

BIBLE LIFE MESSAGES

Give Me Three Good Reasons to Express Love!

I John 4:16-21

1 Years ago a missionary explorer, Frederick Arnot, was traveling through the tall grass in Africa with a group of Africans he had converted. As they were walking down this narrow path a lion jumped out in front of one of the young men. Immediately Arnot pushed him to the ground and covered him with his own body. This must have startled the lion because it retreated without harming anyone in the party.

On hearing about this incident, the chief of the tribe stated, “I would go anywhere with a white man who would put his own body between a lion and his black friend!”^{1 2}

This man was willing to, literally, lay down his life for his brother. This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.^{2 3}

Why would anyone do that? Why love someone that much? Our scripture today tells us.⁴

¹ “Loving Others”, I John 4:7-11, Our Daily Bread.

² I John 3:16.

From First John, chapter 4, verses 16 through 21, we read, God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.³ ⁵

We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, “I love God,” yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.⁴

This scripture points out three good reasons to express love.⁶

The first reason is . . .

³ | John 4:16-18.

⁴ | John 4:19-21.

I. Expressing Love Presents the Lord's Life Through You - v16

Expressing love presents the Lord's life through you. Verse 16, **God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.** ⁷

Expressing love is a sign that God is living in you. ⁸

The word **live** in the original language ⁵ means to stay, abide, wait for, keep on or to dwell. ⁹

Acts, chapter 2, verse 38 promises us that God, the Holy Spirit, would come into a genuine believer's life when they repented and were baptized. **Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."**

Now that the Lord indwells us, why does the Bible continue to talk about the Holy Spirit "filling" you? ¹⁰

⁵ μένω.

Filling does not mean here filling as in filling up a glass but in the sense of controlling your life. See passages such as Ephesians, chapter 5, verse 18, and Romans, chapter 8, verses 9 through 11. ⁶ ₁₁

How does the Holy Spirit fill us? How does God take control of our lives?

The late Dr. Bill Bright, in his book “Have You Made the Wonderful Discovery of the Spirit-Filled Life?” ⁷ introduced a method to help you to allow the Holy Spirit to fill you called **Spiritual Breathing**. ¹²

Sin is the barrier that stands between you and God. ¹³ First John, chapter 1, verse 9 ⁸ says you receive

⁶ Ephesians 5:18 - Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. and Romans 8:9-11 - You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you . . . But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.

⁷ Bill Bright, “Have You Made the Wonderful Discovery of the Spirit-Filled Life?”, 1966-2003, Campus Crusade for Christ, Inc.

⁸ I John 1:9 - If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

forgiveness as a believer when you, genuinely, confess your sin. ¹⁴

With your sin removed, you can ask the Holy Spirit to take control of that yielded area of your life! **If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him! ^{9 15}**

Expressing love in your life acts like a gauge measuring God's Holy Spirit presence in your life! ¹⁶

How do you express God's love to others? How did Lord Jesus do it? ¹⁷

**He healed a leper, ^{10 18} He healed two blind men, ^{11 19}
He fed five thousand people, ^{12 20} He cried over**

⁹ Luke 11:13.

¹⁰ Matthew 8:1-3 - When he came down from the mountainside, large crowds followed him. A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean." Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" Immediately he was cured of his leprosy.

¹¹ Matthew 9:27-31 - As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, calling out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!" When he had gone indoors, the blind men came to him, and he asked them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" "Yes, Lord," they replied. Then he touched their eyes and said, "According to your faith will it be done to you"; and their sight was restored.

Jerusalem, ¹³ ₂₁ He taught those who were like sheep without a shepherd, ¹⁴ ₂₂ He raised Lazarus, ¹⁵ ₂₃ He blessed little children, ₂₄ and He went to the cross! ¹⁶ ₂₅

Now add verse 20, **If anyone says, “I love God,” yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.** Today, Lord Jesus uses you to love others by satisfying their needs. You show your love to God by being His instrument in showing love to others! ₂₆

The second reason is . . .

Jesus warned them sternly, “See that no one knows about this.” But they went out and spread the news about him all over that region.

¹² Matthew 15:32-38.

¹³ Matthew 23:37 - O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing.

¹⁴ Matthew 9:36 - When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

¹⁵ John 11:41-43.

¹⁶ John 3:16.

II. Expressing Love Takes Away the Fear of Judgment - v17-18

Expressing love takes away the fear of judgment. ²⁷

Verse 17 says **expressing love will give you confidence** on the Day of Judgment, **In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him.** ²⁸

Practicing love as a way of life will make **love complete!** ²⁹ The word **complete** ¹⁷ means to bring to maturity, to be perfect. ³⁰

Confidence ¹⁸ means courage, to speak unreserved and boldly. ³¹

Developing a mature love will give you this confidence at the Day of Judgment because you will be like Lord Jesus! ³²

What is the Judge's standard for righteousness?

¹⁷ τελειόω.

¹⁸ παρρησία.

Lord Jesus told the story of a king who separated his subjects into two groups. He told the first group, the righteous, that they had a blessing, an inheritance and a kingdom prepared for them. He told the second group, the cursed, to leave him and go into eternal punishment.

The reason for the separation was the righteous displayed love to others as a way of life and the condemned group didn't. In fact, the king said that when you are giving to help others you are actually giving to Him! ¹⁹ Expressing love is simply meeting human need! ₃₃

Verse 18 continues with **expressing love casts out fear, **There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.****

Shoichi Yokoi, a Japanese soldier, fearing execution after the Second World War, fled to the jungles of Guam in 1944. He was found in 1972; 28 years later!

¹⁹ Matthew 25:31-46.

My mother, who was with my dad, stationed in Guam in 1950-51, actually heard about the Japanese soldier who was raiding food from the local trash bins when she was living there. He waisted a quarter of a century of his life because of fear! ³⁴

The third reason is . . .

III. Expressing Love Displays Your Gratitude Towards God - v19-21

Expressing love displays your gratitude towards God!

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Have you ever wanted to return the favor to God for what He did for you on the cross?

Verses 19 through 21 continue, We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, “I love God,” yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother. ³⁶

Verse 19 says that **we love because He first loved us.** Our love is a result of Him loving us first! ³⁷ Verse 21 concludes that God, then, commands us to express this love to others. ³⁸ In fact, God says in verse 20, you can't really love Him unless you are loving other people! ³⁹

Lord Jesus said that love is the greatest commandment! “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ ²⁰ ⁴⁰

But, **love must go beyond simply saying, “I love you!”** ⁴¹ James, chapter 2, verses 14 through 17, puts it this way, **What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, “Go, I wish**

²⁰ Matthew 22:36-39.

you well; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

This type of love is needed so desperately.

Do you know, babies who are abandoned or unloved do not grow normally. Rejection has an adverse affect on them physically and emotionally. Nurses have been taught to look at them and talk to them until they begin responding to their warm personal attention. They become aware of the smiling faces of those who hold and cuddle them. They begin to show signs of progress and to, actually, gain begin gaining weight.

The same is true with new Christians. They need special attention too. If you ignore them, they could eventually fade away, back into the world. Immature Christians need to be continually loved into the kingdom of God. ⁴²

So, why express love?

Because God is love and your goal is to become like Him. When you express love you become more like God!

Love in your life become your measuring tool for your spiritual progress!

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