

Foundation to Intimacy: Confidence in Love

Confidence in love before God - enjoying intimacy requires living in the reality of our “belovedness” before God and the fact that we are genuinely authentic lovers of God. A believer confident in love before God will be significantly more committed, resilient and persistent than others who constantly live under the threats and fears of punishment. This is the most effective way to motivate people to 100-fold obedience. This is more effective than just calling people to dedication and to forsake compromise. Spiritual immaturity is not rebellion. Rebellion and immaturity may outwardly look the same, but the heart is very different. God sees the heart.

I. THE CORE IDENTITY OF GOD’S PEOPLE – TWO-FOLD

“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Matt. 3:17)

A. ***“My beloved Son”*** – being beloved of God – God’s favorite

B. ***“In whom I am well pleased”*** – being authentic lovers of God – not hypocrites

This is the place that disillusionment is conquered and the place holy zeal is truly awakened. We go to the Father to find out who we are instead of going to people, especially leaders. Here we receive our identity or the definition of who we are in order to release God’s justice in our lives. ***This is the number one battleground in the spirit.*** The two-fold accusation is against these two truths. First, the enemy accuses us of being **rejected** by God, telling us that we have gone too far or that it is too late to come back. Then he accuses us of being **false** in our love back to God as hopeless hypocrites.

...for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. (Rev. 12: 10)

The sequence of receiving these truths is significant. First, we receive that we are beloved of God, then we receive that we are genuine even in our journey through our weakness.

II. THE BELOVED OF GOD (Matt. 3:17a) – GOD’S FAVORITE

A. As Jesus is the Father’s beloved so the Church is beloved of God. This is the inexhaustible sea of Divine love declared in Eph. 3:18; Jer. 31:3.

AS the Father loved Me, I ALSO have loved you... (John 15:9)

...that the world may know that You...have loved them AS You have loved Me. (Jn.17:23)

And he arose and came to his Father. But when he was still a great way off, his Father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. (Luke 15:20)

- B. The disciple who Jesus loved – God’s favorite – Jn. 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20
Then Peter...saw the disciple whom Jesus loved... (Jn. 21:20)
- C. We must “get into” this vast ocean of endless experience of Divine love. The inexhaustible sea of Divine love is declared in these passages.
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. (Eph. 3:18-19)
The LORD has appeared of old to me, saying: “Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you. (Jer. 31:3) – it is a boundless and eternal ocean of love.
- D. The redeemed are Beloved of God.
Keep me as the apple of Your eye. (Ps. 17: 8)
That Your beloved may be delivered. (Ps. 60: 5)
Dark am I, yet lovely, (Song 1:5)
I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys. (Song 2:1)
Let Me see your face, let Me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely. (Song 2:14)
*Did not Solomon...sin by these things? Yet among many nations there was no king like him, who was **BELOVED OF HIS GOD**; and God made him king over all Israel. Nevertheless pagan women caused even him to sin. (Neh 13:26)*
*What has **MY BELOVED** to do in My house, having done lewd deeds...? When you do evil, then you rejoice. (Jer 11:15)*
*...I have left My heritage; I have given the **DEARLY BELOVED OF MY SOUL** into the hand of her enemies. (Jer 12:7)*
The LORD has appeared of old to me, saying: “Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you.” (Jer. 31:3)
...My covenant they broke, though I was a Husband to them, says the LORD. (Jer. 31:32)
*To all who are in Rome, **BELOVED OF GOD**...(Rom 1:7)*
*As He says also in Hosea: “I will call them My people, who were not My people, and **HER BELOVED**, who was not beloved.” (Rom 9:25; Hos. 2:19-20, 23; Isa. 62:2-5)*
...concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. (Rom. 11:28)

III. IN WHOM I AM PLEASED (Matt. 3:17b) – BEING AUTHENTIC LOVERS OF GOD

- A. The truth of being authentic lovers of God in weakness is emphasized by Peter.

He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?” Peter...said to Him, “Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.” (John 21:17).

- B. The weak disciple leaning on God’s breast (heart) – Jn. 13:23-25; 21:20

Now there was leaning on Jesus’ bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask who it was of whom He spoke. Then, leaning back on Jesus’ breast, he said to Him, “Lord, who is it?” (Jn. 13:23-25)

Who is this coming up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? (Song 8:5)

- C. The prodigal having repented returns in great weakness and immaturity

“And he arose and came to his Father. But when he was still a great way off, his Father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. (Luke 15:20)

- D. Bride in Song of Solomon

Dark am I, yet lovely, (Song 1:5)

I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys. (Song 2:1)

Me see your face, let Me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely.” (Song 2:14)

- E. David experienced the joy of being an authentic lover of God in his weakness. See the Psalms. (Ps. 32; 40; 103).

Ps. 17: 8. Keep me as the apple of Your eye.

Ps. 18:1. I will love You, O LORD, my strength. 19. He delivered me because He delighted in me. 35...Your gentleness has made me great.

PS. 38:3. There is no soundness in my flesh because ...of my sin. 4. For my iniquities have gone over my head...9. Lord, all my desire is before You; and my sighing is not hidden from You. 15. For in You, O LORD, I hope; You will hear, O Lord my God. 18. For I will declare my iniquity; I will be in anguish over my sin. 20. Those also who render evil for good, they are my adversaries, because I follow what is good.

PS. 51:1. Have mercy upon me, O God, according to... the multitude of Your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. 2. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity...3. For I acknowledge my transgressions...6...You will make me to know wisdom. 12. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit. 13. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways...15. O Lord...my mouth shall show forth Your praise. 17. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart— these, O God, You will not despise.

PS. 56: 8. You number my wanderings; put my tears into Your bottle; are they not in Your book? 9. When I cry out to You, then my enemies will turn back; this I know, because God is for me. 10. In God (I will praise His word)...11. In God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid. 12. Vows made to You are binding upon me, O God; I will render praises to You, 13. ...that I may walk before God in the light of the living?

PS. 69: 1. Save me, O God! For the waters have come up to my neck. 5. O God, You know my foolishness; and my sins are not hidden from You. 13...my prayer is to You, O LORD...in the multitude of Your mercy...16. Hear me, O LORD, for Your lovingkindness is good...30. I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify Him with thanksgiving. 32. The humble shall see this and be glad; and you who seek God, your hearts shall live. 33. For the LORD hears the poor, and does not despise His prisoners.

Ps 119:132 Look upon me and be merciful to me, as Your custom is toward those who love Your name. v.159. Consider how I love Your precepts; revive me, O LORD, according to Your lovingkindness.