



No.5 DEVELOPING GOD'S LOVE

The Royal relationship

The relationship between us believers and our Heavenly Father is very special. We must not take it for granted. God has filled us with His love and our love for Him makes this relationship complete. While we know how much God loves us, very often Christians don't reciprocate His love.

The problems in this world, the emotions, pain, hurt, the past experiences etc., bring the believer to a place of preoccupation and worry. This focus on self interferes in our relationship with God. In a way, it is the same with any relationship between ourselves and others: when we focus only on ourselves, we fail to consider the other person. Too many relationships are damaged because one person cares only about themselves and disregards the other person.

In a relationship we need to be attentive to the other person to make the relationship rich and healthy. In the same way, we also need to be attentive to our Heavenly Father's longings. He longs for our love, trust and obedience. We don't need to do anything but believe in Him. God always loves us the same but He also wants to bless our attitude of trust, faith and love.

John 6:28-29

"Then they said to Him, What are we to do as a habit of life in order that we may continually be working the works of God? Answered Jesus and said to them, This is the work of God, that you continually be believing on Him whom that One sent off on a mission".

Our Heavenly Father longs for our love for Him. Actually, He longs for us to trust and believe in Him; this is how He knows our faith and love is genuine. He wants us to believe in Him and to trust Him, but also to love Him as we love our neighbour and ourselves.

Matthew 22:36-39

"Teacher, which kind of commandment is of such a character as to be a great one in the law? And He said to him, You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart and your whole soul and your whole mind. This is the great and first commandment. A second one is like it. You shall love your neighbor in the same manner as you do yourself".

In "the natural," we cannot love God with all our hearts, our whole soul and our whole mind. The flesh cannot worship God.

John 4:24

God as to His nature is spirit, and for those who are worshipping, it is necessary in the nature of the case to be worshipping in a spiritual sphere, and in the sphere of truth.

Jesus was answering the woman at the well. Worship in this instance is not solely related to singing worship songs, but a lifestyle of dedication and a constant heart attitude of worship in the believer.

How is this possible? THE HOLY SPIRIT makes it possible.

We now have the capacity to worship God in spirit and in truth and are also able to love God with the supernatural love we have received through the sacrifice of Jesus at the Cross. The love of God

is in us. This makes our relationship with God real, because we have the same nature and the same Spirit. It is wonderful to realise our relationship with our Heavenly Father is for eternity.

Our relationship with God enriches our lives

Our relationship with God will always enrich our earthly relationships. Being constantly aware of our relationship with God and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit brings our lives into harmony with God and with others. This is what enables a Christian to experience the abundant life Jesus has given us. It is a spiritual life full of His love, faith, hope and victory.

Luke 4:8

“And Jesus answering said to him, It has been written and is at present on record, You shall worship the Lord your God, and to Him only you shall render sacred service.”

To love God is simply to put Him first. It is an undivided love. God is our priority. If we love God with *all* our hearts, souls, minds and strength, we will not allow other things to interfere. Our love for God is manifested by loving people.

1 John 2:15

Stop considering the world precious with the result that you love it, and the things in the world. If anyone as a habit of life is considering the world precious and is therefore loving it, there does not exist the Father's love [i.e., the love possessed by the Father] in him.

To love God is to desire Him; to yearn for His righteousness, His Word, and His grace.

Psalms 42:1-2

As the deer pants for the water brooks, So my soul pants for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God; When shall I come and appear before God?

To love God is to obey Him. Jesus tells us,

John 14:15

If you are loving me with a divine and self-sacrificial love, the commandments which are mine you will keep.

Psalms 40:8

“I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart.”

This is not a matter, however, of merely following rules and performing good deeds. It is about having God's love written in our hearts (the Holy Spirit). We naturally wish to please those we love. When we love God, we will want to please Him and obey His ways eagerly.

When we love God we will love His Word.

If we love the author we will love His letter. The Word of God is Jesus and His Word is valuable to us because it is through His Word (the truth) that we have been set free and been saved by His grace.

I remember back in 1969 when I was serving in the Spanish military I received letters from my wife Ulli. The letters were alive to me because I loved Ulli; I read them repeatedly because it was her writing and it touched my heart, it was HER. It is the same today with us and God's Word, because the Bible is God's letter of instruction, it is a love letter to every believer, the Word is Jesus.

God's love in His letter

We need to receive God's letter personally. One mistake many believers make is to not consider God's Word personally. It is written to every one of us individually. IT IS! We need to personalise it; it is only you and God and nobody else. How is it possible? The Holy Spirit makes God's Word alive, personal and real.

God loved us first, we love God and others with thanksgiving, gratitude and humility. This is our expression of worship and this brings glory and honour to Jesus.