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Christ-Centered Change



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Loving God - Loving People

God is all about community. No Christian should live in isolation. Loving God and loving people are two sides of the same coin - you can't really do one without the other. God is love. If you don't have a relationship with God, you don't fully understand what it means to love. You might like people and even care about them, but I don't believe we are capable of truly loving another person until we have experienced God's amazing unconditional love. Jesus said, "Apart from me you can do nothing." He also said, "I give you a new commandment that you love one another." Only with the love of Christ in us are we equipped to love like God loves. His love working through us creates a much greater capacity for genuine, self-giving love towards others.

Love comes from God. It is because God first loved us that we can respond to him with love. "Let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loves is born of God, and knows God." (I John 4:7) It is only when we have tasted the unselfish, unending, uncompromising love of God that we can feed another person out of what we have received. We cannot truly love God or Man without knowing the One who is the source of all love. Jesus Christ was love incarnate, fully God and fully man. His life is the ultimate love story.

Jesus came to serve, and his brief life on this planet opened the door for us to see and experience God's love through him. Before his life and death, there had never been a living example of the deep, awesome, self-sacrificing love of God. Many men and women before Christ knew God and were even filled with God's Spirit, but no one had ever loved like Jesus loved. And no one since Jesus has expressed this love as perfectly as he did. But, Jesus is still present in the form of his Body the Church, and all Christians collectively possess the fullness of Christ's love.

God's love is in the world and it is changing the world. You can be a part of the transforming power of God's unconditional love - if you invite Jesus to live in you. I imagine many would say that they have done lots of good loving things for other people, but scripture tells us every person's accomplishments will be burned up in the fire and revealed to be nothing but straw if these actions are not grounded in God.

If you don't know Jesus you don't know love in its fullness. It's really that simple. Open your heart to the love that Christ showed when he suffered and died taking on himself the penalty of your sins, and then - you too will love like God loves. Out of gratitude for what Jesus has done for us - as we allow Jesus to live in our hearts, we can love God and Man with real, self-giving, life-changing, heart-healing, unending love!

Love is... Jesus. "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13)

Bill

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