

# The King's Highway

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### — Our Pastors Speak —



#### Perfect Love

by Rev. B. M. Hicks

"... That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them..." John 17:26.

The term "Perfect Love" is one of the many used to designate the second crisis experience of the child of God. There seems to be no place to question the rightness of the term. Our text, considered in its context, reveals that it is proper. Christ prays for His disciples, "sanctify them"; "that they all may be one"; "that they may be made perfect in one"; "that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them." The love wherewith God the Father loved His Son Jesus Christ could not be other than perfect. There is no door ajar whatsoever where one could begin an argument.

Christ prayed "sanctify them," "that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them." This is the height of His prayer. What a height it is! So much so that many shake their heads in dismay and declare that it cannot be. Yet Christ prayed this for His disciples and "for them which shall believe on me." There was no inkling of doubt in Christ's mind about it. He knew the perfect love of His Father. He knew He was making provision "for them also which shall believe on me" to experience that for which He prayed. He stood at the threshold of Gethsemane and beyond it loomed the cross. He was about to give Himself for the church, the people He loved and who love Him, "That he might Sanctify and cleanse." It was no idle prayer, but an outpouring of His soul, the beginning of His intercession. He is interceding still.

Notice, Christ prayed first "sanctify them." The perfect love of God abiding in their hearts was the conclusion of His petition. This is their proper order. We cannot have the last before we have the first for the last is predicated on the first. In one sense it is all instantaneous, yet there seems to be a sequence. His prayer definitely suggests it. We must be sanctified, separated entirely unto God, made pure and holy. Only then "the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them." How else could it be? Perfect love can only be where there is purity and holiness. Before that perfect love is imparted to us it dwells in the holiness of our God. It must have a like environment before it is ours.

This perfect love will cause us to love as God loves. It will make us love the world in the same sense in which God loves it. God did not love everything that was

going on in the world. Yet He "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." As the world needed God's love and its manifestation, so it still needs that love revealed through us. "And love that soul through me" is what we sing. How could that be without God's perfect love in our hearts? We will not love the sin, but the sinner as God does. That love makes us love one another. We may not see eye to eye or fully agree with other children of God in everything yet there must be love. Perfect love will not make us accept everything others present or suggest. But perfect love will extinguish all hatred or malice toward the individual himself.

"Sanctify them, . . . that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them." This perfect love was to be "in them." It was something they were to experience. Christ did not pray the Father to take them to heaven that they might know this love. It was to be theirs while living here on earth. The statements in the prayer "that the world may know" and "that the world may believe" reveals that it was a this world experience.

Oh, the greatness and the wonder of it! That we poor creatures of the dust can partake of that divine love. Paul speaks of knowing "the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." Thank God we can know it although it passes our understanding.

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity (love), these three; but the greatest of these is charity (love)."

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#### NOT A SACRIFICE, BUT A JOY

A rich business man and a prominent attorney were travelling around the world. They saw many impressive sights, but agreed that something they saw in Korea was most impressive of all.

One morning as they walked along a country road in Korea, they saw a boy pulling a plow which was steered by an old man. It amused the attorney so much that he insisted on taking a picture of the scene with his little pocket camera. Later he showed the picture to a missionary in the next village, remarking about the peculiar spectacle.

"Yes," said the missionary, "it seems a very strange way to plow a field, but I happen to know the boy and the old man well. They are very poor. However, when the little church was built here in the village, they wanted to contribute something. They had no money. They had not grain to spare and winter was coming on, so they sold their ox and gave the money to the church building fund, and now, minus the valuable animal, they have to pull the plow themselves."

The men looked at each other for a moment, then the attorney said: "But what a stupendous sacrifice! Why did you allow it?"

"They did not feel that way about it, they regarded it as a great joy that they had an ox to give to the Lord's work."—The S. S. Friend.