

George Jeuck

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He chastens because he is always ready to forgive.

He disciplines because he loves. Yes, that is, if he is approached in an attitude of sincere repentance. Because of our Heavenly Father's surpassing love for his consecrated children, he particularly is intensely interested respecting our spiritual interests. Our spiritual interests deeply involve Godlike exhortation in helping one another along the way respecting love and good works the life of Jesus of Nazareth fully exemplified the fact and regarding this most important matter we are reminded of a brief testimony concerning the life and ministry of our Master. For instance, in Acts 10:39, God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power who went about doing good exclusively.

Anything else. His entire outlook was to serve his God in doing good, and by virtue of this controlling factor of his character displayed throughout his day by day living, he could consistently say, he that has seen me has seen the Father. The life of Jesus exhibits a practical lesson of the exercise of divine love on behalf of others. The mighty power of this potential, embodied in the God of eternity, impelled in Jesus an unflinching solicitude for the well being of his disciples, and not only respecting his disciples at that time, but all the way since down to this very hour.

Though I am with you always, is the assurance by the same love he was prompt to fulfill his commitments involving the declaration of sharp cutting truth, truth such as would serve to expose the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and the general accepted errors which they preached. David vividly portrays in prayer prophetically the devotion of Jesus to His God. For instance, in Psalms 4, 7, 8. Lo, I come in the volume of the book it is written of me I delight to do thy will, O my God. Yea, Thy law is within my heart.

The spirit of consecration is indeed brilliantly reflected in this prayer, for it inculcates our Lord's realization that it is God's will to fully witness respecting the Creator's grand design of loving kindness so comprehensively revealed by that which we properly term the divine plan of salvation, and in the ninth and tenth verses of the 40th Psalm, David continues prophetically concerning the dedicated attitude of Jesus, I have preached righteousness in the great congregation. Lo. I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, Thou knowest. I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart.

I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation. I have not concealed thy loving kindness and thy truth from the great congregation.

The same attribute of love that motivated God activated Jesus in enabling him to set a wonderful example of the Father's labor of love. Sainly realism constitutes our Master's course of life, a life characteristic of a faithful witness regarding the loving kindness amplified in the Almighty salvation project. He did not hide the testimony of God in his heart. His day by day course of life was conformity to all the principles effecting a consecrated walk of life, a life such as magnifies the Creator's justice, his wisdom, his power, his love, his condescending grace, and likewise, along with our Master, we subject ourselves to the admonition, be ye holy, for I am holy.

And thus it is our privilege to encourage one another in love and good works. When the love of God realistically fills the heart, the evidence of the fact will be manifest by the employment of oneself in unselfish sacrifice on behalf of the Lord, on behalf of the truth, on behalf of the brethren.

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Works, regardless of their nature, cannot be classified as good works within the meaning of our text.

We recall that our Lord spoke unfavorably concerning such a class, a class of people who make great professions of much activity in his name. Jesus referred to them as workers of iniquity because their works are prompted by a selfish attitude of more or less ambition and wrong aspiration, wrong state of mind, and wrong attitude.

The Scriptures make it very clear that zealous activity alone in itself does not denote true Christian endeavor. There is such a thing as having zeal, not governed by a right heart condition, and not according to divine knowledge. Much zealous activity is sometimes not motivated by godly love. Obviously such activity is not acceptable to God, thus not good works. Paul writes with reference to himself regarding a principle that likewise applies to all consecrated believers.

And he says, though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I have become as sounding brass, and in harmony with this statement of a hard cutting fact, Paul enters into a comprehensive treatise on divine love. For instance, in the 13th chapter of 1 Corinthians he goes into explicit detail. He particularly emphasizes that works which within themselves are good are not nevertheless acceptable to the Lord. When such works are prompted by selfishness.

The ability to speak with the tongues of men and angels is a laudable accomplishment when such speech is wholly employed in magnifying God's holy name and his truth by making known his wonderful humanitarian project. To the extent that such is engaged in unselfishly incomprehensible. Therefore, religious activity cannot be acceptable to the Almighty unless it is solely prompted by a fulness of unmitigated love. So to the extent one's activity of works more or less are the product of selfish ambition, so far as the Lord is concerned, only amounts to a matter of sounding breath. The Scriptures particularly direct our attention to the fundamental importance of faith, a faith that includes the mind, the kind of works a saintly faith produces.

Paul speaks metaphorically to the effect that a godly faith can be so strong as to move mountains. Yet he shows that the greatness of faith in this respect, performed without true, unselfish love, constitutes an equation of nothing. The principle of faith in itself is a good thing, a very important thing, a very necessary thing. We read that without faith it is impossible to please God, Hebrews 11:6. Nevertheless, faith cannot be pleasing to God when unselfish love is absent.

The general tenure of the Scriptures makes clear that sacrificial works of any kind, constituting a product of a selfish motive, cannot be acceptable to the eternal God, whom the Bible states, is love. Services of generosity to others, rendered with a motive to impress others, would of course be a selfish procedure. Works which within themselves are good, can be tainted with evil by reason of a wrong motive, having prompted the act or the thing said. The 13th chapter of 1 Corinthians delineates Paul as an exemplification of a true apostle of heaven's love. Likewise, the apostle John reveals himself as an exponent of love, the love of Christ, the love that is active among the true brethren of Christ.

