

# Notes for the Ones Called-Out to Meet

Info: (651) 283-0568 Discipleship Training Ministries, Inc. www.dtminc.org Today's Date: October 28, 2018

## By This We Know Love

By Dan Trygg

“...the focal point of the instruction is love out from a clean heart, and a good conscience, and ‘unphony’ faith, ...concerning which some people, having lost this aim, have turned off toward empty talk...” I Timothy 1:5,6

“Beloved, we might love one another because the love is out from God, and everyone loving has been begotten out from God and experientially knows God. The one not loving did not experientially know God, because God is love. In this, the love of God was made visible among us, because God sent His unique Son into the world in order that we might live by means of Him. In this is the love, not that we have loved God, rather that He loved us and sent His Son a satisfactory sacrifice concerning our sins. ...We might love, because He first loved us.” I John 4:7-10,19

We have learned that **agapē love is a consistent, ongoing *choosing* to prefer another person for their good**, without regard for self-gain, **...a kind of self-giving which is more than our natural human life is capable of producing and sustaining**. Only life which has its origin from a super-natural source is able to love this way. This is simply the reality of the sin-distorted condition of our human hearts. Thus, it was necessary for us to be radically changed inside for this self-giving to become operational within us. God’s plan to deal with the effects of sin included not only forgiveness, but the need to bring about this radical inner change, to give us hearts of a different quality and nature. In addition, since all our human experience has shown us only imperfect models of love, ...relationships where our value, acceptance and esteem seemed to be rooted in our performance in some way..., we are pre-programmed to evaluate and treat others in this same, conditional fashion. God is well aware of this problem, and He has made provisions for us to move past the scars, hurts, and poor modeling which has been impressed into our life experiences. **It is clear that the Lord understands that in order for anyone to learn to love in accordance with His heart of love, he or she must first have an experiential knowledge of God and His love** (I Jn. 4:7). How we get in touch with God’s love will vary from person to person. The point is, however, that **we must *know* the God of love in order to *give* the love of God**.

**The message of the Bible, from cover to cover, is that *God loves humankind***. In spite of the distastefulness and revulsion that our sin causes to His holy nature, He has diligently and faithfully worked to provide a way for our reconciliation to Him, a way that would not just *cover* our sin, but *remove it* forever, ...one which would *transform us* inside and out, so that we would be able and desirous to walk in ways compatible with His character.

**Another message clearly communicated from Scripture**, though not given nearly as much space, **is that there has been a huge smear campaign mounted by a being hostile to both God and people**, who desires to keep humanity under his influence by distorting and debunking the character of God. **By misrepresenting God’s motives and His heart for people, the Adversary seeks to drive a wedge between us and Him**, so that people will not perceive in God anything desirable and accessible. **For the Serpent to maintain his dominating power over people, he must dispel *misinformation, lies and slander* about God, to keep people at a distance from Him**. He deceived our first parents into distrust and disobedience originally, and thus, by their free choice, introduced the ravaging effects of sin into this world which had been given into their care. The delicate balance of God’s creation was tilted, and the effect has been pervasive. As an infectious disease, or a genetic mutation, sin has continued to be reproduced in succeeding generations, and the destructive impact of its effect has spread, multiplied, and progressed geometrically with our population growth.

To clearly understand God’s character, we must accurately see what He had to deal with. There are at least **five aspects of the human condition which God chose to overcome in order to help us, and to show His love:**

(1.) **We were *broken***. The humanity that was originally created no longer existed in its pure form. The entire gene pool was tainted. We no longer functioned as He designed us to function. We were sick, debilitated, and scarred.

(2.) **We were *revulsive***. Just as you or I may experience a gag-reflex when we are exposed to a particularly bad smell, in a similar way human sin causes a “wrath-reflex” or a “wrath-revulsion” in God.

(3.) **We were *in bondage***. There was no possibility of change, since not only were we naturally mutated, and could only live out what we are, but also because our brokenness created an inner emptiness which we naturally attempt to cover, fill or medicate in order not to feel its pain. Furthermore, the enemy of our souls actively works to get people “hooked” on some kind of addictive behavior, to keep us locked into bondage.

