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The Three-Fold Love of God

Part 2 - Our Love for God

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The first aspect of the three-fold love of God is that it is love from God to man, seen nowhere as vividly as in the face of Jesus Christ.

John 3:16

For God so loved [*agapeo*] the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Romans 10:9-10

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved [*sozo*, rescued and made whole].

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation [*soteria*, deliverance and wholeness].

God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son to rescue each and every one who believes from the destruction that results from the unrighteousness of sin. But very few Christians today understand that there is more to God's salvation than deliverance alone.

Hardly anyone realizes that with the deliverance of God in Christ Jesus comes the life of God, and that with the life of God comes the completely-complete wholeness of God.

Receiving this salvation, this wholeness, is called being "born again" in the Word of God,

or literally from the Greek, "born from above." It is a new birth because this salvation brings with it sonship, by the incorruptible seed of the spirit of God which is born within each and every one who believes.

I Peter 1:23

Being born again [*anōthen*, "from above"], not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

Romans 8:15-16

For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption [placement as sons by incorruptible seed], whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

The seed of God in Christ in us, which is everlasting life, is what makes us whole. Being born from above – by confessing with our mouths the Lord Jesus, according to Romans 10:9 and 10, and believing in our hearts that God has raised him from the dead – makes us children of God. God no longer dwells only with us, now He dwells in us.¹

II Corinthians 5:19

To wit [to know], that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself...

Colossians 1:27

To whom God would make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory;

God was in Christ, now Christ is in us by the incorruptible seed of the spirit of God. Now we are God's dwelling place, His habitation.

Ephesians 2:10, 22

For we are his workmanship [masterpiece], created in Christ Jesus...

In whom [in Christ Jesus] ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

No matter what your preacher says, nor how beautiful its stained glass or how stately its columns, God's habitation is not some building of concrete and stone. Do you want to see the masterpiece that God created to live in? Look in the mirror. It's you.

Being born again of God's spirit, just like a child born into an earthly family, we need instruction. We need to learn how to walk in the love of our Father.

I John 4:16

And we have known [*ginosko*, by experience, past tense] and believed [past tense] the love [*agape*] that God hath to us. God is love [*agape*]; and he that dwelleth in love [*agape*] dwelleth in God, and God in him.

Being born again of God's spirit, we have already known and believed the love that God has to us. We have known by experience that God, our Father, is love.

The wording of the latter part of Verse 16, "he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him," is mathematically exact. When a child

of God dwells in love, he dwells in God and God dwells in him.

This verse does not say that should that child of God not dwell in love that God no longer dwells in him. Being born again of God's spirit, God is dwelling within permanently. We were born from above by incorruptible seed, remember? And if it's incorruptible it's incorruptible.

But to dwell in God requires more than having God dwelling within. God has dwelled in us since the moment we were born again. Now we must grow up. We must learn how, in our walk after the new birth, to dwell in love. Why do we want to dwell in love as sons of God? Because God is love. Learning to dwell in love is how we grow in our fellowship with our Father and in our walk in alignment and harmony with Him.

Being born again of God's spirit, just like a child born into an earthly family, we need instruction. We need to learn how to walk in the love of our Father.

But whether or not we continue to dwell in love, God will continue to dwell in us. Dwelling in love after the new birth is a matter, not of standing but of state, not of sonship but of fellowship. That is the accuracy of I John 4:16.²

Romans 8:38-39

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature [created thing], shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

If God's Word says that nothing is able to separate us, then nothing is able to separate us. Period.

There is another great truth back in Verse 16 of I John 4. Because "God is love," and because He dwells in us, this love of God also dwells

within us. Every child of God has the love of God dwelling within as an inherent characteristic of the gift of "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

For this inherent love to be manifested, however, requires us to learn how to dwell in the love that God has for us.

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The first aspect of the three-fold love of God is God's love for us. The second aspect is our response to God's matchless love.

