

THE LOVE OF GOD
By Donald G. Leavell

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another (1 John 4:7-11).

I am struck by the love of God! I am learning its value every day. It is the most amazing phenomenon in creation. It will rock your world and cause you to understand unknowable things! ***As we speak the truth in love, we grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ (Ephesians 4:15).***

The word of the Lord will change your life forever! I have always thought of myself as a loving person. I do not think that way in pride, but my heart has always been tender toward people. It was always tender toward people until it was not. That is just one problem with human love, it has its limits! However, God's love is limitless. In the above scriptures, John introduces these weighty verses using the Greek word, **agapetos**, meaning beloved, one brought forth from, in and through God's love. In his remaining verses, he expresses love in two other forms of the same word—**agapao** and **agape**. These are expressions for God's own love. We are born-again through the God-kind of love. The scripture says, **"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."** In 1 John 4, the scripture also says, **"God is love,"** therefore, everyone born of God is brought into being by, through, and in the love of God! This love that begets, belongs only to God; it is His very person, character, essence, and nature! In John's letter, He is not at all speaking of human love, which is based on human emotions, but the highest form of love, that which emanates from the source, God Himself! This love is not based on the merit of the object of its love but is based on and defined by its source—God!

Everyone who loves above human capacity is born of God and knows God. However, when one's love is based on what he will receive from the object or thing loved, that love is human in origin and will eventually fail. But when we love (by the Spirit) for the will and purpose of the Life that brought us forth, we will have entered a place of maturity known to only a few who have risked everything for the blessing of knowing Christ beyond knowledge! The love of God as seen in Christ is the Father's goal for all who have faith.

The born-again person is never needy nor love-starved. Now, when we apprehend what God has provided for us through Jesus Christ, we will have realized His goal. Realizing or being made aware of the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, brings a greater understanding of Christ to us and to all whom the Father has placed in our sphere. It is through God's love that we affect the world around us. The things we say and do are a result of God's love or the lack thereof. Therefore, let us be motivated by the love of God in everything we say and do. It is this love that leads us into the full expression of God as sons!

Growing in His love,
Pastor

