

NOTES ON LOVE

By A. A. Whitteker

This is an inexhaustible subject and too high, too deep and too broad for the finite mind to explore, but we want to make a few observations as we pass around the margin.

Love is affection, an inward desire for the good of others. It is both active and passive, we cannot confine it nor keep it neutral; it will manifest itself everywhere and will always find an object or objects upon which to pass and operate. Love is of three kinds, animal, human and divine, but we shall confine our remarks to divine love.

The origin of divine love is God himself, "For love is of God." "For God is Love." And love is reciprocal, "We love Him because He first loved us." "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him." This manifestation of God's love to us in sacrificing His only begotten Son for our sins and save us from eternal death, demands from us the greatest sacrifice that we can give: therefore we should willingly present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service: that we may do good: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

We talk of loving God, loving our brethren and loving our neighbors, but very few of us know what true divine love is. It is not in word, nor sensation, nor emotion, but by the actual performances of deeds. John said: "Let us not love in word neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." God measures our love by our deeds; by the manifestation of loving acts in every part of our daily life. And has commanded us saying: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." "This do, and thou shalt live." Therefore we should find out what it means to keep this commandment for on it depends our eternal destiny.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." The heart is the fountain of the love of God in men and women, and flows out through every avenue of our being. "Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." "And the love of Christ constraineth us." And God will have first place in our heart and in our affections. He will be our supreme ruler and have full control of our whole being. We will serve Him with a perfect, undivided heart and a willing mind, for "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." "Thou shalt worship no other god."

"And with all thy soul." "God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands." Our immortality came from God, He made us what we are, therefore our whole soul and spirit should abound with love to Him who made us living souls capable of enjoying in the realms of eternal glory.

"And with all thy strength." This is perhaps the greatest channel through which we can manifest the love of God. It is the avenue through which our love flows to God and our fellow-men. We seem to forget that our strength comes from God, that He gives us power and strength to get wealth, but we use it as though it were our own, for our own selfish purposes, never thinking of using

it for God's glory. We should use as much of our strength as possible in the service of God, in camp meetings, conventions, revivals, prayer meetings and other similar services.

God gives us power or strength to get wealth and when we love Him with all our strength we will freely give Him of that wealth for the support of His ambassadors, the expense of all kinds of revival services, the support of missionaries and all other branches of God's work. This gives us a great privilege to manifest the love of God, but when we fail in that we expose our hypocrisy. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

"And with all thy mind." The mind of man is never idle, it is always busy, and we have the power of controlling our own mind, and unless we are very watchful our mind is apt to drift into evil thoughts and vain imaginations. Paul said, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Again it is written, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee." Therefore we should keep our minds actively employed in the things that redound to the glory of God and the extension of His Kingdom, and leave all other things in the hands of God. God's order is, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these (temporal) things shall be added unto you." If we love God with all our mind the interest of His kingdom will have first place in all our thoughts, we will study and plan how best we may spread the gospel, bring sinners to Jesus and build up His kingdom in this world, and trust in Him for all our temporal needs.

"And thy neighbor as thyself." God measures our love to Him by the love which we manifest towards our fellowmen. Jesus said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." God manifested His love to us by laying down His life for us that we might live and when we have His love abiding in us we will lay down our lives for others. We will not only love those who love us but will love those who hate us and do them all the good we can. To love them who love us is only human love; but it takes divine love to love human love, for sinners also love those who love them; but it takes divine love to love "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."

This is God's test of our love to Him, and He has given it to us that we may not be deceived nor deceive ourselves, but may at any time and at all times compare our love by this standard, and know how we stand in His sight.

We wonder how many measure up to this standard of love, in this age of selfishness, when men and women have forgotten the other fellow and remember only self; self is so large that it covers their vision and they see no one else. If they should happen to see the destitute and afflicted they sympathize (?) with them and look on them in pity, but pass by on the other side.

Reader, let me leave with you the words of Jesus, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."

The man who makes the will of God his will, never has any disappointments.

ARE THE HEATHEN LOST?

Paul, by inspiration, answers this question in the first three chapters of the epistle to the Romans. Sin is committed in two directions: by doing what we ought not, and by leaving undone what we ought to do. The second is the more prevalent. No man is lost for a lack of knowledge of Christ, but every man is lost because he does not do as well as he knows. He does not act upon the light he has. "For there is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." This is true everywhere. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

The man who has heard the Gospel and rejects it, is lost because he does not do as well as he knows. "He that believeth not is condemned already because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

The man who never heard the Gospel is lost because he turns away from the light he has. "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse. Because that when they knew God they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." The writer then proceeds to tell how idolatry came on by indulgence in sin.

The great fact is that every man naturally is so taken up with carnal things that no one, if let alone by the Spirit of God, would turn to God, whether he is in Gospel light or heathen darkness. It is only as God foresees those who are vulnerable to His approach and calls them, that any one is saved anywhere. May God pity those who have Gospel light and are satisfied to leave others in darkness. Someone asked Mr. Spurgeon if he thought the heathen would be lost, and he replied: "That is not the question. The question is: Will you be lost if you, having the light, let the heathen die without the Gospel?" —Selected.

SAVED BY A SINGLE LEAF

Among the many romantic stories connected with the Bible in mission countries, the following is exceedingly striking:

A Chilean, about five years ago, found in a large pile of rubbish a leaf of the New Testament; the reading of it inspired in his mind a longing for the complete Bible. He heard of one that could be bought for ten dollars, and at once began to save up money to buy it. One day a colporteur passed his house, saw the door open partly, thrust in a Bible, and offered it for twenty cents. It was eagerly bought, and so diligently read that a body of Christians numbering about fifty was formed. When the missionaries came to look for a suitable location for beginning their work they discovered this band of Christians awaiting them.

John Wesley gave all his revenues to God. When his income was about \$150 a year he lived on \$140 and gave \$10.00 to charity. The next year his income was \$300, he lived on the same allowance and gave \$160 to the Lord. The next year his income was \$600, and steadfast to his plan the poor got \$460. When he died he had left only his clothes, books and a carriage, though he had given more than a hundred thousand dollars to God.