



Walking **With Jesus** Ministries

AND THE GREATEST OF THESE IS LOVE



**THE CENTRAL FOCUS OF THE
TEACHING OF JESUS**

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AND THE GREATEST OF THESE IS – LOVE

What is at the heart of the end time, kingdom church?

The answer is actually very simple in principle, if not so simple to activate! For the answer is found in one word - **LOVE**.....

¹³So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love. (1 Corinthians 13:13)

But what is love?

1. LOVE IS THE CHARACTER OF GOD

A good number of years ago now, I was in India, and asked to speak to a woman's group on marriage! I tried 'running a mile' but that didn't work! Even though I had been married 35 years at the time, I certainly didn't feel competent to speak on the subject! LOL!

If all else fails, you have to rely on God! 'Please help me Lord', I pleaded.

And He did.

Of course, the normal starting point when you think of 'love is 1 Corinthians 13. And He took me there. But with a twist!

'David, I want you to show them my character, my character of love. Change the word love for my name, and you will have a picture of the ultimate marriage - of Jesus and the church.'

'But surely Lord, that is changing scripture.....'

'Just do it!'

'Yes, Lord.'

So here it is. I just hope you find it as meaningful to you as it has been to me. Verses 1-3 speak of us, the remainder, of God.

*If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not **God**, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not **God**, I am nothing. 3 If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not **God**, I gain nothing. 4 **God** is patient, **God** is kind. **He** does not envy, **He** does not boast, **He** is not proud. 5 **He** is not rude, **He** is not self-seeking, **He** is not easily angered, **He** keeps no record of wrongs. 6 **God** does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 **He** always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. 8 **God** never fails. (1 Corinthians 13:1-8a)*

How is your heavenly marriage today?

PS: The ladies were blessed. Pheeeeeeeeeeeeeew!!!

'Thank you Lord.'

Without God's love we would not be able to enter into a relationship with Him. In, probably, the best known and 'loved' verse in the Bible.....

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)

.....God's ultimate character of love is displayed. This confirmed in.....

but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for

us. (Romans 5:8)

....as well as many other places, expressed and implied, in both Testaments. Check it out in your concordance or through 'Mr Google'!

2. WE ARE COMMANDED TO LOVE GOD IN RETURN

There are many verses that reflect this. Here are a few, from both the old and the new covenants. From the Old Testament.....

Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations, (Deuteronomy 7:9)

I love those who love me, and those who seek me diligently find me. (Proverbs 8:17)

.....and the New.

Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. (1 John 4:8)

God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. (1 John 4:16b)

As we love God, so we develop the fruit of the Spirit.....

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

This is all pretty standard Christian teaching, although often not observed in our behaviour. Therein lays crux of the matter!

3. THE ATTITUDE OF THE DENOMINATIONAL CHURCH

The reality is, the current denominational church system is based upon theology. Differences between churches are found in their belief systems. New denominations arise through either a new revelation from God or, more often, from differences in what people believe to be the truth. Unfortunately there are 30,000+ different versions of what is right!

Christianity then, is defined by what people believe rather than what they do. This is the primary reason why it is so difficult to attract Jews and Middle Eastern people in general, to the church, for their value system for their value system is based upon actions rather than words.

If then we are to have a unified church, the bride of Christ for whom Jesus is to return.....

6 Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. 7 Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. 8 Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God's holy people.)

.....it is clear that the church has to be built upon *righteous acts*, rather than 'right theology'!

This is the challenge for the church today.

4. WE ARE ALSO COMMANDED TO LOVE OTHERS

As we love God, so we are commanded to love others.....

10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11 Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. (1 John 4:10-12)

WOW! God is made complete in us through love! To become Jesus-like, to become the holy and righteous bride for whom Jesus is returning.....

6 Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. 7 Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. 8 Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God's holy people.) 9 Then the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!" And he added, "These are the true words of God. (Revelation 19:6-9)

..... we have to reflect the love of God and others the Jesus reflected in His life on earth! No ifs, no buts! If we desire to be part of the bride, we..... **MUST LIVE A LIFE OF LOVE.**

5. CAN WE BECOME 'LOVE'LY BY OURSELVES?

There are a few people, particularly ladies, who have an inborn nature of showing an apparent godly like love to others. We can often regard these ones within the church as 'natural Christians', but their love may really come from their nature, their personality, rather than from God. For they are able to be loving to others out of their own strength, rather than God's.

The rest of us can try emulating them as much as we like, but no matter how much we try in our human strength, it just doesn't work on an ongoing basis. We get frustrated, particularly when those we are trying to love reject us!

It leaves us disappointed both with them and with ourselves, for we feel failures. Know the feeling?

