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JULY 2016

THE GREATEST REVELATION

Greetings my beloved brethren!

We pray that this finds you prospering in all things and walking in divine health just as your soul is prospering.

God is doing wonderful things in the life of the Dickerson's! Let me give you a little update on what God has been doing in our family and ministry...

Levi is really growing up fast! He is on his summer break from homeschooling right now and also just got done playing on the 8 and under All Star baseball team here in North Macon. It was very exciting to see his team advancing as far as they did! Growing up, I always enjoyed playing little league and youth baseball and it is fun to watch Levi prospering in the same arena.

Shannon is doing good as well. She has really been stepping up to the plate (notice the baseball analogy ☺) and doing a great job helping me shepherd the people of God that the Lord has entrusted to us. She has been heading up a women's bible study once a month. She has also been doing more writing recently as well as spending time ministering one on one to various women.

In short, she has been doing a splendid job of helping and supporting me at High Point Church. I constantly hear comments of how people love to watch Shannon watch me as I preach. They say that it is such a blessing to watch a minister's wife actually engaged in regard to what their husband is teaching. And I can say that she does this genuinely! She truly does honor me and she loves me so well!

I have been doing good too! I have grown so much in the past couple of years since taking on the role of Pastor at High Point Church!

I had the opportunity to spend some time with my father in the faith Andrew Wommack a couple of months ago and I asked him, "Do you remember what you told me when I told you that I was about to enter into pastoring full time?" and he didn't hesitate in answering- "If you can do anything else, do it?" LOL! Of course, he was kidding (I think), but the fact of the matter is, I really enjoy doing life with people and seeing God's people grow. It is not always easy because when you deal with people, you will always have difficult times, but seeing that one person "get it" and grow in God makes it ALL worth it! To God be the glory!

As for Living Logos Ministries, we are seeing a great response already to our television program "The Living Word." I regularly receive calls when our program airs locally. One call I received was very touching...

A lady called me one Friday afternoon as the show was going off to encourage me to stay on the air, not to ever quit and that she was going to send us an offering to help us do so. The whole time she was telling me how much people need to hear the uncompromised Word of God on television, I sensed the Holy Spirit so strongly. It was as if the Holy Spirit was spurring me on to not be moved from what He led us to begin!

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So I say that to say that we are seeing people ministered to through the "Living Word!" If you have not seen any of our programs yet, remember you can check them all out on demand through our ministry website @ www.treydickerson.com.

So let me take a moment now to thank our partners who support us on a monthly basis! Y'all are the reason that we are able to produce these programs and get them out there to minister the truth to people! I have received other calls that talk about how the particular message they heard was so timely and God was speaking directly to them. So, thank you very much for being a part of this harvest!

Also, before we get into this month's teaching, let me add a prayer request...

Please pray for Shannon and myself here in July as we will be taking our first mission's trip together to Guadalajara, Mexico. This will be Shannon's first trip out of the country, so I am excited to see how this trip impacts her. We will be running wide open during our few days there teaching Bible College students and ministering in churches.

God has done great things, He is doing great things and He will continue to do great things through Living Logos Ministries! Amen?

Well, this month I would like to write to you on the subject of the love of God, but from a different slant than we are used to hearing it. So let's get into some truths that can totally transform our Christian lives...

THE GREATEST REVELATION

In the seven-plus years that I have been a born-again Christian I am convinced that if there is one truth that is the single greatest revelation that we could ever receive it is the unconditional love of our God!

The reason I can say this is because, through understanding that God is love, we will be drawn into a more intimate communion with Him- thus fulfilling God's primary purpose for our lives. On top of that, knowing how much God loves us will produce, not only more of a love for Him, but it will also produce more of a love for others (1 John 4:19).

So what I am saying is that when we truly understand how much God loves us, we will fulfill what Jesus said was the greatest commandment (see Matthew 22:36-40). How awesome is that!?!

Now I understand that most people say that they know that God loves them, but the truth is that most born-again believers do not truly understand the love of God. Most have just mentally accented to Scriptures such as John 3:16 but those Scriptures have not impacted their hearts like they should!

This is why the Apostle Paul prayed for the church of Ephesus that they would know the love of Christ that passed knowledge (Ephesians 3:19). On the surface, that seems to be an impossible prayer because how can you know something that passes knowledge? Well, the word for "know" literally means "to know by experience." In other words, the Apostle Paul was praying that they would come to experience little by little the love of Christ in their hearts- its height, length, depth, and width- a love that surpasses "complete understanding" (definition of "knowledge"). You see, Paul understood that the greatness of the love of God can only be truly known by revelation, so that is why he prayed this for the Ephesian saints.

So what we need to understand is that it is not enough to just know God loves us in our heads. We need to let this truth penetrate our hearts to where we begin to experience God's loves more in our lives.

