

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 6



GOD'S LOVE IN US

Scripture Texts: John 17:26; Romans 5:5

Can one love because he is told he should? Can we love by trying? How can we love God, the brethren, our enemies, and one another as God commands? We cannot with the power we already have. God's love must be put into us. How? God gives His love to His people. We cannot love and forgive without God's love in us.

MEMORY VERSE: *God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him.—I John 4:16b*

God's Love to Be in Us

In **John 17** Jesus was praying to His Father the night before His death. This prayer was not for Himself. That prayer had been prayed in Gethsemane, prayed and finished and answered. This prayer was for His people, those with Him then and all who would believe afterward. This includes us. As a last request for the people He loved enough to die for, He asked for the most necessary and far-reaching gifts to carry them through the years of life's warfare without His physical presence.

John 17:26 And I have declared unto them thy name. Jesus mentioned His Father's name many times through this chapter. His name represents His Person, His power, His love, all that He is. Jesus gave the Father's name, and the disciples accepted it, believed in it, trusted in it, and trusted the Father. They were to be kept through (by the power of) His name (**verse 11**).

That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them . . . Through the power of His name, His love is put into those who trust in His name. This is Jesus' purpose in opening the way for them to know the Father. We cannot measure or comprehend that love, but we can know a portion of it we feel stirring in our own hearts. The limitless reach of His love is too great for us to fully comprehend. The same quality of love He had, we are to have. Where Jesus is, there is love.

Two Kinds of Love

There is a natural, human love that God built into man when He created him. Husbands and wives love each other, parents love children, and friends love friends. Even mother animals love their offspring. But human love is of a limited, selfish kind. We love in areas that touch ourselves. "Me and my wife, son John and his wife, we four and no more." Read **Matthew 5:46**.

The love of God is of a different quality. His love is pure, holy, impartial, unselfish, unlimited, complete, and transforming. His love first flows back as love to God. It fills the heart with joy. It is an urge in the heart to give oneself that others may know Him. His love is a warm feeling flowing out to all people, known and unknown, lovable or unlovely. Natural human love alone can never please God. We must have the love of God.

How Love Is Given

Romans 5:5 The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost . . . To have IT we must have HIM. **God is love.** All of the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—have the essential characteristic of love. All Three join in any work in us. A justified person has the love of God, can forgive those who wrong him, and act as directed by love. The love of God comes in to flood the soul when **the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.** This is the normal Christian love. Many do not reach it (often because they are not taught), but those lives are subnormal, immature, unfulfilled spiritually, and fall

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short in Christian work. Many have hesitated to proclaim this glorious doctrine. The church, filled with comfortable, self-satisfied people, sometimes cares more for lectures on ethics than it does for this glorious soul-searching Gospel. The cry of the church today should be as in this old hymn, "Back to the blessed old Bible; Back to the light of its word." We need to get back to the Words of our Savior, loving, obeying them all and back to the saving Gospel which sustained the early church.

Love Is Not Formed by Trying

Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit—these were saved people—**unto unfeigned love of the brethren**—they had obtained love by their obedience and the Spirit's work. Therefore, they are to use that love to **love one another with a pure heart fervently (1 Peter 1:22)**. This shows us how we, too, can have and exercise the love of God.

Love reaches out. The work of God is one connected whole. Each part is related to the other part. The love of God does not stand separate. It is a two-way love. Many would teach that God's love takes in everything. His love to us causes us to return that love to God by way of obedience to His commandments (**John 14:15; John 15:10**). It affects all phases of the life in which the Spirit dwells. Jesus, speaking to unbelievers who desired to kill Him, said, **But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you (John 5:42)**. That lack of love hindered their believing. This love will help our believing. . . . **but faith which worketh by love (Galatians 5:6b)**. Many long for more faith. Its fullness comes by way of love, and love, by way of the Holy Spirit. **Perfect love casteth out fear (1 John 4:18)**. Not that a person will not meet frightening occurrences or circumstances; these may come as long as we are in this world. But inward fear (which is entirely different from outward, physical fright) is removed from the heart. Read **2 Timothy 1:7**.

As this love is good to receive, it is also necessary to live by and to go to Heaven by. Read **1 Corinthians 13:3, 1 Corinthians 13:13**. How can we keep this love? We find the answer in **Matthew 26:41; Hebrews 12:15; Jude 20-21**.

JUST A THOUGHT

"God cannot do THROUGH you what He is not permitted to do IN you."

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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