

Love Perfected and Unconfessed Sin



The Goal Is Love (Part 5)
by Derek Prince

So, after self-control, now we get to the really good ones.

> "...to endurance godliness..."

My definition of godliness is a temperament controlled by the Holy Spirit. All your reactions and responses are controlled by the Holy Spirit. The mark of a godly person is that when he enters the room God enters with him. He carries the presence of God with him. That's godliness.

There's still two more, we've only got to number five.

Number six, brotherly kindness. That means loving your fellow believers. Some of us haven't got to stage six, and I have to confess that not all Christians are always easy to love. I think I'm probably one of them. People have come to me years later and said, "Brother Prince, I have to forgive you." Other people have said, "You've changed a lot!" I understood what they meant, I had to acknowledge it was true.

But brotherly kindness is not the end, there's one more, a four letter word. Love. That in Greek is agape. That means the love that loves your enemies, that loves the people that persecute you, that loves the people that don't understand you, that loves the people that are different to you. That is the climax of the Christian life, that's the pinnacle. But there's a process and there are two agents that God uses, the Holy Spirit—and you can have these glorious spiritual experiences. I've read the lives of missionaries and others who had glorious spiritual experiences. I'm thinking of Hudson Taylor whose life I was reading recently. But even after that glorious experience when he was filled with the love of God, he had a lot of personal problems and he wasn't always easy to live with. A great man of God. But, we have to go through the process. No one is exempt. You can't get there by any other route than God's appointed route.

Let's say it again. To your faith you add excellence, to excellence you add knowledge, to knowledge you add self control, to self control you add perseverance or endurance, to perseverance you add godliness, to godliness you add brotherly kindness [love of your fellow believers], and to brotherly kindness you add love. And as far as I'm concerned,

that is the pinnacle, that is the goal. That's the destination for every Spirit filled believer.

Now, I have a wish for all of us, and I can say at the moment I love every one of you. I don't know you but I have the love of God in my heart for you at this moment. My prayer, and I want to submit this to Don Double and the team, my prayer is that somehow the love of God will be poured out on us during this week, that not one of us will leave the same. I pray that a fountain of love will be opened in this camp that will flow out at the end of the week in little rivulets that reach every part of Great Britain in your lives. Can you say amen to that?

Now I want to make a confession because I have learned by experience that unconfessed sin is the barrier to God's blessing. There are other barriers but that is number one and the most serious and most common. You see, a lot of Christians don't realize God says "if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." But there's an if and you may read the Bible differently from me but I do not find that God has ever committed Himself to forgive a sin that has not been confessed. So, if we want our sins forgiven, what do we have to do? Confess. Are you sure? Are you willing? It could be painful. It may take you half the week to get through them.

Listen, don't start to analyze yourself. Don't probe into yourself because the further you probe the worse you'll feel. Let the Holy Spirit do it. Jesus said in one gospel, "If I by the Spirit of God cast out demons," and in another gospel He said, "If I by the finger of God cast out demons." So what is God's finger? The Holy Spirit. Let God put His finger on every area in your life that you need to confess.

I want to tell you, having preached this message, I have to confess many, many times I have not loved as I ought to have loved. Many times I've been critical, self-righteous, judgmental, self-centered and insensitive. When I think back of the children that I helped to raise, and between us Ruth and I are responsible for twelve children, I think the thing I regret most is insensitivity. I was an only child, I had no brothers or sisters, I grew up on my own, I learned to live my life my way. It's taken me years to arrive at the point when I'm even aware if somebody else doesn't feel good. I also learned this, that when people come up and ask me theological questions, usually it's not a theological answer that they want, they want love, they want help, they want comfort. Theology is just a way of saying, "Help me, I need to be loved."

I want to confess that before you all because I want to ask God to forgive me. If I don't confess I know He will not forgive. If I do confess I believe He will forgive.

Now, I want to ask you if you would feel it appropriate tonight that those of us who have not been as loving as we ought to have been would stand up, confess it privately to God and ask God's forgiveness. And then ask God to pour out His love on us in a new dimension. I'm not asking you to tell anybody else except God but if you say here tonight, "God, when I compare my love with your love and with the love of the early church, I am just an empty vessel."

Now then, I'm going to pray a prayer and you say amen and then take off and pray your own prayer.

> "Lord, we want to confess before You tonight, as Your believing people, we have failed You. We have misrepresented You. We've given the world the wrong impression of the kind of people we are. We have not caused them to know we are your disciples because we have love one for another. We have often been self righteous, critical and condemnatory, and self centered. Lord, we've failed in many other ways but tonight You have spoken to our hearts and we want to acknowledge before You we have failed, Lord. We have sinned. We've broken the first and greatest of all commandments, to love the Lord our God with all our hearts, soul and mind. We've broken the second commandment because we haven't loved our neighbors as ourselves. All we can do tonight is say we're sorry, forgive us. Forgive us. Forgive us. Change our hearts. Send Your Holy Spirit to do in us and for us what only You can do."

That's your prayer. If you can identify with that just say amen. Amen.

> "And now, Lord, I want to pray that on the basis of Your forgiveness and our humbling ourselves before You, You will pour out your love on this camp this week in a new measure, in a new degree, that You'll open a fountain of love in the midst of us that will flow out in the lives of the people that are here to all the corners of Britain where people are longing for love. They're not wanting religion, Lord, they're wanting love. You have chosen us to be Your vessels and Your channels. Tonight, Lord, start right where we are. Start with us and do whatever needs to be done to change us, we pray. In Jesus' name. Amen."



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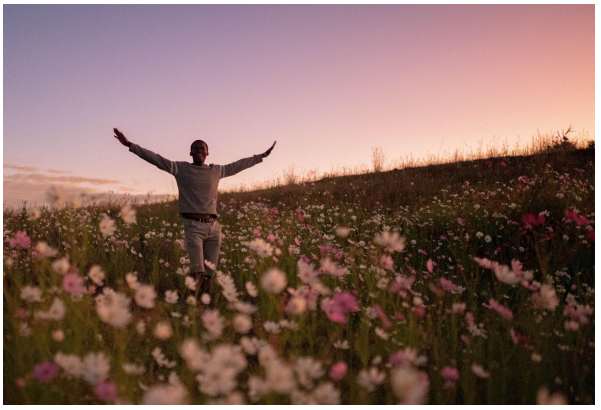

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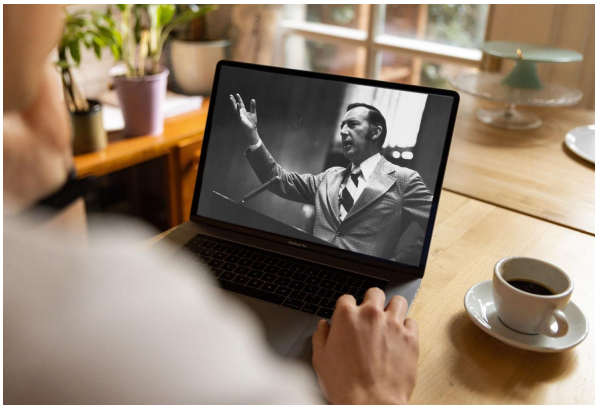

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