

Prayer - Give us such a view of thee, so our hearts may sing.
Hymn - 149 (229)
S. Item -
Reading - Song of Solomon 3.

Love - The enduring Grace

- Here's a riddle for you: -

- What grace, although she endures, bears and suffers, will outlive her two siblings?

A- V LOVE. 1 Cor 13:13.

- And this is our grand theme today.

- But first we must consider the mind & heart of God, as expressed in His precepts or commands.

- These perfect precepts are His will for us.

- They are good even though none of us can perfectly carry them out, and to seek salvation by them is a great error.

- Never-the-less they can point us to God, and be our faithful guide once we know Him.

- These precepts, this 'Moral Law' of God, has been expressed in different ways down through the ages.

- In the garden of beginnings Man was simply told not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good & evil (But man would know evil and has tried to rid himself of that ever since)

- Later we have them expressed in the 10 commandments (which man broke even while they were being given)

- Later still the Lord sums them up with one "To love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our strength, and with all our mind, and our neighbour as ourselves."

- When people think of sin they ^{usually} think of sin against men - murder, theft, lying. But it is our ~~the~~ lack of love to God that is the chief transgression.

- Let us see this, and if we know Him, let it kindle a great fire of love toward Him.

+ if we don't know Him let it drive us to the Cross of love & forgiveness to have our debt cancelled.

- So let us consider this love.

- Love is the Queen of graces it shines & sparkles in God's eye. His very person is described as love.

GOD IS LOVE.
He is where love comes from.

- What is Love?
Love is a Holy Fire kindled in the affections, whereby a Christian is drawn to God as the supreme good.

- What is the grounds of this love?

A. Knowledge.

To know God is to love Him.

• But don't think lightly of when I say to know God

I don't mean to know about Him.

I mean to know Him in a personal, saving way.

- You see if the Sun doesn't shine in the understanding there is night in the affections.

• if there is no fuel in the mind there can be no fire in the feelings.

- True love can only come from God. All else is mingled with inordinate affections.

• So it is only the children's bread. - Those adopted by God into his family.

- let us see it to desire it.

- What are the kinds of love?
1) There is love of appreciation - when we set a high value on God as the most sublime source of all good everything else pales into insignificance.

- The stars vanish when the Sun appears.

2) There is a love of delight - As a person takes delight in a friend he loves. The soul sees God as his treasure and delights & rejoices.

3) There is a love of goodwill to others - An outward affection wishing all happiness to the other.

- As the ~~mag~~ magnifying glass concentrates the sun into a flame

So if we look into the Word it will concentrate God's love into a flame in our hearts for Him and for All mankind.

- See The nature of God in Love ^(we could read love for charity & God for Love)

1 Cor 13.4 'Love suffereth long, and is kind; ^{Love} love envieth not; Love vaunteth

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not itself; is not puffed up, does not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth. Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things, Love never fails.'

- What are the properties of love to God.

□ Our love must be entire.

it must be with the whole heart

□ 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart' Mark 12.30

In the old ceremonial law a high priest was not to marry with a widow or a harlot -

- Not a widow, because he had not her first love
- Not a harlot, because he had not all her love.

- God will have the whole heart not a divided one.

• God will not be an inmate in and have only one room in the heart while all the others are let out to sin!

□ It must be a sincere love
IV Eph 6.24. 'Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity'

• We ~~must~~ must love Christ for himself as one loves pure honey for the taste

- It is said Alexander had two friends Hephestion and Craterus.

He said 'Craterus loves me because I am King Alexander'

'Hephestion loves me because I am Alexander'

The one loved his gifts & position the other loved his person.

• We must love God more for what He is than what He bestows gives.

• You need not pay a mother to love her child, & a soul deeply in love with God needs not to be paid by rewards.

□ It must be a fervent love.

A burning love - ~~like~~ Like the Seraphim The 'Burning ones' of holy love to God.

To love a person coldly is to ~~not~~ not love at all.

- Our love, to temporary things, must be in keeping with their transient nature, as if ~~we~~ we loved them not, because ~~as~~ they don't last. But our love to the eternal God must flame forth.