So since we have this tendency to just mentally accent to the Scriptures, I want us to take a different approach to studying God's love in this edition of the Living Logos... I want us to look at a few of the Scriptures where God tells us how to love other people.

Someone might ask, "How is studying verses that tell us how to love others going to teach us about God's love for us?" Simple! But let me explain by first asking you a question- Would God give us a standard for loving others that He Himself is not already operating in? In other words...Would God tell us to do something that He is not already doing? The answer to those two questions is: Of course He wouldn't! **Our Heavenly Father commands us to treat others a certain way because He wants His children to imitate the way He treats all of us** (see Galatians 5:1)! Amen!

So let's take a look at a few of these Scriptures that will help us to understand the greatness of God's love for us...

GOD'S CHARACTERISTICS

I believe that the most concise yet complete scriptures that reveal God's awesome love for us is found in the great love chapter- 1 Corinthians chapter 13!

When the Apostle Paul penned this great chapter he most certainly had in mind how we are to walk in love towards our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. However, as 1 John 4:8 states, God is love. **God doesn't just have love; He is love!** Therefore, as we read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 that describes love's characteristics, we can read these verses as describing God's characteristics! Let's quickly take a look at a few of His characteristics...

- **"(God) suffers long..."**- The words "suffers long" come from the Greek word "makrothumia." This word describes a stick of dynamite with an extremely long wick. In other words, the person who possesses "makrothumia" can get "burned" a lot before they will "go off" (i.e. explode) on someone. The Word of God teaches us that God is slow to anger and abounding in mercy. Thank God that He does not have a short fuse! He puts up with a lot in us because this is what love does- It is patient and not quick to get angry.
- **"and is kind"**- Notice that God is not only longsuffering with us but He is also kind while He waits on us! In other words, He will still pour out His kindness in our lives while He gives us space to repent of our mistakes. What an awesome God we serve!
- **"(God) does not envy"**- The word "envy" describes a desire to deprive someone of something they have. In other words, envy wants to take something away. But God is not like that! He desires to add to us, not take away from us. The thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy from our lives but love has come to add to our lives- and that more abundantly (see John 10:10)!
- **"does not seek (His) own"**- This is a great description of God! He is always seeking our welfare and not His own. Even when He gave us the Ten Commandments He was seeking what would benefit us. So many read the Ten Commandments with a doom and gloom mentality, like God is just trying to control us or something. But when God tells us what to do, He is not doing it for His own benefit, but for our benefit! God loves us so much that He tells us how we should act so that we can live a more blessed life! God seeks our own, not His own.

- **“thinks no evil”**- This is a poor translation. The word “thinks” comes from the Greek word “logizomai” which means to credit, count, or consider. It was an accounting term that would better be translated “to calculate.” So we could translate this phrase- “(love) does not keep a record of evil.” This is exactly how God is towards us! He doesn’t keep a record of our faults! He doesn’t recall our mistakes! Love separates one’s sins as far as the east is from the west!
- **“bears all things”**- This word “bears” has two possible meanings... It means “to cover” and “to protect.” I believe this has a couple of different applications... Number one, God is our Protector! He protects us from harm. You know, if you truly love someone, you will hate the thing that tries to hurt them. In other words, true love will have hate mixed in with it because it hates anything that tries to hurt the object of its love. The Lord is our shield and He considers it a righteous thing to repay with tribulation those who trouble us (2 Thessalonians 1:6). Another application is that God is our Coverer! In other words, He covers our mistakes! God is not going around telling others what we did wrong with the intent of making a spectacle of our sins. Nope, He covers our sins! The book of Proverbs tells us that “love covers a multitude of sins.” You could say it this way- “God covers a multitude of sins!”
- **“believes all things”**- Love is always willing to believe the best about someone. So God is always putting good intentions with our actions. He gives us the benefit of the doubt. It’s not that He is ignorant of what is in our hearts, but He chooses to believe in us! This is what love does; He believes the best in us! So many people think that God focuses on our failures and is down on us, but that is not true. The exact opposite is true... He believes in us! He focuses on what He created us to be and what we are capable of instead of where we are currently falling short. He is a faith God and this means that He trusts us! This is such an awesome expression of God’s love- that He trusts us! This is evidenced in that He entrusted the evangelism of this world to us. Tell me He is not a faith God!
- **“hopes all things”**- Not only does God believe in us, He also has an expectation of us being successful. Jeremiah 29:11 says that God knows the thoughts that He thinks towards us- thoughts to give us a future and a hope. God is optimistic because love is optimistic! In other words, God will not quit expecting us to do the right things and make the right decisions. He is not like man who sometimes considers people to be too far gone. Nope, God will not give up on people! So the moment the devil tries to lie to you- telling you that God is through with you- just meditate on this awesome truth... God is optimistic, not pessimistic!