(4.) **We were *deceived, manipulated and distanced from God***. We were even *hostile* to Him. By distorting our view of the world around us, the enemy actively used many techniques to keep us away from the truth of who God

is. By distraction, he lures us away; and by slander he misrepresents the heart, intent, and actions of God in order to cause us to resent Him, and thus stay away.

(5.) **We were powerless.** Unable to change ourselves, and unaware of our misperceptions of reality, we could not affect any real and lasting change to help ourselves.

**Only God** could

(1.) **Heal**, repair, renew or even create something better.

(2.) **Cleanse** and remove every distasteful thing, and actually make us fresh, positive and delightful.

(3.) **Liberate** us from bondage to fulfill a positive, hopeful destiny.

(4.) **Reveal the truth** about Himself and reality, giving us new vision.

(5.) **Empower us** to not only walk out of bondage, but to also live a positive, fulfilling existence.

Without His intervention, we had no possible way to truly better our situation.

**The *agapē* of God is made visible most powerfully by the commitment evidenced in the incarnation, life, death and resurrection of Y'shua**, Yahweh's salvation.

**The Contrast** -- In spite of years, generations of distasteful, disgusting behavior on the part of man, in spite of disappointment, repeated failure and defeat of human effort, God patiently, persistently, unremittingly persevered in preparing for the most significant event in all of history, human or otherwise.

**The Cost of the Choice** -- The Eternal Word, some unfathomable aspect of God Himself, voluntarily chose to leave the glories and majesty of heaven to be expressed, embodied, and ensconced in the most humble and helpless of creatures, a human child. Then, through 33 years of human existence, He experienced the limitations and weakness of our existence in an imperfect and cruel world, as an apparent bastard child of a relatively impoverished laborer, growing up under a harsh, military occupation, being hated and oppressed by foreigners, even considered second-class by His own countrymen, being a Galilean. After three and a half years of teaching and revealing the Father's concern for His children, ...*announcing* the soon initiation of a kingdom that would begin to undo and assault the powers and effect of darkness, and also *demonstrating* that power by healing the sick, feeding the hungry, and casting out demons by a word..., He, the King, voluntarily chose to give Himself away completely, undergoing hardship, torture, even death to break the power of sin on our behalf. The full wrath-reflex of God against sin was levied against *Him*.

**The Expanding Hope: Reconciliation, Counteraction, and Re-creation** -- He took the death-stroke that was due us all. Why? To just let us off the hook? Oh, no. It was *much more* than that. *It was to totally counteract the expanding destruction of sin's dread disease.* It was to introduce a *new creative force* into the world that would be *more powerful* than sin and death. The first glimpse of that was revealed by the empty tomb on resurrection morning. His appearances to Mary, the women, the apostles, Peter, James, the two on the road to Emmaus, the 500 brethren, and, later on, to the apostle Paul, are the evidences that God had broken the power of sin, and redeemed us from bondage and hopelessness to purchase us for His own. This is just the *beginning!* In Romans 5, the apostle declares, "God demonstrates His own love toward us, because, yet being sinners, Christ died for us. *Much more then*, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be delivered from the wrath of God by means of Him. For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by means of the death of His Son, *much more*, having been reconciled, we shall be delivered in the life of Him." ***The resurrection of Christ has released a new force into the world, a life-giving, life-reclaiming, life-activating power that, through the redeemed, is to assault the very strongholds of hell's forces occupying this world*** (Matt. 16:18).

**What can we learn of God's love from the events of Jesus' life, passion and resurrection?**

(1.) **Agapē does not rest in the loveliness of the person** being loved, but in the will and intent of the lover. God endured much that was distasteful and unpleasant to Him, in order to be able to help us.

(2.) **Agapē is incredibly patient**, and has a long-term view regarding a solution, but an immediate offer of encouragement and relationship to those who will respond.

(3.) **Agapē is willing to go among those it desires to benefit**, to give up great comfort, privilege, and leisure to communicate love, yet maintains its own integrity.

(4.) **Agapē is willing to pay a very deep, self-sacrificial price** in order to meet the need.

(5.) **Agapē can be a powerful, far-reaching force to effect good**, reaching beyond one life to many others.