

Love Lays Down Its Life



The Love Of God (Day 34)
by Derek Prince

Dear friend,

We have looked at fourteen characteristics of love's behaviour – seven that were negative (that's seven things that love does not do) and seven that were positive (seven things that love does do).

Today I'm going to share with you another distinctive aspect of love's behaviour. And this is stated for us, first of all, in the New Testament by Jesus Himself. The aspect of love's behaviour that I'm going to speak about is summed up in this phrase – love lays down its life. Jesus Himself set the pattern and He gave it as a commandment to His disciples. This is stated in John chapter 15, verses 12 and 13, where Jesus is speaking to His disciples and He says this:

> "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends." (NIV)

First of all, we need to see that for us as Christians, love is not an option. It's not something we can decide whether we wish to do or not. There are many things in the Christian life which are optional. We may or may not do them. But love is no option. For those who accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour, love is a command. Jesus says, *"My command is this: Love each other."*

Also, the degree and the kind of love that we are required to have is not left to us to decide. Jesus set the pattern and He has never authorised us to change it. Love each other – how or how much? Jesus says, *"...as I have loved you."* That's the command. Love each other as I have loved you.

And then He goes on in that next verse to explain the way that love will act. *"Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends."* The essence of this kind of love is that it lays down its life.

Now where the English translation says "life" the Greek word that's used is literally 'soul'. Love lays down its soul. Its soul life – its soulish life. There are, I believe, three main functions

of the soul as portrayed in Scripture. The will, the emotions and the intellect. And they are summed up in three simple verbs, each of which we can put the simple word 'I' in front of. The will – I want. The emotions – I feel. The intellect – I think. That is really the essential nature of soulish life. It's what I want. It's what I feel. It's what I think. Now love lays that down. In other words, love is not dictated to by what you want, by what you feel, by what you think.

Love has a higher standard. Love's motivation is what is good for the other person. And where there is a conflict between what is good for the other person and what you want or you feel or you think, love lays down the latter.

Love is no longer motivated by what you feel. You may feel you want to rest, but the person you love needs help. Or you may think that a certain situation is this way, but thinking that would keep you from helping the person who needs help. You're not dictated to, you're not motivated, by what you want, what you feel, what you think where the good of the other person is the issue. The good of the other takes precedence over your own soulish nature. Love lays down its life.

For reflection and prayer

Love lays down its life - its soulish life.

Devotional

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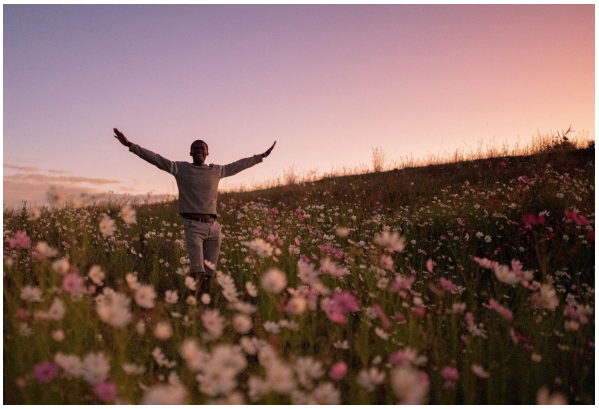

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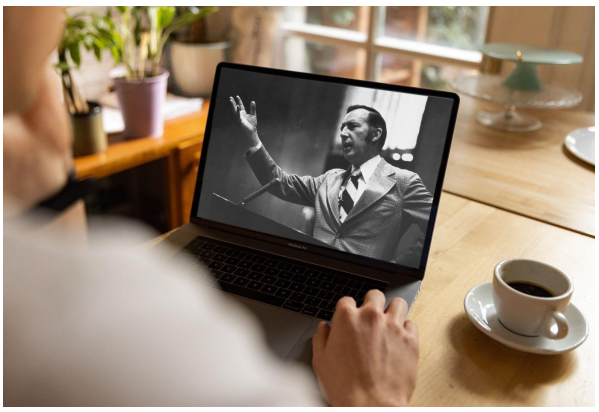

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