

Living in the Father's Love

by Larry Bennett, contributing writer

Love trumps every human emotion. Anger separates and alienates us from those we care about the most. Jealousy becomes possessive behavior that drives our loved ones away. Pride keeps us from being real, and sets up a wall preventing us from developing transparent relationships. But our Heavenly Father's love sets us free and breaks down all those barriers.

God's love helps us establish lasting relationships that bind our hearts with others. However, the administration of this love has a divine order. First, we must be able to receive love before we can adequately give it to others. God wired us to be purveyors of His love; but He knew that in and of ourselves, we lack the capacity to give continual love. That's the reason He sent Jesus to provide the ultimate act of love. Jesus died in our place on the cross, in order that each of us can become a child of God and then be a receiver of the Father's love.

God not only wants us to be continual recipients of the Father's love, but He wants us to learn to live and walk in His love. How do we do that? We must be willing receivers of His divine love. It is more than accepting Jesus as one's Savior. It involves an act of the will. We go the next step in our spiritual growth by abandoning our life to Him. We are declaring "I am all in, and committed to serving God all the days of my life." When we do that, there is an exchange that takes place – we exchange our self-centered, self-directed life for His life. It's an acknowledgement that 'I can't live my life in my own strength. I need Christ's divine life within me for direction, wisdom, and guidance.'

When we learn to live "in the Father's love" several things happen.

1. **We give up the idea that our goodness controls the way God treats us.** We abandon the idea that if we do our part, then He will do His part. God always does His part because He always has His hand in our lives. God promises us, "*I will never leave you nor forsake you*" (Hebrews 13:5, NKJV).
2. **We would let Him have His way with us, so that we can become more like Him.** He always knows what is best for us. "*God causes all things to work together*" (Romans 8:28).
3. **God will set us free from those things in which we get our security.** "*Apart from me you can do nothing*" (John 15:5).
4. **We will see that suffering is God's way of setting us free, so we can follow Him at a deeper level.** "*Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone*" (John 12:24, NKJV).
5. **We will learn that walking in God's love is enough.** "*In Him you have been made complete*" (Colossians 2:10).
6. **God will increase our "love capacity," so we can become givers of His love to others.**

Bottom Line

God loves you more than the world could ever love you. His love is pure, unconditional, and abundant. Living and resting in His love is the best place a follower of Jesus can dwell. Abiding in His love is not a formula or a religious ritual. It is not a list of “do’s and don’ts”. But it’s a gift from God, as we yield every aspect of our lives to His control. So give up, surrender, and then abide and walk in His sweet love.

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