- Love to God must be active
 - Like the flame always moving
 - In 1 Thess 1.3 it is called the 'Labour of love'

Love is no idle grace
 it's head is set to study God
 it's feet run in His ways. To love whelp others.

A pretence of love is not enough
 True love is not only in word but deed
 not only in tongue but in hand.

The Cherubim have wings and hands.
 Wings of faith to fly
 x Hands beneath to work.

Love is kind
 it not only has a smooth tongue
 but a kind heart.

He that loves God will be generous
 to His creatures

He will be eyes to the blind
 x feet to the lame

Why? because they have been first
 loved by Christ

They know what it is to need
 and what it is to receive love.

Love to God is specific only to Him.
 A wife gives such a love to her husband
 as she has for none else.

Love to God is permanent.
 It is like the ~~candle~~ lamps in the
 temple - always burning.
 or the beat of the heart.

Love never fails - Nothing can conquer
 love, not any difficulties or
 oppositions 'Love is stronger
 than the grave' Song of Solomon
 8.6.

As the grave swallows up
 the strongest bodies
 so love the strongest difficulties

'Many waters cannot quench love'
 Song of So 8.7
 Neither the sweet waters of pleasure
 or the bitter waters of persecution or
 trouble.

A man rooted firmly in love to God
 is as a tree not blown over in a
 storm.

God is the chief Good in all the world
 so He must have the chief of all
 our affections.

The creature may have the milk of
 our love
 But God must have the cream!

Mr. Graham
 Bill ~~Thomson~~ said in his speech
 'Tessie loves God more than me'
 I like that about her.

Our love to God must be above all other
 things as the oil
 swims above the water.

What shall we say ~~also~~ of those who don't
 have a drop of love in their hearts to God?
 They have life from Him & Common Grace
 They have food & breath from Him
 yet they do not love Him
 - wretched men!

- Sinners dread God as Judge, but do not love Him as father.
Judgments cannot make them love Him.
Only grace can make the stony heart melt in love.
- The wind may blow but the coat of wilful hostility is held the tighter.
But if the Sun shines it is taken off ^{willingly}.
- How sad it is to be void of love to God.
As the body is cold when dead so is he spiritually dead who has no heat of love in his heart to God.
- Shall God welcome into heaven those who do not love him?
• Will God embrace an enemy?
• They shall be bound in chains of darkness who will not be drawn with cords of love.
- Let us be persuaded to love God
+ see the Cross - see how He has loved us.
It is what God desires of you.
• He would have you give him this flower.
• Is it a hard request?
• Was ever a debt easier paid?
• Is it a labour for a wife to love her dear husband?
- It is hard to love the unlovely,
but easy to love the lovely.
• Who is more lovely than Christ?
- Great blessings will result.
"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" 1 Cor 2.9.

- Love is the enduring grace.
It is the only grace that shall live with us in heaven.
- In heaven we shall need no repentance, because we shall have no sin.
No faith, because we shall see God face to face.
- ✓ V. 1 Cor 13.13 These are the two siblings love outlives in our riddle.
- What shall we do in order to love God?
• Attend the preaching of the word
• As faith comes by hearing so does love.
(even the Bible studies!)
- Go to God as a beggar
that He will give you a heart of love.
He will give you the oil to make your lamp burn bright.
- And
- You who have this love to God already,
Keep it burning on the altar of your heart.
- Love like fire, is ever ready to go out if not attended.
- Rev 2.4 Thou has left thy first love, ^{the church}
• Neglect your duties and it will ^{cool} generate
• Love the world it will generate ^{cool}.
- Attend always to the word and to prayer.
This ~~fuel~~ fuel will keep the fire burning
• the wheels oiled
• the body warmed with
- True love is mutual - both ^{love} given & returned. ^{Return it to the God of LOVE.}

Ephesians 6:24

24 Grace be with all
them that love our
Lord Jesus Christ in
sincerity. Amen.

1 Corinthians 13:13

**¹³And now abideth
faith, hope, charity,
these three; but the
greatest of these is
charity.**

Mark 12:30

³⁰And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

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