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## VOLUME 79 JUNE 2013 FAITH IN HIS LOVE

Greetings in the name of our faithful and loving Heavenly Father- Adonai!

We pray that every one of you is walking in the experiential knowledge of His great and incredible love!

Friends, I consider understanding and experiencing God's wonderful love for us to be *the* single greatest revelation that we could ever receive. Now I understand that this is a strong statement to say that it is *the* greatest truth we could come to know but allow me for the next couple of minutes to explain why I whole-heartedly believe this to be so...

The reason I can say this is because knowing in our hearts God's great love for us is the key to unlocking many of the other virtues that we also know to be important. Perhaps the most important of these is the ability to fulfill the Great Commandment. Let me explain...

You see, through understanding that God loves us, we will be propelled into fulfilling the Great Commandment which is to love the Lord our God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength. How does this work, you ask? Well, when we realize that God is love and the truth of how much He loves us abides in our heart, it will produce more of a love for Him in return. On top of that, knowing His love for us will not only produce more of a love for Him, but it will also produce more of a love for others- thus fulfilling the second Great Commandment, which is to love our neighbor as ourselves. The reason this occurs is because as His love floods our hearts, it overflows into the lives around us.

### LOVE BEGETS LOVE

You see, you cannot give away what you have not first received, and this is especially true when it comes to love. If you have not first received love, then you will have no love to give- not to God, nor to God's children. You must be filled with His love in order to effectively pour love out on others. It is that simple.

There are a couple of Scriptures that verify this ... First of all, we are told in 1 John 4:19 that "we love because He first loved us"... What this verse is saying is that what enables us to love is when we are loved first. In other words, we can love (God and our neighbor) because (or, when we know) He first loved us." That, my friends, is a powerful truth!

Jesus made a similar point in John chapter 13 when He said that He was instituting a new commandment- that we love one another as He has loved us (vs.34). Again, we see our ability to love one another tied to how He first has loved us. Jesus was telling His disciples that they were to use His example of how He loved them in how they were to love one another. But, again, what if they never had experienced that love? Then they would have only been able to emulate what they had experienced and, therefore, would have only been able to love to the extent that they had received love from maybe their friends or family. And so many do this today...

Many followers of Christ had unloving parents. Some were abused. Others were simply never told by their parents that they loved them. And there are many other negative experiences that I could mention here, but the point is that these usually carry into their relationship with God in their own experiences. This is why we must first experience how Jesus has loved us.

So how do we do this? We do this by receiving His love by faith- simply believing that He loves us unconditionally based on the fact that the Bible tells us so. When we choose to adopt the attitude that- “God, I choose to believe that you love me. My parents might not have told me or showed me love. But I choose to believe that what you feel towards me is real and true whether I feel it or can relate to it or not”- this is when we are on our way to experiencing more of His love. In other words, when we make that heart adjustment to choose to believe it, we have taken the first step to experiencing His love in our life.

It is when we approach the love of God in unbelief that we are further away from experiencing His love than ever. For instance, if we have the mentality that- “Yeah, well I know that the Bible says that God loves me, but I just can’t relate to that. My momma this... My daddy that...” (and on and on they go)- that Christian is not creating an environment conducive to experiencing His love. No, first you must believe it by faith and then the feelings will follow. In fact, it works this way in everything pertaining to God’s kingdom. We believe it before we see it and then we eventually see it.

This is why I believe understanding God’s love for us is so important. It is because it empowers us to love God and to love others! On top of that, through being enamored by God’s love for us, many of the cares and concerns that we have become insignificant in the light of His love. So hearing this, who out there wants more of a revelation of how much God loves you? I sure do!

### **KNOWING GOD’S LOVE**

The problem that comes with this particular truth is that many believers think they already know this... For instance, you can tell some Christians that God loves them and the response you will get is- “Yeah, I already know that.” When I hear this, I want to respond- “Do you now? Then how come you are not smiling? How come you have no joy? How come you are not enjoying life?” Friends, if you knew in your heart that God loves you like you have the opportunity to, you would be consistently full of joy, peace, and faith. But the truth is that most born again, Spirit-filled believers do not truly *know* God loves them much at all. How can I say that? Again, look at their fruit! There is a lack of the fruit of the Spirit in their life, which is essentially the fruit of love- joy, peace, faith, etc.

