



Cross Currents International Ministries

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Love:

Inclusive Love

"breadth, and length,"

Ephesians 3: 18.

by Richard A. Bennett

Dear Prayer Supporter,

Please prayerfully read and share "*Inclusive Love Part 1*," the second article of the series "*The Love of God*,"

We rejoice to share this report from TWR: "There is an incredible impact through PANI's 500,000 transmitter power which has dramatically expanded outreach 20 fold more than when we

transmitted into this same area on Short Wave radio. The station reports have been quite remarkable."

Only through your gifts and prayers is it possible to continue to be part of this overwhelming response.

Together in His Name,

CCIM ministering God's love through pioneer broadcasts in Pakistan, Afghanistan & N. India!

This month, we happily share the first year CCIM's report of our PANI (Pakistan, Afghanistan and Northern India) broadcasts:



"Without reservation the stories we have heard since the powerful PANI transmitter went live, make it well worth CCIM continuing into a second year of "*Your Quest for God*" **Punjabi broadcasts.**

These broadcasts, paid for by CCIM, to peoples who have never seen a church or met a Christian, strategically reach millions of people in this region, particularly in rural areas where radio waves reach into whole villages.

This is a pioneer ministry as these precious peoples have no understanding who Jesus Christ is and what it means to follow Him.

Thank you for your vital part, by gifts and prayers, in reaching deeply religious and earnest seekers after God.

What a privilege to share the love of God this way!

Tax deductible gifts processed through CCIM—PO Box 1058, Lynden, WA 98264—www.ccim-media.com

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The Love of God

1. Incomprehensible Love
2. Inclusive Love - Part I
“breadth, and length”
3. Inclusive Love - Part II
“depth, and height”

A personal heart-warming experience of the love of God is totally incomprehensible! I once heard ‘love’ defined: “Love is a feeling, you feel you are going to feel, when you feel you have a feeling, you feel you never felt before.” That may be a definition of emotion which waxes and wanes according to circumstances, but it is the antithesis of true love. When a husband says to his wife, “I don’t love you anymore,” what he is really saying is, “I never truly loved you because I really love myself.”

When introduced to God’s astonishing love, as expressed to every person in every generation, it is so overwhelming that, to comprehend its significance, we need to be strengthened in our inner man. *“That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ . . .”* Ephesians 3:16-19. This love is not produced by a toe-tapping, hand-waving, knee-slapping emotive meeting that turns people on but does not turn them around. Only the illumination and the strengthening of the Holy Spirit can produce a comprehension of God’s love: “Spirit of God, my Teacher be, revealing the love of Christ to me.”

LENGTH - His historic love! In the Garden of Eden, God loved Adam as He communed with him in the cool of the day. This wonderful fellowship, which existed in the presence of Eternal Light and resplendent Glory, was severed when Adam sinned. However, though both Adam and Eve were stripped of the glory of God and became shamefully conscious of their nakedness, God continued to demonstrate His

love. So how did God demonstrate His love to Adam even after he sinned and plunged all his forbears into disaster and death?

“The Lord God made coats of skins, and clothed them” Genesis 3:21. To acquire a coat of skin required the slaying of an animal. This, of course, meant the shedding of blood. In the fullness of time, the invisible God stepped out of eternity and into time to become visible in the person of God the Son. This was no emergency measure to meet an unexpected crisis. We read, Jesus was *“the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world”* Revelation 13:8. *“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world”* John 1:29. When the Lord Jesus shed His *“precious blood,”* (1 Peter 1:19), His sacrifice was sufficient for everybody but it is only efficient for those who believe in Him. Just as Adam and Eve were then clothed, so wonder of wonders, the Blood-washed believer is clothed with the righteousness of God!

