

The Walk of Faith

Lesson 5: Walking in the love of God

The Father's love shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit (Rom 5.5) is the foretaste of glory because it gives us several strong arguments for the comfort of our heart.

- I. First of all, how do we know God loves us?
 - A. Because we could never have loved Him if He didn't, 1Jn 4.19. Our love for Him is but the reflection of His love for us.
 - B. If we've been convinced of our sinfulness and our need for a Saviour, that conviction came from God, who came to us to draw us to Him.
 - C. If we've been convinced of the ability and willingness of Christ to save us and have put our whole trust in His person and work, that conviction came from God, who came to us in love.
 - D. If we've come to ground all our hope on Jesus and put all our faith in Jesus, that faith is not of ourself, but came from God as a gift of His love, Eph 2.8
 - E. And if God's given us His love... then what kind of love is this?
- II. It's a *free* love—which gives us full assurance of its *continuance*.
 - A. We've done nothing to deserve it. Before He saved us, all we did was sin; and since He saved us, all we've done is fall short of what's right. There was nothing good in us before and there's nothing good enough in us after. If we have His love, then it had to have been *freely* given, Eph 1.3-6; Dt 7.6-8
 - B. If He set His love on us freely, then whatever stirred and awakened and caused that love was not something in us, but something in God. And that means the continuance of His love is not contingent upon anything in us, but upon the very immutable and eternal thing in Him that caused it in the first place.
 - C. And therefore though we be beset with temptations and assaulted with corruptions and in a world of troubles, yet we need not fear but God will bring us safely through it all—because He loves us.
- III. It's a *covenant* love—which gives us full assurance of its *unchangeableness*.
 - A. This is especially supportive to our faith in times of trial... When we're walking in darkness and have no light (Isa 50.10); when we have troubles on every side, fightings without and fears within; and when we're walking in heaviness because of our failings in every duty, a sense of our great corruptions and many temptations, this is when the treasures of a covenant bring us rich consolation.
 - B. We can support ourselves in this way: "I may be in trouble, but I'm not forsaken. My enemies may be against me, my evil heart may be against me, Satan may be against me, but my God is for me. My love for God may falter, but His love for me cannot falter. I may be fickle and too easily carried captive by sin, but my God is unchangeable and His love for me is steadfast."
 - C. Who can annul the covenant of the Trinity?
 1. Creatures cannot. God will not. His purpose of bringing many sons to glory in Christ is unalterably fixed in His own heart and in order to make it sure, He covenanted to make it so.
 2. And it's on this secure, divine covenant love that we must rest our restless soul. What God swore to do cannot be undone; and what God covenanted with Himself to do, cannot be changed. The engagements of the Father with the Son and of the Son with the Father to save all who come to Christ for salvation are covenant engagements, divine promises and self-cursing oaths, backed and upheld and seen through by almighty power, Gen 15.7-18

- D. Therefore when everything around us seems to be falling apart, and when everything around us seems to be changing and letting us down, let us remember that we have immutable things to depend upon for the certainty of our salvation. So let us fix our soul and stay our heart upon this immutable covenant, trusting in our God with an unshakable confidence—not for what we see in ourselves, and not for how well we’re sure we’ll hold out—but only for the Word of promise, ratified by a covenant (Gen 15), confirmed by an oath (Heb 6), and secured by the blood of Christ (Heb 13). All these are meant to assure our hearts that the heart of God is invariably towards us for good, Ps 56.9
- IV. It’s an *everlasting* love—which gives us full assurance of its *permanence*.
- A. God’s love for us knows neither beginning nor end. It’s without variableness or shadow of turning. His heart is always one and always the same towards His chosen people.
1. He loves us *freely*—the motives to it were all in and from His own heart.
 2. He loves us *in covenant*—distinguishing us from others and secured to us by the most solemn engagements.
 3. And now *this* crowns it all—that His love for us is of the same date with the covenant, not only before the creation of the world, but *from eternity*, Jer 31.3
- B. Here’s a never-failing source of comfort to a believing heart! Consider what God’s done for you and give Him the glory of His precious love because the love which came into your heart in time is the fruit of His love for you before time. What a powerful motive this is to believe without wavering and to cast all your cares on the God who cares for you because He loves you.
- V. Would you have your love for God drawn out more freely and fervently? Then this is the way to do it: let God’s love for you warm your love for Him!
- A. Our love for God, at its best, is not what it ought to be. It’s not constant. It’s not perfect. It’s not what God deserves.
- B. When we consider our love to God and are ashamed at how poor it is, then let us turn our eyes to look at His love for us.
1. A believing, thankful look at His love for us will increase our love for Him. Nothing can excite or nourish our love for Him like standing in the warmth of His love for us.
 2. Besides, if our love is but a reflection of His, then how else can we expect to grow ours but by taking in more of His!?! His love is the cause, ours the effect. His love is the fire, ours is the heat.
 - a) Whenever our love is small, unsettled, cold, and dull, we need to study the divine properties of His love for us! The more we become acquainted with His love for us, the more our hearts will be drawn out in love for Him.
- C. So let us, then, seek to walk every day in the enjoyment and experience of His love:
1. not to buy it, because it’s priceless;
 2. not to merit it, because grace cannot be merited;
 3. not to deserve it, because it’s freely given;
 4. and not to get what we don’t have, but to enjoy what’s already been given.
- D. His love has been freely given to you in Christ. Let the freeness of it assure you of its continuance. Let the covenant engagements undergirding it you assure you of its unchangeableness. And let the eternal nature of it assure you of its permanence.
1. You did not earn your way into God’s heart and you cannot sin your way out of it. God has taken you for His child, and therefore you have taken Him as your Father. Believe this. Rest in this. Walk in this. Rejoice in this. For here is your strength in temptation, your comfort in trouble, your assurance in failure, your peace in sorrow: that God loves you, Eph 3.14-19