



No.2

DEVELOPING GOD'S LOVE

On this earth we have no rights; we cannot claim anything except that which God has given us. This is more than enough to fulfil, protect, provide and bless our lives. Our right is to be sons and daughters of the living God with our full inheritance in Christ, however we cannot forget that a part of our inheritance is the blessing of suffering for Christ.

Our rights in Christ

John 1:12-13

“But as many as appropriated Him, He gave to them a legal right to become born-ones of God, to those who place their trust in His name, who, not out of a source of bloods, nor even out of a desire of the flesh, nor even out of a desire of a male individual, but out of God were born.”

Bearing another's sins

Every offence committed against us is an opportunity to communicate love. The degree to which your life will be used by God to heal the offender will be directly proportional to your willingness to bear the offender's sin (e.g. negative attitude, offence). God is looking for faithful Christians who will unconditionally forgive all offences others have committed against them.

Colossians 3:12-14

“Put on therefore as your spiritual apparel, as chosen-out ones of God, saints and beloved ones, a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, considerateness, longsuffering, bearing with one another and forgiving one another if anyone has a matter of complaint against anyone. Even as and in the degree that the Lord forgave you, in the same manner also you forgive. And upon all these, put on divine and self-sacrificial love which is a binding factor of completeness.”

Ephesians 4:2

“with every lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, doing your best to safeguard the unanimity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

Discerning the other person's heart with grace

Regardless of how well we know a person, we seldom know the “real” problems in their inner life. Rather than reacting to negative attitudes and actions we see in a person's life, this should motivate us to discern what led the person to this behaviour. This approach will develop an attitude of discernment and godliness.

What is discernment?

Discernment is the process of determining God's will in a situation or identifying the true nature of a thing, such as discerning whether something is good or evil. The aim for a Christian is to see every person or situation from God's point of view. In this way we “bypass” our own conclusions, emotions and motivations of the heart. Submitting our thoughts to the Holy Spirit and God's Word will give us the capacity to share God's love with others even in tough situations.

We believers have the capacity to rely on the Holy Spirit for discernment. We should rely on God's Word and the Holy Spirit to give us additional and critical information in order to have the right discernment about a person's attitude. Failure to discern in a Christ-like way will cause us to develop a critical and judgemental attitude leading to conflicts and ungodliness.

Jesus Christ, our example

No one was more falsely accused than Jesus, the sinless one who, in the natural, had every right to react to his accusers. And yet, He didn't. He forgave them. Instead of becoming oversensitive and "bitter," He gave only love in return. This is our calling as followers of Christ. When we are falsely accused or wounded, this is God's way of letting us know that the person who is wounding us is in need of the love of God.

A loving attitude as well as actions

It is important that both your countenance and your words reflect the love of Christ in rough or tense situations. There are degrees of silence that communicate inwardly hostile feelings. Thus it is important that both your lips and facial expressions communicate Christ's love. When your mind and your heart are in harmony within God's Word, you will find it easy to share the sacrificial love of God in any circumstance at any time.

The love of God is forgiveness

Matthew 18:21-22

Then, having come, Peter said to Him, Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I shall forgive him; up to seven times? Jesus says to him, I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.

This is actually God's generosity toward us, because He has forgiven us endless times and He will continue to forgive us until Jesus returns. Likewise, we are to be generous toward others with our God-given grace, and forgive others, not just seventy times seven, but also endless times without keeping a record of wrongs. This is God's love in action!

How about forgiving yourself?

As much as you are to forgive others with the love of God, you have also been forgiven by your Heavenly Father and therefore, you are to be as generous with yourself as you are towards others: forgiving yourself once and once for all. Remember you are the righteousness of God! Our performance in the flesh cannot affect our righteousness in Christ. When we have peace and a good conscience we have freedom, and this freedom brings us to a state of rest which enables us to share God's love and wisdom with others without the interference of the flesh.

THE NATURE OF JESUS

We have the nature of Jesus in us by the Holy Spirit. Jesus wants us to give His love to others. We are only vessels, i.e. the instruments Jesus uses to draw people to Himself with His divine sacrificial love. We are not to be obstacles by operating in the flesh, rather, we are to surrender to the will of God and die to self, so that the life of Jesus in us will bear much fruit.

The love of God

The love of God is God's power. God bestowed His love on creation. Everything God has done and made originates from His divine love as a source. This love is able to perform miracles: the love of God heals, restores, encourages, builds up. The love of God is the ultimate sublime attribute, it is the most precious treasure **and this treasure is within us by the Holy Spirit**. God wants to perform miracles through us as we share His powerful and supernatural divine sacrificial love with others.

1 Peter 4:7-8

"But of all things the end has come near. Be of sound mind therefore, and be calm and collected in spirit with a view to [giving yourselves to] prayer; before all things in order of importance, having fervent love among yourselves, because love hides a multitude of sins."