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### Love: The Dynamics of the Christian Life

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## LOVE--THE DYNAMICS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS  
NUMBER 50  
EPHESIANS 5:1-2

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EPHESIANS 5:1-2 "Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children: And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour."

In this great chapter we will see three areas of the dynamics of the Christian life.

Verses 1-12--The impact that comes to the Christian life from the erection of an edification complex in the soul.

Verses 13-18--The essence of The Spirit Filled Life.

Verses 19-Eph. 6:9--A combination of the edification complex plus the Spirit Filled Life.

EPHESIANS 5:1-2 "Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children: And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour." "Be ye" comes from the Greek word "ginomai" and it is a present, active imperative and it means to become something you have not been before. It is not optional, it is a command from God. It goes with the same kind of command we saw in verse 32 of chapter four where the command was "Be ye kind." As a result of faith in Christ and growth in faith and love and knowledge of the Scripture, the believer is to become something he was not before. What he is to become refers to something that must happen in his soul. It is not an outward change in dress or style or appearance, but an inner change in the soul. It deals with the result of having an edification complex erected in the soul. So in this passage under consideration, we are half way between the command to "put on the new man" of Ephesians 4:24 and the "be ye filled with the Spirit" of Ephesians 5:18. The combination of these two forces forms the dynamics of the Christian life.

The word "therefore" is used to show that this is the expected result that comes from the erection of the edification complex in the soul. The word here translated "followers" comes from the Greek word "mimetes" and it means to become "imitators" of God. "The God" here refers to the manifest God, who is always Jesus Christ.

### THE DOCTRINE OF BEING IMITATORS OF GOD

1. JESUS CHRIST IS GOD. But in his first advent Jesus became man. This made him the unique person of the universe. He is the most perfectly adjusted person in the human race. So this verse really says, "Keep on being imitators of The God, Jesus Christ." In his humanity he is the most perfectly adjusted person of the whole human race. Jesus was like God in the essence of his deity but he was unlike God in that he became a man with a body, a soul, and a spirit, minus the old sin nature. Jesus Christ is the only one of whom can be used the words God-man.
2. FROM HIS EARLY YOUTH JESUS CHRIST INHALED BIBLE TRUTH INTO HIS SOUL. Remember the mechanics of this. He took in truth into his soul and then he stored up residual doctrine in his spirit. He went upon an intense study of the Word of God.

LUKE 2:40 "And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him."

LUKE 2:52 "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."

In his youth and young manhood, Jesus went on a crash program of learning Bible doctrine. Please notice this--He did this in his youth. "And the child grew" this is an imperfect, active, indicative of "auzano." It means he began to grow and kept on growing. "Waxed strong" means to wax strong in self-discipline. The word is "Krataioo" and is in the passive voice. It means he had great concentration. He developed the ability to study. "Filled with wisdom" is a present, passive, participle and this has to do with the erection of an edification complex in his soul. Jesus was a disciplined student.

In Luke 2:52 the word "increased" is from "prokopto" and it means advance and to cut a path where there is pressure and opposition. He grew in wisdom and knowledge of the Word of God. The word translated favor really means "grace." So Christ grew in grace orientation. He grew in stature. He grew in the disciplining of his own mind.

### 3. THE FAMILY OF GOD.

Believers in the Church Age are members of the family of God.

GALATIANS 3:26 "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."

As members of the family of God, believers should bear the family resemblance.

### 4. JESUS CHRIST--THE MANIFEST PERSON OF THE TRINITY.

The only one of the Trinity that is seen is Jesus Christ.

JOHN 1:18 "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

JOHN 6:46 "Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father."

1 TIMOTHY 6:16 "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen."

1 JOHN 4:12 "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us."

### 5. JESUS CHRIST--ALSO A HUMAN BEING.

Christ in his humanity was constantly filled with the Holy Spirit. He was constantly taking in doctrine and he erected a fantastic edification complex in his soul. This was evident by the time he was twelve years of age on the occasion of his first visit to the temple in Jerusalem. He had doctrine in his soul, built an edification complex, and had perfect happiness and a relaxed mental attitude. When his disciples got excited, he said, "Are there not twelve hours in the day?"

6. BECOME IMITATORS OF THE MANIFEST PERSON OF THE GODHEAD, NAMELY JESUS CHRIST.

This achievement is accomplished in two ways--

1. Through the erection of an edification complex. Eph. 4:24
2. Through the filling of The Holy Spirit. Eph. 5:18

This truth is also declared in Galatians 4:19 and Eph. 3:16-17.

7. THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE CHURCH AGE WORKS THIS MIRACLE IN THE HEART AND LIFE OF THE BELIEVER.

This is taught in--

JOHN 16:14 "He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."

JOHN 7:39 "(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)"

1 CORINTHIANS 6:19-20 "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's"

8. THE PRODUCTION OF THE CHARACTER OF CHRIST IN US.

The filling of the Holy Spirit is the only way the character of Christ can be developed in an individual. The raw material the Holy Spirit uses in building this structure in the soul is the Word of God.

9. A GREAT COMMAND FROM GOD.

Consequently in Ephesians 5:18, we will get a command from God to be filled with the Holy Spirit. This command is built on the other commands that have come before it; namely, to take the truth of the Word of God and from that truth build this structure in the soul.

"As dear children" should be translated "as beloved children." The moment we believe we are put into union with Christ. We can never get out of that relationship. Remember, Christianity is a relationship, not a religion. We share his life, his righteousness, his sonship, his heirship, his election, his destiny, his priesthood and his future rulership. That's the plan of God for believers and no sin is as great as that plan. "Beloved" is a title for Jesus Christ. He was called "beloved" from eternity past and that means that God has always loved him with a perfect love. Beloved means that someone is the recipient of perfect love. Jesus has always had this love from his father, and now that we become children of God, we become the recipients of that perfect love also. We share that same perfect love.

