

Express God's Love



The Love Of God (Day 35)
by Derek Prince

Dear friend,

Jesus commanded His followers to love each other the way He loves us. In John 15:12-13, He says:

> "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)

In his first epistle, the apostle John likewise lays down this requirement for love, that it lays down its life. In 1 John 3, verse 16, he says:

> "This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us. [If Jesus hadn't come and set the pattern, we wouldn't really have known what this kind of life is. But we know because Jesus came, gave us the pattern, and also gave us the command.] And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers." (NIV)

With this awareness of the love of God manifested in Jesus, comes an obligation. If we receive God's love, then we are obligated to show that love to others. John goes on in that third chapter of his first epistle to give it a very practical application, and sometimes I'm afraid we're content with religious platitudes, and we don't move on into the practical outworking of what the New Testament teaches. In the next verse [17], after saying we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers, John says:

> "If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?" (NIV)

In other words, it's not enough to just feel emotional, or express love in words, but there are very practical ways in which we're obligated to express love. And in particular John says, "If one of our fellow-believers has a material need and we have material sufficiency and we are able to supply his need, if we do not supply his need, we cannot claim that the love of God lives in us." That's a very searching standard which we each need to apply to ourselves. John goes on to appeal [in verse 18] that we should not be hypocrites, and I

think it's very important as Christians we give heed to this:

> "Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth." (NIV)

In other words, it's not enough to talk about love. It's not enough to use religious platitudes, it's not enough to say "God bless you" or "Jesus will help you". Because many times it isn't Jesus who has to help them, it's us.

> "This then is how we know we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in His presence whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and He knows everything." (1 John 3:19-20 NIV)

There again you see the security of true love. Our heart does not condemn us when we're demonstrating true love. We are at rest in God's presence. This rest comes only through love actively expressed.

For reflection and prayer

Jesus commands me to loveothers the way He loves me.

Devotional

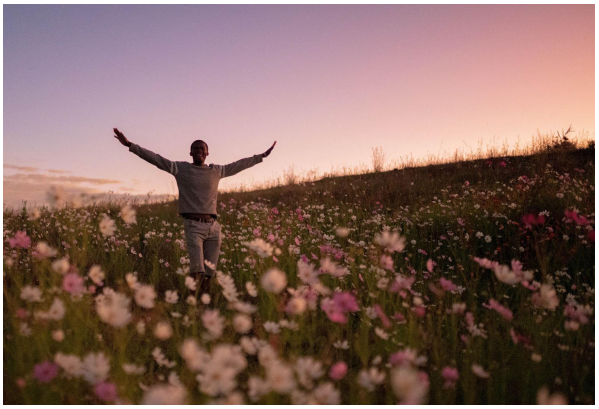
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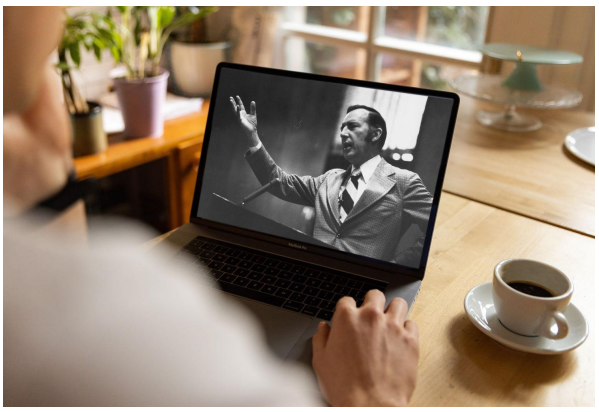
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