Joshua, after conquering the land which God had promised many years before to the children of Israel, met with the nation's elders. While recounting what God had done for them and for the children of Israel, he said:

We too, the born-again believers of the church of God, are to love God with all our hearts, souls, minds and strength.

Joshua 23:9-11

For the Lord hath driven out before you great nations and strong: but as for you, no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day.

One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the Lord your God, he it is that fighteth for you, as He hath promised you.

Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the Lord your God.

The only appropriate response by the children of Israel for all God had done, and for all He remained willing and able to do, was to take heed to love the Lord their God.

From the call of Abraham to the birth of Isaac, from the days of Jacob to God's deliverance by Joseph, from the time of slavery in Egypt to God's deliverance by Moses, from the taking of the Promised land under Joshua up to that very day he was speaking to them, God had been the prime mover. God had been the deliverer of

His people. God had been their strength. God had been their hope.

What God had commanded in response, as written in the Law of Moses more than fifty years prior to this occasion in Joshua 23, was that the children of Israel love Him in return.

Deuteronomy 6:5

And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

Many centuries later, Jesus Christ would declare the greatness of this commandment from Deuteronomy.

Matthew 22:35-38

Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked Him a question, tempting Him, and saying,

Master, which is the great commandment in the law [of Moses]?

Jesus said unto him [citing Deuteronomy 6:5], Thou shalt love [agapeo] the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

This is the first and great commandment.

This first and great commandment was given by revelation to Moses in the Law. It was given to him after God – with great power, signs and wonders – had delivered the children of Israel out of slavery in Egypt.

This first and great commandment still applied over fifty years later in Joshua's day, after God had given Israel the Promised Land. And it still applied in Jesus Christ's day, when God's promise of the coming of the Messiah to Israel was being fulfilled. And this first and great commandment still applies today, after Pentecost during the administration of the grace of God.³

We too, the born-again believers of the church of God, are to love God with all our hearts, souls, minds and strength. With all God did, does and will do for us through Christ Jesus, loving God is the only appropriate response.

The second aspect of the three-fold love of God is our love for God.

I John 3:1

Behold what manner of love [*agape*] the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

The children of Israel were servants, recognized as sons of God only by adoption. Today in the Church of God, we are sons by birth, the new birth.⁴

Among the children of Israel the spirit of God was upon only certain men and women.⁵ In the Church of God today, as we have seen, the spirit is born within each and every believer as incorruptible seed.

That's why God's deliverance and wholeness today is greater than what was available for Him to offer even to Israel.

Israel, under Moses' leadership, was delivered from slavery in a foreign land. Under Joshua's leadership, they claimed the Promised Land, flowing with milk and honey. Under the prophets, they looked forward to the blessings they would receive at the coming of the promised Messiah.

But Jesus Christ – by his perfect life, his sacrificial death, his resurrection, his ascension and his giving of holy spirit on the day of Pentecost – has accomplished a greater deliverance for us. God in Christ has accomplished our completely-complete wholeness. We have been delivered from death itself unto life everlasting.

I Peter 1:10

Of which salvation the prophets [in Israel of old] have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you:

Hebrews 11:39-40

And these all [the believers of Israel], having obtained a good report through faith [believing], received not the promise:

God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

If the children of Israel were to love God – if this

were to love God – if this was the first and great commandment to them – how much more the Church of God? With all the great and glorious wonders that God has accomplished in Christ for

us, we too are to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.

I John 5:3

For this is the love [*agape*] of God, that we keep His commandments.

Our love for God is not shown by mouthing platitudes, by straightening the chairs at a meeting hall with a string, or by never making any waves or ruffling any feathers.

Our love for God is indicated, rather, by our obedience to God's Word. That is, we do what God says to do, and we refrain from doing what He says to refrain from doing. We obey, not because we are afraid of Him, but because we love Him.

I John 4:18,19

There is no fear in love [*agape*]; but perfect love [*agape*] casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love [*agape*].

We love [*agapeo*] Him, because he first loved [*agapeo*] us.

It is Satan, the god of this world, who operates by fear, intimidation and coercion. God's way is radically different.