Now that we have taken a look at the great “God” chapter, let’s take a look at just a couple of other Scriptures that will further illustrate God’s awesome love for us...

LOVE’S UNLIMITED FORGIVENESS

The first one I want to take a look at is found in Matthew 18:21-22...

This is the instance where Peter approached Jesus with the question- “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?”

Do you know that this is the way the natural mind thinks? We think that there just has to be a limit to forgiveness; so this is how we perceive God’s forgiveness of us as well. But notice how Jesus answered Peter. He said, “I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.” In other words, Jesus was saying that He was not wanting a limit put on forgiveness; He wanted our forgiveness to be unlimited (i.e. seventy times seven). **So the awesome truth is that this is the way God forgives us- without limit! Hallelujah!**

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This truth has been so helpful to me when I've continually missed it in the same area and my flesh and the enemy tries to tell me that God won't forgive me this time. I just revert back to this passage of Scripture and believe that when I sincerely repent that Jesus will forgive me for the "umpteenth" time if necessary! Praise God for His mercy, grace and forgiveness!

LOVE'S FAITHFUL PROVISION

Another great truth about God's love is found in James 2:15-16...

In this passage of Scripture James was teaching on faith and works and in these two verses he gives an example. He says, "If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food and one of you says to them, 'Depart in peace, be warmed and filled', but do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?" In other words, James was making the same point as the Apostle John when he said, "let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:18).

You see, it is not enough to just tell someone you love them. You need to show them you love them through meeting their needs! And this is how God is...

Sure, He has given us His Word that He will provide for us, but He also does it! Someone might think, "He doesn't provide for me!" Sure He does! Take a deep breath... Where did you get that from? Where did you get the roof over your head? Where did you get your eyesight to read this? The answer to all three of those questions is- God... He provided you with all these things!

You see, the Lord has met our needs more than we really know. **The problem is that we focus on the few things that we have not yet seen provision for and fail to see the countless things God has already provided us with.** The truth is that God has really met all our needs and given us what is needful for the body. We just need to become grateful for the things that we have that are really the important things. Amen?

LOVE'S CARE FOR THE WIDOWS AND ORPHANS

Although these are all great examples of how God loves us, I believe that one of the greatest examples of how much God loves us is found in one of the most often given instructions in the Word of God...

Throughout the Bible it is very obvious that one of God's biggest "pet-peeves" is our care for widows and orphans. In the Old Testament you will find God constantly correcting the Jewish people for their neglect of the orphans and widows in Israel. And if you look at James 1:21, you will find how God considers visiting orphans and widows as a big part to having pure and undefiled religion.

As we have seen, if God commands us to do something then we can rest assure that He is already fulfilling those things Himself. **So, in the case of caring for widows and orphans, who are the orphans and widows God is caring for? WE ARE!** Saints, we were the widows that He provided for! We were the orphans that He cared for!

You see, there are two kinds of human relationships that the Word of God likens our relationship with God to under the New Covenant: Those two are a husband and wife and a father and child.

So the truth is- God went above and beyond the duty that He gave us... Not only did He provide for us when we were widows, He actually married us so that He could meet our every need forever and ever! Not only did He care for us when we were fatherless in satan's orphanage, He actually adopted us and made us His very own children!

You see, in His great love and abundant mercy, God did more than just help us in our hopeless state. He cut a covenant with us through the blood of Jesus- making us His bride and His children. In other words, He not only rescued us from the kingdom of darkness, but He translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son! What an awesome and loving God we serve!

GOD'S PERFECT EXPRESSION OF LOVE

In conclusion, let me reiterate what we just saw about widows and orphans by saying something that every Christian needs to hear- **God has already done everything that He ever needed to do through Jesus to prove that He loves us!**

I have dealt with a number of Christians who are confused about God's love for them because of the negative circumstances in their life. They wonder if God really loves them because their lives are in a mess and they are facing life's difficulties. But what I have to remind them of is the truth that in the world we will have tribulation and those who are living godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. I have to remind them that even their mistakes and shortcomings do not affect God's love for them.

You see, we will encounter struggles and difficulties in life that the enemy will try and use to remove us from God's perfect will, **but we should never base God's love for us on our circumstances or even on our sins; we should always base His love for us on the Cross!**

The fact that He sent His Son to die for us proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that He loves us unconditionally because He did that when we were His enemies! What Jesus went through on the Cross for us was the perfect expression of God's love! So never let yourself doubt that God loves you because you might be having some difficulties... Nothing can separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus (See Romans 8:35-39)! Never forget that!

Until next month... Maranatha!

Victoriously,