What these Christians mean when they say that they know God loves them is that they have just mentally assented to this truth. In other words, they have the head knowledge of Scriptures that say that God loves us, but the truths of those Scriptures have not truly impacted their hearts. And this is what I am talking about- knowing something in your heart! This is when it impacts you- not when it is just known in our head, but when it is known and believed in our heart...

1 John 4:16 describes what I am talking about here because it refers to knowing and believing the love God has for us...

Notice, first of all, how the Apostle John says that we are to know the love God has for us. Friends, as I just mentioned, this is not just knowing something in our heads. This word for “known” here describes knowing something experientially and intimately. We need to know God’s love for us from this level. But notice that he did not stop there. He also said that we are to believe the love God has for us... Next to the “knowing” of God’s love, this is a huge issue in the body of Christ. People do not truly believe that God loves them. Again, they might say they believe that He loves them, but look at their fruit. There is a big difference between believing that He loves us in our head and believing that He loves us in our heart. Faith of the heart produces a change in our life. This is the place we all need to desire to get to concerning the love of God- knowing it and believing it in our heart.

But this is just human nature to think we “know” something because we have gathered the knowledge of that truth in our intellect. In fact, you will hear people moan and groan when you tell them to turn to a particular Scripture that they have heard many messages about. Why? It is because they think they understand all there is to know in that verse and because they want to hear something new and exciting. But if we ever get to the point where we are not excited or at least anticipating something from what we maybe have heard before, then that is proof positive that we do not really “know” that Scripture the way the Bible speaks of knowing something.

Have you ever noticed that when a particular subject or truth is alive to you- that is, it has impacted your heart to where you have seen its light- that you get excited when you are about to hear another message on it? And why is that? It is because when you have come to truly know a truth, you do not want to hear it less; you want to hear it more!

So if your response was- “Aw man! I don’t want to hear such a simple message of God’s love for me! I already know He loves me!”- then you are exactly the person who needs to read this. You need to open your heart and let the revelation come so that you too can become excited and full of joy at the wonder of God’s love.

So let’s conclude this month’s Living Logos by looking at a nugget of truth concerning God’s love that I believe to be one of the most important for us to understand...

### **THE MANIFESTATION OF GOD’S LOVE**

Back in 1 John 4:9 we are told- “In this the love of God was manifested towards us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.”

In this verse, John says that this example of God sending His only begotten Son into the world is the actual manifestation of God’s love for us. In other words, the giving of Jesus is how God has purposed to manifest His love for us. Now it is important for us to get this, so I’ll say it again: It was in the giving of Jesus- from the manger to the Cross- that God has manifested His love towards us, period and has, therefore, proven to us that He loves us. The reason this is important for us to understand is because what so many Christians want is other manifestations of His love for them- like financial, emotional, or physical provision. However, this is not the primary way that God has chosen to manifest His love. Sure, He has promised to provide for us and heal our bodies, etc. but these are not meant to be *the* manifestation of His love that we look to- the Cross is! In other words,

the only evidence of His love that we should need is the giving of God's only begotten Son. Again, this is how God chose to manifest how much He loves us.

Another reason why I feel this is important for us to realize is because the devil likes to tempt us to doubt God's love for us when our circumstances are not favorable. And too many believers bite the bait by basing God's love for them on the situations and circumstances that occur in their lives. For instance, if a tragedy or disaster occurs in certain Christian's lives, they begin to question whether God really loves them or not. But what they need to understand is that our circumstances are not in any way a reflection of God's love for us!

The Apostle Paul dealt with this issue in Romans chapter 8 when he asked the questions- "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?"

Why did he make reference to Christ's love in the midst of all of these hardships? It is because life's difficulties oftentimes tempt one to question whether God really loves them! How many times have we heard- when someone has suffered a tragedy or something that they needed did not come to pass in their life- that they do not feel God loves them? This is one of the greatest devices Satan uses in our hardships... He brings into question God's love. This should not be so. But the reason why he has been so effective with this is because there is a misconception about God in general...

