

1st John # 78

“ Fearless Love” *1st John 4:18-21*

**We’ll always find an excuse for not fulfilling Jesus’ command to love one another but it’s never that we can’t love; it’s just that we won’t.**

It’s easy to love those who love us or share the same views we have but that’s not really love; it’s simply mutual attraction.

*John’s been repeatedly telling us that’s not true love and yet because we have a tendency to associate only with those with the same attitude toward life that we hold, we somehow think it is.*

**Fear; *fobos* in the Greek (phobia) means fear, shock, worry or anxiety; all of which destroy our ability to think and especially our capacity to reason under pressure and that means inability to apply biblical truth which inevitably results in our emotion taking over in the soul.**

Fear represents total disorientation to the plan of God which creates a vacuum in our souls leading to some form of cosmic world system involvement since fear is emotional subjectivity.

**Here’s a case where impersonal love sets the stage for a faith-rest life where the first step is to claim a promise or promises of God to begin accurate thinking which removes fear.**

Fear is the enemy of thought and cowardice is the inability to apply knowledge to a situation.

*Honor, integrity and virtue from living and functioning in the plan of God cannot co-exist with worry, fear and anxiety.*

And so, virtue directed toward God motivates virtue directed toward mankind.

**Sooner or later all believers who advance in the spiritual life, do so only because they switch from crawling in fear of a disciplinary angry God to running alongside a loving God because they’ve learned that He truly loves them so they now truly love and respect Him.**

We cannot pass the point of spiritual childhood until we get away from this restraining concept which is entirely valid initially as the enforced humility part of the spiritual life that’s completely necessary for new believers or babies in Christ but as we grow spiritually, we must get to the motivational part of the spiritual life

**Notice that the impersonal love system of the plan of God is not only the place where virtue, honor and integrity are manufactured but it’s also the only place we can advance to spiritual maturity, where the plan of God can be completed in the Church Age.**

The royal family is designed to live in God’s palace where the only legitimate fear is the virtue of personal love for God; a reverential respect the Bible calls ‘*The fear of the Lord*’ but that’s not involved in this passage.

*Respectful fear for God is a virtue but fear of man is cowardice, arrogance and instability and gone unchecked, it's a sign of world system involvement.*

**And coming to know God through Jesus Christ, His Son, has caused us to comprehend real love so now we and you who choose to follow us as we follow Jesus, can have this same love in you.**

So, it didn't start with us, it started with Him and when we understand that everything of any lasting value begins with God and not us, then we'll correctly interpret anything in this life.

*When we grow to the extent that we begin to fully understand the depth of our salvation with its powerful spiritual life, we begin to love our Lord like never before.*

**Knowledge of God must come before we can ever hope to love Him because we can't really understand the love of God until we understand the Person & Nature of God which is clearly revealed in His Word.**

We can't personally love someone we don't know and we can't know someone without an active desire to learn of them and relate to them.

*And we can only be motivated to love properly if we first know the love God has for us from making a detailed study of the mind of Christ, our top priority.*

**So, we have God's initiating love expressed in antecedent grace which means God not only thought about us before we existed prior to any Creation on His part but He formulated a plan to save us from ourselves, our sin, the devil and his world.**

In eternity past mentioned in Acts 2:23, there was an eternal life conference regarding God's decrees and it was then that God in His omniscience, knew He would create man and man would sin; so God being God, decided to provide the salvation solution even before the problem of sin actually existed.

**We cannot express functional virtue without motivating virtue; so if we claim to love people and don't love God, obviously we have a malfunction toward God.**

And if we claim to love God and don't love people, we have a malfunction that's toward all and it's obvious to all who know us.

**Our relationship with God determines our relationship with man.**

We cannot have confidence in God without having courage toward man and true courage is not a feeling or an emotion.

*Confidence in God is our motivating virtue and because God is our confidence, we will not fear what man can do to us and therefore we have courage regarding people, circumstances and life in general.*

**John says you can see people created by God and if you hate people whom you can see, obviously you hate their Creator; God whom you cannot see.**

If a believer has malfunction in personal love for God as a virtue, he's lost motivation for

any form of love; so no one can love invisible God when he hates visible people demonstrating that he lacks capacity for personal or impersonal love because of his residence in Satan's world system.

*Our attitude toward God determines our attitude toward people which is our motivating virtue in action and our attitude toward people displays our attitude toward God which is our functional virtue in action.*

**Personal love for God is our motivating virtue providing the basis for fulfilling the RFHC or the normal Christian life in which we love one another.**

Since all virtue is developed inside the plan of God, the power of Christianity is found in the filling of the Holy Spirit for expressing true love by walking by means of the Spirit. *So, for believer in Jesus Christ, morality toward man depends on worship of God and courage toward man depends upon confidence in God and impersonal love toward man depends on personal love for God.*