

Midtown Messenger

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Issue 36

The Love Of Man Toward God

By: Daniel F. Cates

We sing, “My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine; For Thee all the follies of sin I resign. My gracious Redeemer, my Savior art Thou; If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, ’tis now. I love Thee because Thou has first loved me, and purchased my pardon on Calvary’s tree. I love Thee for wearing the thorns on Thy brow; If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, ’tis now.” When we sing this, do we really know why we sing it? (1 Cor. 14:15) When we sing this, do we really mean it? (Jn 4:24) In this study, we wish to address the love of man toward God in a way that we will not only see what it is; but that will show us such things as why it is, what it requires, and why at times some fail in it.

First, the love of man toward God is predicated upon God’s love toward man. John, rightly called the disciple whom Jesus loved (Jn 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20), wrote of the love of man toward God, “We love him, because he first loved us” (1 John 4:19). Earlier in the same chapter he had shown that the basis of love is God’s toward man, “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (1 Jn 4:10; cf., Jn 3:16). Jesus himself, who was the ultimate demonstration of love, said, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13).

Second, the love of man toward God is educated by Biblical examples. Consider the Shulamite bride of Solomon who typifies the bride of Christ (i.e., the church [Eph. 5:22-

33]). As she grew to know and appreciate her king-husband more, her love grew and her humility increased. Note the growth of her love: “My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies” (Song 2:16); “I am my beloved’s, and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lilies” (Song 6:3); “I am my beloved’s, and his desire is toward me” (Song 7:10). So ought every man’s love toward God increase.

Third, the love of man toward God is dictated by God’s commandments. One can proclaim a love for God the proverbial “all day long and twice on Sundays,” but until he demonstrates that love in obedience, he does not truly love God! Jesus said, “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (Jn 14:15; cf., 1 Jn 5:2-3). Only when we so love Him is His love perfected in us (1 Jn 2:3-5). Furthermore, only when we truly love Christ are we counted as His friends (Jn 15:14, “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you”).

Fourth, the love of man toward God is dedicated to being its best. This certainly calls our thoughts back to the Shulamite; but is also demonstrated in the New Testament, for Jesus quoting Deut. 6:5 said, “And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment” (Mark 12:30). Paul in numerous places likewise showed the greatness which ought to characterize the love of man (Phil. 1:9-11; cf., I Cor. 13:1-8,13), even calling it “the bond of perfectness” (Col. 3:14).

Fifth, the love of man toward God is demonstrated toward his fellow man. If one truly loves God, that love will be seen in his dealings with his fellow man. Jesus did not merely lend credence to this thought, but He made this a necessity! He said, "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you" (Jn 15:12, cf., Mark 12:31). As Jesus loved, so man must love his fellow man; and as Jesus gave himself, so must man (1 Jn 3:16, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren"). Woe to the man that says he loves God, but does not love his brother! (1 Jn 3:14, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.")

Sixth, the love of man toward God is complicated by man's love for the world. Anytime one allows the world to be his focus, he necessarily takes his eyes off of Jesus who is to be his focus (Heb. 12:1-3). Likewise, whenever one turns his love to the world, he necessarily turns it from God (1 John 2:15; 1 Tim. 6:10). John warned against so loving the world thus: "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever" (1 John 2:16-17).

Seventh, the love of man toward God is confiscated by the ungodly. If any loves not God nor his fellow man, then it can rightly be said that he has no love! John wrote, "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love" (1 Jn 4:8). How is such a lack of love demonstrated? John spoke of a lack of concern for others and its consequences: "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 Jn 3:17-18). This is very plain: The one who does not love his brother does not

know the love of God, and he is not God's friend!

Let us consider these things and ever be able to sincerely sing, "My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine; For Thee all the follies of sin I resign. My gracious Redeemer, my Savior art Thou; If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now. I love Thee because Thou has first loved me, and purchased my pardon on Calvary's tree. I love Thee for wearing the thorns on Thy brow; If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now."

Dan Cates serves as an Instructor and Dean of Public Communications at the Memphis School of Preaching. He is also the minister and an elder of the Independence Church of Christ, Independence, MS

When God Has Not Spoken

We need to be careful to never assume what God is thinking. Unless we can point to the book, the chapter, and the verse, we don't know what the will of God is. We're just guessing. And while guessing may be good for a few extra points on a test at school, it won't work in our spiritual lives.

Guessing where God has not spoken is dangerous. When trying to determine the will of God, we should never be satisfied with "I think" or "I feel." Rather, we should not rest until we have found a "Thus says the Lord." What has God said? What has God implied?

And once we hear the clear voice of God in his Word, we should be satisfied with that, even if we don't agree with it. Or, should I say, **ESPECIALLY WHEN WE DON'T AGREE!** We must never search the Scriptures trying to find the thing that we want or desire.

If God has not spoken, then we should just leave it alone.

PRIVILEGED TO SERVE

Week of September 6, 2020

subject to change

Sunday Morning:

Announcements: Bryant Siegel
Scripture Reading: Fred Scherffius

Lord's Supper & Offering

Bread: Ron White
Fruit of the Vine: Ron White
Offering: Christian Sneeringer

Prayer

A.M. Opening: Ron White
A.M. Closing: Dale Hill

Song Leaders:

Sun. A.M.: Larry Nuckels
Wed. P.M.: Doug Jobs

Ushers: Allen Clifton

Wednesday Devo: Lupe Escojido

Open/Close Building:

Sound System: Mark FitzSimmons

To Our Visitors: We welcome you to our service. Perhaps this is the first time you have visited us. It is our desire to have you return often and give us a chance to become better acquainted with you. You will find visitor cards on the back of the pew in front of you. Please fill one out.

**Sermons are available on our website
www.midtowncoc.org under Resources.**

MidTown's Bible Classes and Worship services can be viewed livestream on YouTube. Search MidTown church of Christ Victoria.

IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

Please pray for the country during this time of the Corona Virus Pandemic.

Happy Birthday: Brant Jacobs (7); Herb Ramsey (9); Cooper Siegel (11).

Happy Anniversary: Curtis & Ann Pantel (9)

**New Bible Class Quarter Starts today!
and**

Men's Monthly Business Meeting is today at 1pm

Bible Classes will be held on both Sunday and Wednesday's for the youth. More details are posted in the hall on the bulletin board.

****FRIENDLY REMINDER TO CONTINUE
PRACTICING SOCIAL DISTANCING****

KEEP IN PRAYER

MIDTOWN MEMBERS:

Jeff Cannady
Les Daltry
Janice FitzSimmons
Dee Gilpatrick
Wayne Martin
Ann Pantel
Veronica Serenil
Clark Withers

SHUT-INS:

Faye Henderson
Charlie Mabe
Sandy Malone

If you would like to add or remove a name on the "Keep in Prayer" List, please see Nina Siegel.

MIDTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST

Minister: Ronnie Scherffius
Secretary: Nina Siegel

TIMES OF SERVICES

Sunday Morning Bible Class: 9:00 AM
Sunday Morning Worship: 10:00AM
Wednesday Bible Class: 7:00 PM

RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

Week of August 30, 2020

A.M. Bible Class.....66
A.M. Worship.....84
Online views during worship.....28
Wednesday Bible Class.....51

Offering week of August 30, 2020.....\$3,478

Reading for this week:

"Have you not seen a false vision and uttered a lying divination, whenever you have said, 'Declares the LORD,' although I have not spoken?"
Ezekiel 13:7

SUPPORTED WORKS

India - Mani Pagidipalli
Bible Land Passages - John & Carla Moore
Southwest School of Bible Studies - Anthony Scherffius

GO PAPERLESS!

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