There has to be an answer for, as we have seen, love is to be the very centre of our 'walk with Jesus'.....

*29 The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' 31 The second is this: '**Love your neighbor as yourself.**' There is no commandment greater than these."* (Mark 12:29-31)

"Oh Lord, this is so hard! I give up!" Know the feeling?

**FOR THE SOURCE OF OUR LOVE CANNOT COME FROM WITHIN,
BUT MUST COME FROM THE HEART OF GOD LIVING WITHIN US.**

Human strength..... beating ourselves up when we fail..... simply fails!

6. GOOD WORKS AND LOVE ARE NOT NECESSARILY THE SAME

Interestingly, most Christians would say they are exhibiting love when they are doing good works. But is this really the case?

There are many possible motivations in doing good works. Earning brownie points with the pastor and people. Earning your ticket to heaven through good works. Helping the community. Completing a programme. Obligation. And many more.

Sadly, in spite of our good intentions, these motivations do not necessarily reflect true Christian love. For true Godly love comes from a heart of obedience to the Father's will.

John, the disciple who was closest to Jesus understood this principle well and expresses it most succinctly.....

6 And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love. (2 John 1:6)

and again.....

15 "If you love me, keep my commands. (John 14:15)

followed by.....

12 My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. (John 15:12)

and more.....

20 On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. 21 Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.” (John 14:20-21)

As an aside, the book of John, of the four Gospels, has been primarily written for the believer. If we truly want to find the Father heart of God, it does well to absorb John's Gospel into the very core of our being.

Jesus was love personified. Both for His Father, and for us. This was ultimately expressed in the cross.

From John again.....

Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. (John 15:13)

My friend, love is ultimately expressed in obedience to the Father. Obedience comes from listening to the Holy Spirit's voice - and putting what He tells us into action! As we love God more, we hear His voice better, and He will show us how He wants us to express His love to others.

It may well be in unexpected ways, quite likely outside our comfort zone!

One way the Lord uses me is to visit seriously sick people, in particular those with cancer. Not all the time but the ones He chooses for me. This is way outside my comfort zone, not naturally being an empathetic sort! Ask my wife Kathy! LOL! But as I visit these ones more, He blesses them while also changing me - slowly - more into the image of my precious Jesus.

The Father does not want to wear us out continually attending meetings, fulfilling programmes and chasing good works. He wants us to spend time with Him, then He, will guide us into the expressions of love He desires us to show to our neighbour.

It is amazing, once we remove stress and misplaced obligation from our loves, true love will more and more be reflected in both our personality and our actions.

7. LOVE MUST CHANGE US

One of the big differences between Jewish (and other Middle Eastern) and Western cultures is the separation of what we say from what we do. Both Jews and Muslims look at the 'Western Christianity' and will conclude that we 'do not practice what we preach'. We talk about salvation, make mental assent by saying the (unbiblical) 'Sinners Prayer', and then go on living the same way as before and expect to live forever in perfect peace and happiness for eternity! Too good to be true? Yes! It isn't true, and most crusade 'converts' (round 95% it is believed) are not gracing a church 5 years later.

Eastern people's belief system is integrated into their lifestyle. It is the way of Jesus, for that is the understanding in which He taught and ministered.

Without being theological, put simply, God is love, Jesus is love in the image of His Father, and we are to be love, in the image of Jesus.

God made a covenant of love with His people, Israel.....

*He said: "Lord, the God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven or on earth—you who keep your covenant of love with your servants **who continue wholeheartedly in your way.** (2 Chronicles 6:14)*

Ooops! As the highlighted words (mine) say, there is a condition of the covenant - we must love wholeheartedly, in order to receive god's love!

But that is Old Testament, David! Well..... no actually.....

Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. (1 John 4:8)

It is clear. If we do not live a life of love, we are not real followers of Jesus.

It is hard word, a harsh reality, but it is the truth.

Until we develop genuine hearts of God (not human effort generated) love we will not be able to effectively witness to Jews and Muslims, for to them, as well as to others, 'actions speak louder than words'.

Something to think about - and seek the heart of God for?

8. LOVE CHANGES THOSE WE LOVE

Jesus, in the Garden of Gethsemane, just before He was arrested, prayed to His Father for all believers - including you and me.....

*20 "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, 21 that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— 23 I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. **Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.** (John 17:20-23)*

Paul expressed a similar sentiment.....

Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law. (Romans 13:8)

Love is the distinguishing characteristic of the kingdom age. This is again confirmed by Paul in the conclusion of the 'much loved', love Chapter in Corinthians.....

