

Passion

Part 3: Do You Love Me?

"There, but for the grace of God, go I..." -John Bradford, 1555

Romans 5.6ff For when you were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly... God commending His love toward us that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us... *and now we joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ...*

Ephesians 2.1ff And you, dead in errors and sins, walking according to the dictates of this world under the direction of the prince of the power of the air (the same spirit active now in the sons of disbelief and disobedience, who fulfill the lusts of their flesh and the desires of their will making them children of wrath) were loved and though dead in sins He quickened us together with Christ and raised us up to sit together in heavenly places with Christ, so that for all time He might show the exceeding richness of His grace in kindness toward us thru Christ... So once, without Christ, having no hope and without God in the world we are now in Christ and made near to God by the blood of Christ! *He is our peace who has broken down the wall of separation!*

Ephesians 5.8ff You who were once in darkness are now children of light... proving what is acceptable to the Lord... so have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather expose them for it is a shame to even speak of those things that are done in secret... This is why He says, *"Awake those who are sleepers and get up and Christ will give you light! Walk wisely, not as fools!"*

1 Corinthians 15.9,10 "I am the least of all the sent ones, and really not worthy to be called a sent one because I persecuted the Church of God... *but by the grace of God I am what I am (now) and the grace that He bestowed on me was not in vain* because I have been at work laboring to exceed my peers... Yet it's not really me, but the grace of God that is at work in me!"

"Do we realize what great salvation we have been given by Jesus?" "Do we see Him as the lover of our souls and the deliverer of our lives?" "If we did then why would He ever have to ask..." "Do you love Me?"

Not an unreasonable question! *If you love me, keep my commandments... John 14.15* He that has my commandments, and keeps them, *loves me... v21* *If a man loves me, he will keep my words... v23* *For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. 1John 5.3*

True love never expresses itself only in words... it speaks and acts! If we love Him we are hanging on His words and doing them! No one we truly love should have to ask for proof... our love should be evident!

When we're in love! Hearts are hot for any/every moment we have together! Everything else goes on hold! Want to know everything we can about them! Dissecting every word they speak to us! Committing every word to memory!

Do we realize what He's done for us and what that makes Him to us?

How could love grow cold?

Sin can make our love for God grow cold... "and because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold..." **Mt24.12** *When we are engaged in sin against a lover, we don't want that lover around!* When we are engaged in sin, darkness doesn't want light around! He is both Lover and Light!

Distractions can keep us away from the One we love... Led astray from our "first love" by lusts, fears, etc. **2Tim 4.10** "With lips they draw near but their hearts are far from Me..." **Mt 15.8** "Woe to them who do their works in the dark and ask, 'Who sees us?' **Is29.13** "It won't be long before I move to turn that around!" **v17-24**

Loving ourselves/others more than we love Him... "If we love anything more, not worthy of Him..." **Matt 10.37,38** That sounds strange to the people who want your undivided attention/affection. But all they're getting is "divided love" until you filter your love thru Him!

Familiarity can breed coldness... "There is knowledge that puffs us up... and if any man thinks he knows it all, he knows nothing yet!" **1Cor 8.1-2** "What more is there for me to learn? I've read all the stories!"

The word is our introduction to Him! The Spirit is our developer in Him! Experiencing Him is our flame!

Drawing near...

Have to go back and read the stories for pictures, not information...

Have to draw aside in prayer with full intention of listening...

Get the stuff out of the way that He points out is in the way... (adultery)

Ask the Spirit of God to take you to school every day...

It's not the giddy feelings of love that we're trying to rekindle... It's the sense of "this is right" that we're looking to regain and retain! What we want is the kind of love that grows up and old together!