The true God does not push people around. The religions and philosophies of the world may proclaim that is how God operates, but it's a lie. God's Word says, "God is love," and that "there is no fear in love" and that "perfect love casteth out fear." It is never the true God who forces people into obedience. That is the world's way.

The world's way is to coerce men and women into conformity to its destructive counterfeits. The world's way is to entice people into slavery ending in sin, sickness and death. It is Satan, the god of this world, who operates by fear, intimidation and coercion. God's way is radically different.

God's way is the only way that imparts life and transforms men and women from the inside out. God's way is the only way that makes us truly fruitful and truly free. For God's way is the love way.

Once we begin to recognize the true God and His ways versus the god of this world and his ways, the two great motivators in this life begin to come into focus. They are: number one, love, and number two, fear.

Why do we love God? It's simple. Because He first loved us. God so loved that He gave, Christ so loved that he gave. Now, because God in Christ so loved us, we are able to love them in return.

Romans 12:1

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice [sold-out to obey], holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable [*logikos*, meaning logical, reasonable, appropriate] service.

Remember Ephesians 2:4, that God is "rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us"? Here in Romans it is by those rich mer-

cies, that God beseeches us to sell out as living sacrifices. Considering the richness of His mercy and love, to do so is the only logical, reasonable and appropriate response.

But the reason God "beseeches" us is because we are the ones who must decide whether to offer ourselves as living sacrifices. The true God never, ever, coerces or intimidates His children. He loves us in Christ Jesus unconditionally, and asks us to love Him in return by selling out – by our own free will – to obey Him.

The true God does not want His children to conformed themselves, He wants to transform us.

God's love for us in sending His only-begotten Son – who so loved us that he gave himself for us – inspires our love in return.

Verse 2

And be not conformed [do not conform yourselves] to this world: but be ye transformed [by God in Christ] by

the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove [show forth in your life] what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

God's love in sending His only-begotten Son – who so loved us that he gave himself for us – inspires our love in return. It is out of love that we obey them. It is out of love that we offer up our lives as living sacrifices and "new up" our minds, allowing God in Christ to transform us and prove that good, and acceptable and perfect will of God.

As beloved children of God, it is the thrill of our lives to believe, obey and act on His Word. And our ability to love Him increases as we avail ourselves more and more to discover His great love for us through Christ Jesus.

The love of God has been revealed and awaits discovery throughout the Word of God. His love, born within us as an inherent characteristic of the gift of "Christ in you, the hope of glory," is what enables us to love Him by renewed mind action.

As we recognize God's love for us more and more, our love for God grows and obey His Word more and more in all it commands. Motivated by our love for Him, we sell out more and more as living sacrifices. And by the love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation, we are transformed. We believe and we receive the promises of God, proving the will of God in our walk with our Father and with His Son.

We love God because He first loved us. This is the second great aspect of the three-fold love of God seen in God's Word.

1. As promised by Christ in John 14:17; and fulfilled in Acts 2:1-4.
2. For more study from God's Word on the believer's standing and state, see Victor Paul Wierwille, *The New Dynamic Church*, Chapter Six, "Fellowship is the Secret.
3. Although Deuteronomy 6:5 is addressed to Israel during the administration of the Law, and is not addressed to us, who are in the Church of God after the day of Pentecost, it is a command that still must be obeyed by us, being a command that transcends administrations. See Victor Paul Wierwille, *Power for Abundant Living*, Chapter Fifteen, "To Whom The Word is Written,"

Christians Should be Prosperous, Chapter One, "The Profit in Giving," Page 2 (latest printing), and E.W. Bullinger, *How to Enjoy the Bible*, Part Two, Chapter Ten, "Interpretation and Application."

4. For an in-depth study on this subject, see Victor Paul Wierwille, *The Word's Way*, Chapter Five, "Sons of God: Adoption and Birth."

5. Numbers 11:16-17
And the Lord Said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee.

And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone.

Deuteronomy 34:9
And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him...

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