John magnifies the great love of God, as manifested in the unmerited gift of his beloved Son, to be the redeemer of all mankind, who are willing to avail themselves of the benefactions of life accruing thereby. Was it not John who quotes so much concerning the Love of God? For instance, John the third chapter and the 16th verse, 13th chapter and the 34th verse first John the third chapter and the 16th verse 1 John 2, 8, 10 and the fourth chapter 7:21 John's attitude regarding his brethren was actuated in the consuming fire of love for them. However, he did not use love as a means to

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cover up misconduct among the brethren. In his epistles second and third, he does not cuddle ambitious brethren who selfishly aspire to leadership in the congregation of the Lord.

True Christian love does not stand idly by when the Lord's people are in danger of being misled. There are occasions when love must clearly speak out in counsel and in warning. John's second Epistle brings to our attention how vital it is to exercise great care in the matter of those with whom we closely fellowship, and especially as concerns teachers. In verses 10 and 11 he outlines a fundamental principle respecting the operation of the love of God, and this to the effect that to whatever extent we give our support to those whom we have good reason to believe are taking a wrong course, such constitutes our being a party to the error to the extent that we support them and wish them Godspeed. A distorted conception concerning God's law concerning its operation is certain to lead one to the conclusion that even though a brother is taking a wrong course, we should bid him Godspeed anyway, and pass on a recommendation for his service elsewhere.

Such reasoning is, of course, unscripture. Such reasoning is entirely out of harmony with the love and good works that John, Paul, and James has so much to say about. It is vitally needful to have a proper concept of how truly God's love operates, how it seeks to protect the brethren against evil influences. True love always operates in a true sense of Christian solicitude for the protection of the brethren from influences which are designed to have the effect of undermining the truth in one's mind and heart and life and it exercises great compassion for frightened sheep, but does not have any awe at all for wolves in sheep's clothing. The good work of love is seen from a somewhat different standpoint in the third epistle of John.

This epistle is addressed to Gaius. Here John gives expression concerning his rejoicing, that Gaius and his brethren continued to walk in the truth. Apparently in the area where Gaius lived, brethren from other districts were serving from time to time. John's attitude respecting Gaius and his brethren was significant, especially so by reason of Gaius having entertained the visiting brethren in his home. Thus Gaius shared in their ministry, together with the blessings of accruing thereby.

In the same district where Gaius resided, there was a man who falsely professed to be a fellow brother. In the truth, this man's name was Diotrephus and it is evident that John had written to the brethren in this vicinity that he would be pleased to serve them. John being God's appointed specially appointed apostle, it was in order for him to offer his ministerial services. Diotrephus was opposed to John's visit. Diotrephus had a good reason, a shameful reason, for opposing the idea.

In few definite words, John explains the reason, saying, Diotrephus loved to have the preeminence among the brethren and from what John says, I am sure we can rightly infer Di Rufus was accustomed to holding a whip hand of dictatorial lordship over the congregation of the Lord's people, so as to encourage the congregation to solely look up to him concerning tenets of faith and the practice, in fact, to look up to him as the law of the ecclesia, which is absolutely unscriptural in the most far and complete sense of the thought. Diotrephus no doubt sensed that his spell over the class would be broken if John was to minister to them.

Then Micah 6:8 reads, what does the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? It is true that this admonition was addressed to fleshy Israel. However, these fundamental principles are likewise required to be practiced in every age and dispensation.

To do it justly means to deport oneself according to the golden rule, to govern oneself in harmony with the principle of justice, to do this at all times in dealing with other people. There are no

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exceptions. Far as the consecrated believer is concerned, this rule is extremely exacting. It allows for no compromise, and to the extent that we diligently follow this rule to such an extent, it will be easier to put a check on our words and actions.

However, putting into practice a rule of justice does not alone make a person a Christian. For mercy and humility must be involved. The Scriptures clearly show that the present gospel dispensation is not the time to make an effort to convert and reform the world. Enhance. Any endeavor to bring about such an ultimate outcome is premature.

Such efforts are not in line with the Creator's will. Some have no doubt some still are laying down their lives unselfishly for world reform. This in many different types of effort. However, these endeavors do not constitute walking with God. The only conversion in order during the present gospel age is the call and the development of the Christ, the Church of the firstborns, whose names are only written in heaven.

They're not written down here anywhere.

This age has been solely set apart for the promotion of work that can reach the hearing ear and by virtue its sanctifying power be made ready for joint heirship in the kingdom of heaven and of earth, the kingdom for which we so earnestly pray, Thy kingdom come. This means having some part according to one's ability in an activity of holding forth the truth by letting one's light shine according to whatever their ability and opportunity may be in an activity of holding forth the truth by letting one's light shine. So very, very important, and especially particularly to build one another up in the most holy faith, doing so in justice, in love, in all Hum.

Thank you, Brother Yike, for that very timely.