13 And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love. (1 Corinthians 13:13)

We have the HOPE of the salvation of Jesus, the FAITH generated by the HOLY SPIRIT working in us, culminating in LOVE, both of God and of others. In a church sense we move from the TRADITIONAL/EVANGELICAL, centered upon Jesus, to the PENTECOSTAL/CHARISMATIC streams, adding the anointing to the Holy Spirit, to the greatest and final KINGDOM church, based upon love, love of the Father expressed through obedience, and love of others.

Loving God is not enough! We must love others also.

Others lives will be changed through God's love being expressed through us.

Jesus set the example to us in His kingdom parable of the love - or lack of it -shown to the man who was robbed and left on the side of the road. The religious people passed by on the other side of the road. The 'good Samaritan', considered a lower class person by the Jews, tended to the man's needs.

Who would have had the most influence in the robbed man's life? The religious people who looked down their noses at him, or the Samaritan who attended to his needs? The answer is obvious.

To the religious man Jesus said.....

Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise." (Luke 10:37b)

May we be obedient to the command of Jesus. It truly works!

9. LOVE IS THE SOURCE OF UNITY

There are now 30,000+ denominations in the world, as we mentioned earlier. We have seen over the past several hundred years since the Reformation that unity in the church will never be achieved through the denominational system.

Yet Jesus is returning for a single, a united, pure and holy bride.

7 Let us rejoice and shout for joy [exulting and triumphant]! Let us celebrate and ascribe to Him glory and honor, for the marriage of the Lamb [at last] has come, and His bride has prepared herself. 8 She has been permitted to dress in fine (radiant) linen, dazzling and white—for the fine linen is (signifies, represents) the righteousness (the upright, just, and godly living, deeds, and conduct, and right standing with God) of the saints (God's holy people). (Revelation 19:7-8)

I would suggest to you, that the definition of righteousness (and holiness) here (the upright, just, and godly living, deeds, and conduct, and right standing with God) is impossible to attain to without God given love coursing through our veins.

Holiness and righteousness must be built upon the foundation of love, specifically, God given love. This is what the 'Love Chapter' of 1 Corinthians 13 is all about. We can have human love, caring for the poor and needy, doing good works in human strength.....

3 Even if I dole out all that I have [to the poor in providing] food, and if I surrender my body to be burned or in order that I may glory, but have not love (God's love in me), I gain nothing. (1 Corinthians 13:3 AMP)

..... but fail to see God.

All that endures is God given love.....

8 Love never fails [never fades out or becomes obsolete or comes to an end]. As for prophecy (the gift of interpreting the divine will and purpose), it will be fulfilled and pass away; as for tongues, they will be destroyed and cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away [it will lose its value and be superseded by truth]. 9 For our knowledge is fragmentary (incomplete and imperfect), and our prophecy (our teaching) is fragmentary (incomplete and imperfect). (1 Corinthians 13:8-9)

We can have faith, we can have hope, both of which are great Christian attributes, but the greatest God given gift is love.....

13 And so faith, hope, love abide [faith—conviction and belief respecting man's relation to God and divine things; hope—joyful and confident expectation of eternal salvation; love—true affection for God and man, growing out of God's love for and in us], these three; but the greatest of these is love. (1 Corinthians 13:13)

Without holiness, which must be built upon the foundation of love, no-one will see the Lord.

14 Strive to live in peace with everybody and pursue that consecration and holiness without which no one will [ever] see the Lord. (Hebrews 12:14 AMP)

Love is the foundation of the bride (singular) for whom Jesus is returning. True, spiritual unity only comes through God given love, which is reflected in righteousness and holiness in our lives.

Yes, God given love will bring unity to the bride of Jesus.

10. LOVE IS THE KEY TO THE KINGDOM

This word is from Ron McGatlin of OpenHeaven.com, so you don't think that 'only David' has these revelations of the kingdom.

Love Dissolving Limitations (The Next Move of God)

For some time now many of God's people have been expecting another great move of God. Prophets have been proclaiming it, often with an accompanying statement something like this, "A great move is coming that will bring great transformation, but we don't know what it will look like." Some have heard clearly by the Spirit that this move would not be like past moves that came like a wave and then later ebbed away. Each move seemed to drift back where it had come from. However, each wave left its mark upon the world. A fresh layer of restored truth and change was left with the people of God.

Tabernacles, the move of God that will never end, is now coming upon the earth. It is characterized by God within and among us. His presence within us and among us is pure, holy, all-consuming love beyond explanation and description. Our past life is dissolved in the fire of His love consuming us. In an instant we are changed and are fully aware that it is Christ now living in us by the Holy Spirit in this new place where we abide. Pure holy love tabernacles or abides in and with us changing everything.

