those pieces will haunt you with my love for the rest of your life."

God's love won Nicky Cruz over. He accepted Christ, and later on he became a powerful Christian leader, helping troubled youth to find Christ as their Savior and Friend.

Chapter Three

EIGHT SPECIFIC WORDS THAT DEFINE GOD'S LOVES

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

"Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Galatians 5:22-25).

"There will I give thee my loves" (Song of Solomon 7:12*b*).

When we see that the Bridegroom's gift of "loves" is plural, it brings us to another understanding of the fruit of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit is love—and that is a noun. But as we see in Galatians 5:25, the reality is that the fruit is expressed as an activity, and the noun becomes a verb. Because we have received the love of God, we can now operate in the activity of love, *agapao*,

in John 4:19: We have the activity of love toward God, because He first loved us.

The eight words that follow the noun “love,” in Galatians 5, are feminine nouns in the nominative case. They serve as adjectives of the word “love.” So when the Word of God declares that the fruit of the Spirit is love, and when love becomes an action, it also means that joy and peace and six other qualities of love come along, describing the activity and reality of love in specifics.

Love That Passes Knowledge

“And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God” (Ephesians 3:19).

God’s love passes knowledge. When I am filled with the love of God, I also have joy that becomes my strength (Nehemiah 8:10). This joy has exactly the same quality of life that comes with the word “love.” In other words, I cannot say, “I love you,” and be sad. Joy acts as an adjective in the nominative case of equality that comes as a result of the love I have from the Holy Spirit: “joy-love.” So when the Word of God says, “love, joy, and peace,” the peace I get is dynamically, dogmatically, and realistically

God's unconditional peace. The joy is unconditional joy. And all of it is the fruit of unconditional love. Therefore, the man who is connected to his healthy, godly, left-emotion, which receives and responds to the life of Christ, God says He will reward him "according to the fruit of his doing" (Jeremiah 17:10).

These inward qualities are developed in us through amazing love that produces amazing joy and amazing peace. It all happens when we are filled with the Holy Spirit who sheds God's love abroad in our hearts, and it is a beautiful thing.

Longsuffering, Gentleness, and Divine Goodness

"Longsuffering" is another kind of love. It has an outward quality that goes toward people. Perhaps I am under tremendous pressure. I have been hurt again and again, and I am getting to the place where I cannot cover it up anymore. Longsuffering means that because of the love and the peace that I have, I suffer long with the person who has hurt me. All I am waiting for is for that person to be a responder as he comes into the discovery of my love for him, regardless of what he is doing.

"Gentleness" refers to a disposition of kind-

ness, an expression that is absolutely infallible when it is at work in the operation of God towards another (Colossians 3:12).

Then comes “goodness.” This is divine goodness, and it means that I relate to others with the same mercy God has for me (Luke 6:36-37). I become a dispenser of the identical mercy God gives me because this love—“goodness-love”—reveals corresponding fruit of the activity of love that we give out to others.

Upward Qualities

The last three things that represent God's loves are faithfulness, meekness, and temperance.

When I first became a Christian, I was taught that the Bema Seat would be a time of judgment. But it is not like that at all. It will be a time of evaluation for receiving rewards for eternity. It will have nothing to do with sin but with fruit, because sin was judged once and for all at Calvary. But let's look at 1 Corinthians 4:1-2, which speaks of the faithfulness of God's servants as we respond to His initiations of love, calling us out to be stewards of His mysteries: “Moreover it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful.” The degree of faithfulness operating in

our lives will determine our degree of joy or sorrow at the Bema Seat. There, Jesus Christ will determine what motivated each believer's works in time. One by one, we will be face-to-face with God. He will take us aside personally and evaluate what we did on this earth (see 2 Corinthians 5:9-10, Romans 14:10-12), to gain or to suffer loss of rewards for all eternity.

Growing in God-Consciousness

Next, we have meekness. This says that through fellowship with Jesus Christ, we walk in the light over circumstances or adversity, and we grow in God-consciousness. The conscience is lifted up through the activity of love toward God, and we develop amazing convictions. These are not convictions of convenience, but convictions that are holy, unchanging in the face of accusations from the world, the flesh, and the devil. These are not convictions of compromise or circumstance. These are convictions from the Word of God.

Finally, we come to temperance. What is temperance? Much more than "self-control," it is to abide in the truth, under the Holy Spirit's control, in the face of tremendous temptation as Jesus did in His humanity (see Matthew 4). In

the midst of every test from Satan, Jesus responded with “It is written.” He had absolute temperance, which found its resource in the tremendous love He had with His Father. Satan could not get Him to step out of that temperance at any time.

The Son of God was under divine control at all times. He woke up morning by morning “to hear as the learned,” according to the Word of God (see Isaiah 50:4), and He was led by the Spirit of truth. No one could do anything to break Jesus from that pattern of life. He moved in divine temperance—one expression of the loves that God has shown forth to mankind.

So there we have it—the word love with eight feminine nouns used as adjectives in the nominative case, denoting equal quality and equal possession. These are the loves of God, given to us, His Beloved.

CONCLUSION

One time not too many years ago, we had a special series of meetings in our church that featured one of Elvis Presley's stepbrothers. It was a very interesting time, and we learned some things about famous people that week. Like everyone else, those people just want to be loved.

There has been endless speculation about what happened to Mr. Presley, a man who to some remains an obsession. Some claim the singer died from drug and alcohol problems. The real problem, however, according to his stepbrother, was that the entertainer really was searching for peace in his life, and he had trouble finding it.

From this study of the Word of God, we understand more about where God's peace comes from. It comes from letting His "loves" work themselves out in our lives. The fruit of the Spirit is love, and by allowing that love to be

shed abroad in our hearts, we flourish as tender grapes in a well-tended vineyard. We spread special seeds, just as the pomegranate that buds forth. We enjoy what we are given, receiving everything with gladness, with healthy emotions, and sharing it all in our walk of faith.