



*Cross Currents
International Ministries*

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Love:

Incomparable

"... but the greatest of these is love."

1 Corinthians 13: 13

by Richard A. Bennett

Dear Prayer Supporter,

"And now abideth faith, hope and love, but the greatest of these is love. Follow after love." This month, "**Love incomparable**" will bless your heart as you read the fifth chapter of "**The Love of God.**" To "*Follow after love,*" involves reaching the loveless, the hopeless and even the merciless by the power of His resurrection and love.

Following the bloody raid last year in Lamu, Kenya, where 60 Christians were killed by terrorists upon confession of their faith, still today, precious lives are being saved through our broadcasts! Thank you for your gifts as we minister in such persecuted regions.

In His Love,

God's love extended through CCIM by radio broadcasts in Kenya's turbulent regions.

Pray for me, I would like to encounter the real God."

"We are always excited to get feedback from our listeners about the *Dorothy Daily Devotional* programs and have been receiving 'texts,' many times anonymous from listeners in the **Coastal Regions,**" wrote TWR/Kenya.

"Listeners have been asking for more information about salvation or to be led into the sinner's prayers. We reply either by text or email. They do not want to be heard or known by their friends and family. Your program reaches out to those who need to hear the gospel in those areas."

Listeners from LAMU, the Coastal Region of Kenya:

"Praise God! I am glad to be a listener of your devotional program, both Dorothy's in English and Swahili, I began listening on Kenya Broadcasting Corporation and I have now switched to FM. I thank God for "*Dorothy's Daily Devotional!* **It has been a source of encouragement for my family and I during these very tough times.**"

Lamu - "I am encouraged by your program. I thank all those who, whenever I call or text I am always responded to. Please pray for my sick mum as she is not well."

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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
4. Insightful Love
5. Incomparable Love
6. Incontestable Love
7. Inductive Love
8. Influential Love

Love Incomparable: “And now abideth faith, hope and love, but the greatest of these is love. Follow after love” 1 Corinthians 13:13 and 14:1.

In addressing the church at Ephesus, the glorified Christ said: “Thou hast left thy first love” Revelation 2:4. In spite of this, they still defended their faith against the influence of the Nicolaitans who, though they professed to be Christians, lived in a licentious manner. The Lord said “Thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate” Revelation 2:6.

He also said: “I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience” verse 2. They were a busy, busy church. So, having left their first love, what was missing? The structure of the Church continued but the essential core of faith, hope and love was absent.

To the church at Thessalonica, Paul wrote, “Remembering without ceasing your work of **faith**, your labor of **love**, and your patience of **hope**” 1 Thessalonians 1:3.

The church at Ephesus had lost their first love; they worked without faith, they labored without love, and they had patience without hope. And so, the propulsion of the Holy Spirit’s activity waned. Work without faith is fruitless: “For without faith it is impossible to please God” Hebrews 11:6. Labor without love is unrewarding – day after day, the same old thing! Patience without hope is frustrating: “Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh

not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, which is given unto us” Romans 5:3-5. Are you ashamed to own your Lord or to defend His cause in your secular environment?

Deflection of a believer to the world is not necessarily a sudden blow-out, it is often a slow leak. Let us all beware of close friendships that dampen our love and loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ.

A devastating avalanche in the Swiss Alps was not triggered by an earthquake. Papers reported that as the sun shed its warm rays on the snow, the force of adhesion was gradually overcome by the force of gravity. The consequences were devastating. Many people at the bottom of the mountain were killed.

And deflection from a labor of love to the fascination of the world is a problem many Christians face. In sadness of heart, the Apostle Paul wrote, “Demas hath forsaken me having loved this present world” 2 Timothy 4:10.

What is the “present world” that deflects us from the love of God? “All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh; the lust of the eyes and the pride of life” 1 John 2:16: “**Flesh**,” means pleasure without responsibility; “**Eyes**,” means possessions without responsibility; “**Pride**,” means position without responsibility. If you took these lust patterns away from television advertising you would not have much left!

Before train engines were propelled by diesel or electricity, steam was the propelling power. In the

engine room, a driver whose face was black with coal dust, would stoke the boiler fire to maintain the pressure of steam. If the fire went out, the train would continue to roll down the tracks by momentum, but there was no more propulsion. So gradually the train would grind to a halt.

With the demise of the dynamic propulsion of the Holy Spirit in the Church, zealous Christians try to fill the gap. It is the Holy Spirit who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment to come. (John 16:8). Building programs; professional money raisers, and administrative 'know-how' are no substitute for the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Platform personalities and performance can never replace the priority of preaching God's Word and prayer!

Never think defensively. After Hitler opened his second front in North Africa – as part of his agenda to get to the oil rich nations of the Middle East and to liquidate the Jewish presence – Montgomery's troops were in full retreat before the overwhelming odds of Rommel's Panzer Division. It was then that Churchill telegraphed Montgomery: "In your headquarters, you are never to think defensively. You must always plan for attack." And so he did, as he employed a pincer operation to route the enemy.

Today, the language of attack is seldom heard in the church; we are more interested in survival than we are in revival!

The Lord Jesus said: "*Because thou art lukewarm . . . I will spue thee out of my mouth*" Revelation 3:16. I am reminded that before I was called into the ministry, one of my tasks in developing a plan for the renovation of the city, was to survey the area and discover the land use. In so doing, I sadly observed that many churches, built at the sacrificial expense of loving believers in the previous century, had been converted into garages, roller skating rinks and office blocks. The Baptist church that commissioned William Carey, the pioneer missionary to India, is now a Muslim mosque.

In this era of increasing deception in the church, which has resulted in the intrusion of worldly cares at worship time and the pining for worldly pleasures,

militant anti-god forces have invaded the land. Regardless of personal consequence, let us engage in spiritual attack instead of compromising defense. Boldly, "*Speak the truth in love*" Ephesians 4:15.

Praise the Lord! When Christians, who have lost their first love, radically repent, God will open a door to personal restoration with resultant church blessing.

"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" Galatians 6:14.

Living in the days of mighty revival in England, which saved England from the revolution that was currently taking place in France, John Wesley described the engulfing flow of God's love among the people as "a baptism of love." May that be true today!

O Breath of Love, come, breathe within us,
Renewing thought and will and heart:
Come love of Christ, afresh to win us,
Revive Thy church in every part.

O Breath of Life, come sweeping through us,
Revive Thy church with life and power.
O Breath of Life, come, cleanse renew us,
And fit Thy church to meet this hour.

O Wind of God, come, bend us, break us,
'Til humbly we confess our need;
Then in Thy tenderness, remake us,
Revive, restore; for this we plead.

Revive us, Lord! Is zeal abating
While harvest fields are vast and white?
Revive us, Lord, the world is waiting,
Equip Thy church to spread the light.

~ Bessie Porter Head

Spiritual Check-Up

- * Was there ever a time in my life when I loved the Lord Jesus more than I do today?
- * Do I plan for personal security, or do I engage in spiritual attack by, "*the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God*"? Ephesians 6:17.