Relationships change, situations change, what we could not do before now seems to do itself. God's love is power flowing into and out from us dissolving walls and limitations. Barriers and boundaries are dissolved effortlessly. Our hearts and minds are cleansed as love dissolves every need that once drove us. All strife, bitterness, fear, and any other

negative emotion or stress is dissolved in the power of His love. In the unavoidable interactions with the abrasive and tragic fallen world around us, we are strengthened to endure and come through unscathed in His love.

This move of God is completely from God inside of us. This is not a platform or pulpit move. It is a Spirit move inside the hearts of God's people that is totally changing us from within.

In the past moves, we may have thought that we were in great shape with God and even did great works displaying natural and supernatural gifts ministering powerfully to the people. However, in this new move, only after this pure, holy, all-consuming love came in and cleansed us did we realize that we had been still contaminated with stuff. When we became cleansed in His love, we sensed the absence of all need in our lives. This was the first time we saw what had been remaining in us. After the stuff that had caused strife, disorder, and weakness amongst the people left, we were able to then see that it had been there and love had washed it away.

Our hearts are melted with the realization of His perfect love for us and in us. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, we are totally washed clean by His purifying love. His pure holy love gushes into our spirits, souls, and bodies. We are captive in His love.

False or outdated established structures within our hearts and lives are dissolved instantly. Man-made structures of religious, social, and political order around us will also be eventually dissolved in this never-ending move of God's all powerful love. His pure, holy, all-consuming love is transforming His people to transform the world into the kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven. The perfect law of love fulfills all law and all prophecy. All these structures will pass away, but His love and His

kingdom will never end.

In this pure move of love, trust and faith are abundant – the heavens are truly opened as we truly experience what it means to live and walk in the Spirit. Access is opened to enter spiritual heaven and commute there and back receiving of the resources of heaven to fulfill the work of establishing God's kingdom on earth in the hearts of His people first and then into all aspects of the created world. All things are possible to the pure holy sons of God abiding in Christ and Christ in us as one.

The word and the reality of God's kingdom on earth are further opened and unveiled to us. Mysteries are revealed as our spiritual senses are fully opened to experience the reality of life in the Spirit with God continuously.

All pretension and veils are removed from our hearts and lives. We can only speak the truth in love. We can only do and say what we see and experience God doing. Our minds are at perfect peace and function with greater clarity of understanding that derives its life from the one source of the wisdom from heaven.

Brothers and sisters, we are in this world at this time in the providence of God to become a part of the great move of God that will never end – the move of His love transforming us and eventually this world to His pure, holy, kingdom of heaven on earth.

Be consumed and lose your lives now for the sake of the love of God in Christ Jesus by the Holy Spirit and the gospel of His kingdom. Truly when we seek only His kingdom, all things are added to us far beyond what we may have thought that meant in the past. As we seek His kingdom, heaven is opened to us in this season of the ushering in of this great move of God on earth that will never end. There will truly be no ebb.

*He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.
(Matthew 10:39)*

*For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My
sake and the gospel's will save it. (Mark 8:35)*

Love never fails, and His kingdom never ends.

Ron McGatlin

CONCLUSION

Through the past 10 chapters we have considered many facets of 'love'. It is impossible to do a fully comprehensive job, for the love generated by and through God encompasses all - if we allow it to!

We need to have this personal revelation and experience of God's love within us in order to live it out through our day to day lives.

Unfortunately, this is not a revelation or experience we can gain from going to church on a Sunday, or seven days a week, for that matter. For formal religion, as such, is based on theology. Our beliefs are what separate us, denomination by denomination. Rules, both formal and informal, are the glue that binds us together, into a particular church.

But the kingdom of God, both on earth and in heaven, is built on the foundation of unconditional love, unconditional love of God and unconditional love of others.

To enter the kingdom requires a personal 100% (fold) commitment to our Lord Jesus Christ. To seek, hear and obey the voice of God in all that we do. Let us again be reminded of the verse that is conveniently ignored by 95% of preachers, teachers and Christians alike.....

3 We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. 4 Whoever says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. 5 But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: 6 Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.(1 John 2:3-6)

Obedience to God's word, both written and as revealed through the Holy Spirit (not a pastor, church etc.) is the key to having God's love dwell in

us. We must emulate Jesus.

One of the greatest thrills of my life occurred one day as I was walking down the road towards town and a complete stranger stopped me and simply said, "I can see God shining out of you," before walking on. I was flabbergasted to tell the truth!

Yet as the bride is made ready for the return of Jesus.....

"Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God's holy people.) (Revelation 19:8)

..... this will become a more common experience as the robes of righteousness, the robes of God's love, shine out of His chosen bride.

Are you; am I, willing to make the sacrifice of complete commitment to our Saviour and Lord? Jesus is calling us today.