

God's Word: The Love of Christ

Kevin Butcher; April 24, 2013



"...that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height – to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge...that you may be filled with all the fullness of God." Ephesians 3:17-19

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

But what if someone has never known or been able to receive that love? What if they don't receive that love in their home? In school? In church? In life?

SUMMARY:

HOW ARE THEY TO HEAL?

[Or, how is someone to recover from the devastating effects of trying to live life without being grounded in the love of God?]

Here are some typical "Christian" responses – some spoken and some implied – to those struggling to know the love of Christ:

1. You need to read the Bible more.
2. You need to be in a Bible study.
3. You need to hear more sermons.
4. You need to go to church. [And our church needs to come up with some fancy programs and strategies and special services and Easter pageants and have better music and teaching and multimedia in order to heal these folks.]
5. You need a miracle.
6. Sorry – you're on my nerves; I really don't want to mess with you anymore and unless you get your act together, neither does our church.
7. Leave me and us and others alone or I'm calling the cops.
8. Sorry you acted out your emptiness – I might visit you in prison.
9. Sure glad the rest of us aren't so jacked up and empty that we acted out like you!

Cont.

What did Jesus say was the answer to healing in John 13:34-35?

Why do you think Jesus spent so much time touching folks [like the leper in Matthew 8 or the woman at the well in John 4] and listening to their stories and affirming them with His words?

What did Peter say was the answer to healing in I Peter 4:8?

Do you think it is at all ironic that in Acts 2:42, all the activities engaged in by the early believers...were highly intimate and loving and relational?

Neurobiological science shows us that when human beings are not loved well – especially when they are very young [even in the womb] and on into the rest of their lives – damage occurs in the "right brain" where we learn to do relationships, to handle stress, even to know the meaning and experience of love.

The neurobiologists tell us that the damage in the right brain can be healed – but not by words and concepts alone. The damage must be healed by the reverse of the experience that led to the damage in the first place. **The damaged right brain of one who has not been loved well...can only be healed by long term, authentic, intimate and committed love of another human being.**

God's plan for the healing of humanity? TO LAUNCH AN ARMY OF HUMAN BEINGS WHO ARE ALREADY BEING HEALED BY THE LOVE OF GOD THROUGH JESUS CHRIST...TO SPEND THEIR ENTIRE LIVES GIVING THAT LOVE AWAY TO OTHER WOUNDED AND BROKEN HUMAN BEINGS.

APPLICATION:

1. Do you understand that your emptiness cannot be filled by anything other than the love of God in Christ?
2. When I say to you, "Son, brother...the Father loves you with all of His heart"...how does YOUR heart respond? "No way" or "it's too good to be true" or "No one has ever loved me like that" or "I'm on my way to knowing that love" or "I want to believe it...I just don't yet know how."
3. In terms of reaching out to others who are empty, which of the above strategies have you used to try to help someone heal? How have they worked?
4. What would it take for you to being to realize that what the Father is ultimately asking of you – is NOT for you to be some brilliant strategist or savior – but that you simply offer yourself as a committed, loving brother/father/human being – to sacrificially and lovingly walk alongside others who are wounded...all the way home? Would this encourage you? Frighten you? Free you?

"We're heading for something
Somewhere I've never been,
Sometimes I am frightened
But I'm ready to learn...'bout the power of love." Jennifer Rush, 1984

**"And above all things, have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins."
[I Peter 4:8]**