### **SOVEREIGN LOVE**

You see, the main reason that most Christians doubt God's love for them is because they believe wrong. They believe God is in control of everything that happens on the earth, and this is simply untrue. They say things like- "If God really loved me, He would have stopped this from happening." But what they need to understand is that God has bound Himself to His Word. Therefore, He cannot just stop things from happening. He can only intervene if He has a man or woman who invites Him to intervene through their faith and prayers-whether that is the person who needs the intervention or an outside intercessor.

But the truth is that God has already done His part to show us how much He loves us- and He did that through the Cross. He provided everything for us that pertains to life and godliness through Jesus and now the ball is in our court. The Father sent Jesus to the earth as a man so that He could regain what we lost in the Fall. Then Jesus, in all of His perfection and righteousness, gave all of it up on the Cross so that we could be perfectly redeemed. Then, after He was raised from the dead on the third day, He delegated that authority that He had rightfully regained over to us. Praise Jesus!

So now we have the keys to the kingdom! We have the authority! And God is not sitting up in heaven deciding to intervene whenever He so desires. He has, in all of His sovereignty, limited Himself to His plan for the earth- which is the giving of the earth to the sons of men.

But it is because so many fail to understand this very important truth that so many Christians blame God for the problems in their life and, therefore, question His love for them. But again, God is not

failing to manifest His love for us during the hardships of life; He has already manifested His love for us through the giving of His only begotten Son. The cross was God's perfect expression of love!

You know, God has already done everything that He ever needs to do to prove that He loves us through Jesus! This is something that every Christian needs to hear and understand! I have dealt with a number of Christians during my walk that have been 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 had 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 for our lives, 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. He need do nothing more to prove to us that He loves us than the Cross of Christ! If this was all that He ever did for us, we should still be fully persuaded that He loves us. Never forget that!

### HOW MUCH MORE?

But the awesome truth that I want to piggyback this message with is that the giving of Jesus is not all that the Lord does for us through His love! The truth is that **if He loved us enough to give us Jesus; He loves us enough to freely give us all things!**

In Romans 8:32, the Apostle Paul makes this very elementary yet profound point... In it, he says that if God did not spare His only Son, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things!?! You see, this is a truth that is just plain common sense... If God gave us His very best- manifesting His love for us through the giving of His only begotten Son- then how will He not give us all things that are much less costly and precious? For one to believe that He won't say provide them with the finances to pay their bills when He already paid the price of putting Jesus on the Cross is absolutely ridiculous! And I will add this: It is actually downright insulting to God for us to think this way.

But this leads me to what I want to conclude this edition of the Living Logos with. We actually have an example of what I have been referring to this month in the story of Abraham's offering up of Isaac...

In Genesis chapter 22, we see how Abraham was told by the Lord to offer his son- his only begotten son, Isaac- as a sacrifice to Him. And in verse 12, the Lord said something so powerful that echoes this month's message...

When Abraham had Isaac on that altar and was just about to offer him up to the Lord, we are told how the Angel of the Lord (many believe this to be Jesus) called to him from heaven and said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; (Now get this part...) for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son from Me." This is such a powerful truth!

You see, what the Lord was saying here was that this proved to the Lord that Abraham feared Him (i.e. that he revered Him and was completely sold out to Him) because he was willing to sacrifice his one and only son to Him. **So just as it was said that the Lord knew that Abraham feared God because He did not withhold His son, His only son, from Him, likewise we should know that God loves us since He did not withhold His Son, His only begotten Son, from us!** In other words, we should know beyond a shadow of a doubt that God loves us and will provide us with everything we need- spirit, soul, and body- simply because He gave us Jesus! Hallelujah! That is good stuff right there!

So, in conclusion, what the Holy Spirit wants us to understand is that the giving of Jesus is God's manifestation of love. We need look no further than Jesus to know and believe that He loves us unconditionally. We need not base God's love for us on our circumstances. Just as we should not be moved by what we see, hear, or feel but only by what we believe- likewise, we should not let ourselves be moved off our faith in God's love by what we see, hear, or feel. We must simply believe He loves us because the Bible tells us so! Just like this simple childlike faith in the rest of God's promises is what brings their manifestation to pass in our life, faith in His love is what yields a greater manifestation of that love in our lives. First by faith, and then followed by feelings!

Till next month... Maranatha!

Victoriously,

