

The QBC Daily Nugget March 3, 2010

“The Rules of the Lord are true and righteous. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold” (Psalm 19:9b-10a)

JOHN 15:9 - As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: **WHERE IT ALL STARTS.** In today’s reference, our Lord gives us a great privilege and command – “Abide in His love.” Don’t be quick to get to the command and get busy living the Christian life. Allow ourselves to simmer on what comes before the command - “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you”. Allow that to warm the heart before we get busy seeking to understand and obey the command to abide.

In the Christian life, we know that obedience is the goal God has for us. That goal is for His glory and our good. It was that way before the fall in the Garden of Eden and it is the goal for those restored in relationship with God through the Lord Jesus. It is by obedience we “tell” the Lord we love Him – ““If you love me, you will keep my commandments” (**JOHN 14:15**). To love the Lord involves not only our lips but our actions (**JAMES 1:22**). But obedience must flow from a heart that has been apprehended by the love of God. I know too painfully how to perform the conduct of the Christian life without being controlled by what makes the Christian life – “For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died” (**2 CORINTHIANS 5:14**). The starting and continuing points in every role we have - husbands, wives, fathers, mothers, sons, daughters, employers, employees, educators, and everything else between and around them – must be the love of Christ controlling us. The Apostle Paul said without love, we are simply “a noisy gong or clanging cymbal” (**1 CORINTHIANS 13:1**).

What is a practical way to be warmed and thoroughly gripped by the words of Jesus, “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you” so the result is a life abiding in and controlled by such love? There are many things we could discuss. The need for holiness, an effective prayer life, time in the Word, but one of the most important acts of faith, and necessary to know this experience, is a life of thanksgiving and gratitude. We may not “feel” this love right now. We often don’t, but that does not make it untrue. One of the highest expressions of faith is giving thanksgiving for something God has given us and we don’t sense or “feel” what He has given us. Like boldness to witness or feeling loved by God. Faith doesn’t wait for a warm feeling to act. It acts and then often the feeling follows. For instance, I am fearful to witness. So are you. We don’t wait for the “right opportunity” which is often an excuse to justify our fear. We simply seize the moment and whisper, “Father, thank you for giving me the spirit of power not of fear” and then act upon His Word and share Christ – “For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control” (**2 TIMOTHY 1:7**). Here is a story showing the proper attitude of thanksgiving for what God has given us.

One day a daughter of a printer, who worked where they were printing Martin Luther’s translation of the Bible, picked up a small scrap of paper from the floor on which was printed these words: “God so loved the world that He gave . . .” The rest of the sentence was torn off. The mother and girl had been taught God was cruel and just waiting to punish them. Her mother looked at her daughter and asked, “What did God give?” The girl replied, “I don’t know what He gave, but if He loved us well enough to give us anything, He is not angry with us and we don’t need to be afraid; we can start thanking and loving Him for whatever He gave us.” And though **JOHN 3:16** was incomplete in that little piece of paper, the message is not. God loves us, so loves us. It is from that position we love Him, leading to a loving of others, with hearts overflowing with thanksgiving for such love!

PRAYER: “Lord, I need to learn to rest in Your love today. Teach me how.”

QUOTE: “We are transformed by looking to Jesus and it is a look of love.”