EPHESIANS 1:6 "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

1 JOHN 3:2 "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

EPHESIANS 5:2 "And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour."

Here is another present, active, imperative of the Greek word "peripateo" and it is a command for us to walk in love. This means we are to do this all the time, as a way of life. The active voice means you must do this for yourself. The imperative mood means that this is not optional, but is a command from God. Walking has in it the concept of making progress. Also walking means that we must take one step at a time. We are to walk by faith--

2 CORINTHIANS 5:7 "(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)"

We are to walk in doctrine--

3 JOHN 3 "For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth."

We are to walk in the spirit--

GALATIANS 5:16 "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."

Here we are commanded to walk in the sphere of love. This is "agape" love and it means mental attitude love. It also means we are to walk minus mental attitude sins.

#### THE DOCTRINE OF LOVE

1. Maximum Divine love.

At the point of salvation every believer passes the point of propitiation and comes under maximum divine love. It is impossible to talk about love without talking about the cross. At the cross the righteousness and justice of God were satisfied. But remember, man must come to the cross in faith in order to appropriate and experience this maximum love of God. God found a way to love sinful man and still be consistent with his perfect character.

2. Sin doesn't cut off this maximum love.

God can love every believer with this maximum love in spite of the believer's status. This is the meaning of grace.

3. The three categories of love.

- a. Love toward God. The more doctrinal truth you know the more you can love God. Capacity to love is based on doctrinal knowledge.
- b. Love toward the opposite sex.
- c. Love toward your friends.

4. Relationship love.

Apart from the three categories of love listed above, there is another type of love and we call it "relationship love." This is the love of parents for their children and children for their parents. The word is "storge" love, and this is a relationship love. This word does not appear in the New Testament but 2 Timothy 3 has in it the word "astorge" and it is translated "without natural affection."

5. The love of things.

This is the love we have for the details of life like money, or success or pleasure or sex. These are the details of life and can be properly related to life by the right kind of love.

6. There are two main words in the New Testament used for love--  
Phileo (the verb) and philos (the noun). Agapao (the verb)  
and agape (the noun).  
Another word for love, sensuous love, is "eros" but it does not  
appear in the New Testament.  
Phileo is an entire soul love. Every facet of the soul is in-  
volved here. Phileo is the strongest word for love in the Bible.  
The commentaries say that "agape" is divine love, but this is  
incorrect. Look at one verse which will prove this point.  
JOHN 3:19 "And this is the condemnation, that light is come  
into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, be-  
cause their deeds were evil."  
This verse declares that unsaved men can employ "agape" love and  
if unsaved men can employ this kind of love, then it is not  
divine love. Now when God is the subject of agape, then it is  
divine love. Agape love is mental attitude love. "Phileo" love  
is used when referring to God.  
1 JOHN 2:5 "But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the  
love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him."  
Here phileo love is used of God. So both agape and philos are  
used of God. They are also used of man. The subject determines  
the kind of love it is. I am convinced phileo love is the  
greatest love of all. God loves us both with agape love and  
philos love.
7. The meaning of "agape" and "Philos"  
Therefore, we can come to this conclusion: "agape" love is a  
mental attitude type love with emphasis on the exclusion of  
mental attitude sins. "Philos" love is a total soul love as  
illustrated in John 21:15-17.
8. Therefore, the filling of the Spirit can produce mental attitude  
love, namely, "agape" love. This means freedom from mental at-  
titude sins.
9. A direct command to all of us.  
All believers are commanded to have an "agape" type love toward  
other believers, but we are never commanded to have the "philos"  
type love toward others. Agape love is automatic when you are  
in fellowship with God. But the philos type love is dependent  
on the edification complex in the soul and requires a maximum  
amount of doctrinal truth in the mind.
10. Highest love.  
There is a sense in which agape love is taken and carried to its  
highest level and then it becomes philos type love.
11. Limits of love.  
Agape love is limited to the mental attitude love. Philos type  
love is total soul love. Agape love is used of the unbeliever  
in John 3:19. Philos love is used of God in John 16:17.

So "walking in love" here refers to putting on an edification complex  
in the soul and this will bring to your life stability and inner vic-  
tory. Please notice the basis for this love. It is "as Christ also  
loved us." That is an aorist tense and it refers to the time when he  
went to the cross for us. It is an active voice and it means he did it  
himself. The indicative mood means the reality of this salvation.

Five Concepts Concerning Love

1. A person's declaration of his love is no stronger than the character of the person making the declaration.
2. Christ had an edification complex in his soul, and therefore, had a maximum capacity to love.
3. The love of Christ for us does not depend on the type of people we are but on the type of character he has.
4. Christ was perfect in character, therefore, perfect in love.
5. Love of this nature must express itself and it did at the cross. Christ loving us and giving himself for us resulted in the cross. "For us" is from "huper" and it means on behalf of us.

Notice the word "sacrifice" which is from "thusia", so the cross is here related to all the Old Testament animal sacrifices. This offering was made to God "as a sweet smelling savour" and this shows his sacrifice on the cross is connected with the Levitical offerings. LEVITICUS 1:9 "But his inwards and his legs shall he wash in water: and the priest shall burn all on the altar, to be a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord."

LEVITICUS 1:13 "But he shall wash the inwards and the legs with water: and the priest shall bring it all, and burn it upon the altar: it is a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord."

LEVITICUS 1:17 "And he shall cleave it with the wings thereof, but shall not divide it asunder: and the priest shall burn it upon the altar, upon the wood that is upon the fire: it is a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord."

This means that God was satisfied with what Christ did on the cross. What is your attitude toward this perfect love?