Father and Son - King David was the father; Absalom was his much loved son. Tragically, his son despised his father’s love and incited an insurrection in an effort to dethrone his father and enthrone himself. This followed the pattern of Satan’s ambition who said: *“I will exalt myself . . . and I will be like the Most High [God]”* Isaiah 14:13,14. Likewise, in Satan’s ambition to enthrone himself, he incited the crowds to cry, *“Crucify Him, crucify Him.”* Little did he realize that this act would result in the Blood of the Lord Jesus being shed. It was this precious Blood that spelled Satan’s own defeat. Never minimize sin, never magnify it so that it becomes too big for God to handle. *“Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain”* Psalm 76:10.

In similar fashion, when the heartbreaking news of Absalom's death reached the ears of King David, he sobbed, "*Oh my son, my son, my son Absalom! Would to God that I had died for thee. Oh Absalom, my son, my son!*" 2 Samuel 18:33. Though David could not die for the sin of Absalom, the Lord Jesus, in fact, did die for your sin and mine. Today we can rejoice in the 'finished work' of Christ for our salvation. There is nothing we can add, and there is nothing we can do to nullify the finished work of Christ. His last cry from the cross was, "***It is finished***" John 19:30. To this very day, the Lord Jesus still pleads with men and women, boys and girls: "*Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*" Matthew 11:28.

BREADTH - His geographic love! "*For God so loved the world ...*" John 3:16. Yes, the love of God embraces every person on every continent in every country and in every home. Staggering!

During the dark days of Apartheid in South Africa, the authorities commandeered Robben Island, just off the coast of Cape Town, as an inhospitable prison. Constrained by the love of Christ, Christians received permission from the authorities to visit this Island and distribute small copies of the New Testament among the prisoners. However, the thinness and the size of the New Testament paper was utilized by many prisoners to tear out, roll tobacco, and make cigarettes. When smoked, the cigarette stubs were scattered around the prison compound.

One day, idle curiosity caused a prisoner to pick up a cigarette stub and read on the paper: "*For God so loved the world.*" "Whoever could love such a rotten world as this?" he mused. As time passed, he reflected, "If there is such a God as this, then I want to know Him." In the providence of God, he met another visitor to the prison who explained the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to him. He gladly repented and received Christ as his personal Savior! Does the distribution of Bibles and missionary literature really count? Yes, a thousand times, yes! In whatever remote part of the world people may be, God's love still reaches them through His Word!

On my first journey to America, I was able to acquire a berth in the hold of a Greek cargo vessel. It was an up and down experience! On that ship, I purposed to witness to the other three men in my cabin and to all the people seated at my assigned eating table. God must have had a special interest in a man who happened to be in my cabin and also at my table. When talking with him on the rolling windswept deck in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, he told me how he had left his Christian fiancé and his godly parents in Scotland without telling them he was leaving home until the very day he sailed. "I've left God and my Christian family behind me," he said. "Now I am headed for a new life in Canada." The Psalmist wrote, "*If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me.*" Psalm 139:9-10. And so it was with this runaway prodigal as we prayed together on the storm-tossed deck.

As a hound follows a hare, so the love of God pursues a fleeing soul. In his day, Francis Thompson was also on the 'run away' from God. He was hopelessly addicted to a cocaine habit. After being gloriously converted to Christ, he penned a classic poem titled, *The Hound of Heaven*. "For though I knew the love of Him who followed, yet was I sore adread, lest having Him I might have naught beside." Weary of running from God, he continued, "Me halts me by the footfall, is my gloom after all, love of His hand outstretched caressingly?" Then, in his picturesque way, Thompson described the voice of a loving God: "O fondest; blindest; weakest, I am He whom thou seekest, thou drawest love from Me who drawest thee." This is very true today. The inclusive love of God still reaches out to hurting and needy people around the world. "*The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few . . .*" Luke 10:2.

Spiritual Check-up

* In these last days, will I become His devoted laborer in God's harvest field?

* Although His sacrifice was *sufficient* for everybody but it is only *efficient* for those who believe in Him, how does this effect my response to Him?