

STUDY TWELVE – FAITH WORKS BY LOVE!

Introduction

As we continue learning about faith and how to live by faith, we must also learn about the love of God. The best place to start learning about it is 1 John.

John is called the “apostle of love”. In the first chapter, verses 1-3, he explains the reason for his writing is to tell what the apostles had seen, heard and experienced when they were with Jesus, so we too, can have relationship with one another, with God the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. This is important because what he and the other apostles experienced with Jesus was a lesson in divine love.

Without a revelation of the love of God, you’ll never have close fellowship and communion with Him and therefore never walk in faith to the fullest extent. There will always be an unwarranted fear of Him if you don’t know and believe He loves you. You cannot live in fear of God and live by faith in Christ Jesus. The two are diametrically opposed.

1 John 4:15-16: *“Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.”*

This is the answer to the prayer Jesus prayed in John 17:26 *“... that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”* He prayed the love of the Father had for Him would be in us. God is love, and love is God, so he who dwells in love dwells in God and God in him.

When you are talking about love, you are not talking about a feeling. You are not talking about something that is a state. You are talking about a Living Being. You are talking about God. When you speak of love, you are speaking about all that God is, all that God can do, all God ever was, and all God ever shall be.

Combating the Devil

One day, the Spirit of God said to me, you don’t understand My motive when I said to turn the other cheek. If you will retaliate in My love by faith, instead of retaliating through the arm of flesh, you can develop My power and My love in you until they are perfected, and I will keep you protected all the time.

When Jesus said, “Turn the other cheek,” He didn’t intent for you to be beaten up. He intended for you to walk so powerfully on the love of God that when you do turn your other cheek, the enemy can’t hit you! Look at 1 John 5:18, *“... he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him.”* That is the greatest testimony of love in the physical realm. God has never asked us to be a lamb to the slaughter. Jesus was the Lamb of God. He was slaughtered in our place.

By misunderstanding God’s motive in asking us to turn the other cheek, we have just laid our heads on the block and let the devil cut them off. The WORD does not say to subordinate yourself to Satan. It says, *“Resist the devil and he will flee from you” (James 4:7)*. But our ideas of resistance have been centred in the natural, physical realm.

We aren’t in physical combat with Satan. He’s a spirit being, so we must fight him with spiritual weapons. *“The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds” (2 Corinthians 10:4)*. These strongholds are not human. We don’t wrestle with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, rulers of darkness of this world and wicked spirits in heavenly places

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(Ephesians 6:12). Once you stop Satan's operation, you won't have any trouble with people doing you harm.

Move by Compassion

An illustration of this is Jesus' reaction to the murder of John the Baptist. You have to remember that John and Jesus were related. In the natural realm, they were cousins, but their kinship went deeper than that. John was the only man at that time who knew Jesus was the Messiah. He was the only man who walked in the power of the Holy Spirit and in the office of prophet while Jesus was on earth, so there was a ministerial kinship between them, as well.

Then John was brutally murdered. When Jesus heard of John's death, He went to a desert place to be alone, but crowds followed Him. They made a demand on His ability. *"And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick"* (**Matthew 14:14**). When Jesus saw the multitude who had followed Him, He was moved with compassion – not a feeling of compassion, but Compassion Himself.

Compassion says, *"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."* Compassion says, *"Lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."* Compassion told Jesus to heal the sick and save the lost.

Compassion was manifest as Jesus laid hands on the sick in that desert place. Herod wasn't Jesus' enemy, Satan was. Jesus retaliated for the murder of John, in the realm of faith and love. He retaliated against His real enemy, Satan, by healing the sick!

To understand these things, we need to understand God's motive. In commanding us to walk in love, He doesn't intend for us to be the world's whipping boys. We were not made to be spiritual rugs for Satan to wipe his feet on. God's desire is to put us in a place where we will never fail. How would you like to operate at a zero-failure rate? You can, but there's only one way – through love. First Corinthians 13:8 says **love never fails**.

God's Real Motive

Let's look again at 1 John 5:18: *"We know that whoever is born of God does not sin..."* This doesn't mean that if you sin, you're not born of God. It means you're born of God; you don't practice sin – you're not looking for a way to sin – you're doing your best keep out of it. You could say it this way: *"Whosoever is born of love does not sin."* So, a step out of love is a step into sin.

The second part of that verse says, *"but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him."* When you're born of God, you're born of love. When you're walking the love walk, you can laugh in Satan's face. He can't harm you when you're walking in love.

God has a protective spiritual capsule that goes into effect when you get into The WORD and allow God to minister to you. God will, by His Spirit, build that capsule around you to protect you from all that's happening in the outside world. If you'll walk in The WORD, you can be protected at all times and the wicked one will not be able to touch you. That capsule is the shield of faith.

Faith works by love. Ephesians 6:16 say faith quenches all the fiery darts of the wicked one – not part of them, all of them. You can speak to Satan and say, "Satan, my household is off limits to you." You put up a sign in the spirit that said, "Off limits, Satan. That means you!"

Glory to God! I had always thought Satan held the key to my back door and could come and go as he pleased. Then I found out about my authority as a believer. As you build your faith and begin to get an understanding of God's love down into your spirit, you will begin walking in a whole new place. Satan will

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have no power. You'll begin to be moved by the Spirit, by compassion, and you'll be ready to fulfil anything God has called you to do.

Questions

How do faith and love harmonize?

Explain why love is more than just a feeling.

Why don't you need to be afraid of the devil if you are walking in love?

What other lessons have you taken from this study?
