

Bailey
1/31/66
P.M.

"The Love of God"

Scripture Lesson:- I John 4: 1 - 12.

Text:- I John 4: 12. "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us,"

Introduction:- We have perfect love when the Spirit sheds abroad God's love to such a degree as to exclude everything antagonistic thereto. The thing that is antagonistic to loving God with all the heart must be excluded before we can have perfect love.

Perfect love will give us boldness in the day of judgment. One of the differences between the Calvinistic teaching and Wesleyan teaching concerning perfect love is. The Calvinist contends that everything that is antagonistic to the love of God cannot be excluded until death. The Wesleyan teaching is, that everything antagonistic may be excluded here and now.

Both schools of theology teach that everything must be excluded before we can have boldness in the day of judgment. "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment." Somewhere, either in life or in the hour of death, we must have everything excluded that is antagonistic to the love of God, if we are to come to judgment in boldness.

We believe that the teaching of the Scriptures is very plain, and that there is no necessity of us waiting until death to have every thing in our lives that is antagonistic to the

love of God. Infirmities and mistakes will always be manifested in every life. But our lives may be so filled with the love of God that divine love becomes the dominating motive of the life to the exclusion of motives that are contrary to his love.

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"Perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love" (I John 4: 18). Fear and love cannot be in the heart of the believer at the same time. Fear cannot exist in the heart that is occupied by love. Examine your heart. Does it have fear abiding? If it does, then love cannot exist in the heart. Fear must go, before love comes in.

Primitive Christianity had about it a daring that amazed the pagan world. Our Christianity today has often been so adjusted to the times in which we live that it has been thrown into neutral gear instead of high gear.

Why do we not do more for our Lord? Why do we sit by so indifferently, and put forth such small effort for the advancement of his Kingdom in the world? Why do we give the signal of retreatment, when we ought to be raising the blood stained banner of our Lord for a great advance and a mighty crusade?

It was hearts filled with an overflowing love that made the Christianity of the first century such a daring venture that it shook the entire world. It was this daring, crusading spirit, born in the hearts that were filled with the love of God, that marched forward in the face of the seem-

The whole of mankind may be divided into four classes.

1. First, there are those who are without fear and without love. This class consists of a large multitude. They are the hardened sinners of the world. They have neither fear of God nor of the devil. Their hearts are hard, and they are without any divine love. Some of them have gone so far in their hardness that they have little or no human love. They are those who are without God and without hope in the world.

2. The second class consists of those with fear and without love. This class represents the large multitude of sinners who have not become so deadened in sin as the first class mentioned. They do have a fear of God. They have a fear of punishment of their sins. They are not happy. They bear the sting of conscience. Their conscience has not become so deadened and blunted that they do not hear the voice of conscience. They have fear but are without the love of God. They have not had the courage to surrender their lives to God. They are those whom we are after all the time.

3. The third class consists of those who have both fear and love. While they have no condemnation for their sins, which have been forgiven, they do have a sense of fear that intimidates them, and which is a hindrance to them in their Christian service. In some it is a fear to lift the

voice in prayer, or to stand and give their testimony. It may be a weakness that is manifest in the everyday walks of life, in failing to give a testimony for Christ. Yet, I must say, that these are good people. They are Christian people. They love the Lord. They are regular attendants at the services of the church. They may be numbered among the regular, and the best, contributors of the church. Yet there is a restriction among them.

There is a liberty they need, and there is a heart cry within that they might have this liberty,

You can have this liberty - you don't have to live bound & shackled by fear. God promises deliverance.

4. There is a fourth class that I want to mention. That is the class who are without fear and in whose hearts the love of God abides steadily.

Their hearts have so filled with the love of God that there is no fear. "Perfect love casteth out fear!" "He that feareth hath not been made perfect in love!" Perfect love is the crown of a

perfect consecration. Perfect love springs from a faith for a cleansing from every impurity. Perfect love is not absolute, it is not angelic perfection, it is not the glorified perfection we shall have when we get over there; but it is loving God, with a heart so filled with love, the love of God that is so pure and changeless, with grace that is so full and free.

Conclusion.- Do you have the love of God in your heart just now. Think of the four classes, and you will know in which class you belong. The third class is very fine, but the fourth class is finer. Oh, I would that all here might have hearts filled with the love of God, might have hearts from which all fear is gone forever.