

The Necessity of Childlike Trust and Dependence

By Steve Bray

The biblical doctrine that speaks of sharing with the Son in His life and nature of love will sound impractical, and even impossible, when it is received by the natural mind. From the very beginning it is necessary to come to God in a childlike faith. As unreasonable as it may sound, the Father expects His children to ask Him to open the eyes of their understanding so they may recognize “the riches of the glory” that is now available in this age of fulfillment. (Eph. 1:17-19; Jam. 1:5-8) In God’s kingdom, you will find that He reveals His deeper truths to the little “babes” who come to Him for help in a childlike and trusting faith.

But the natural man {the man who depends on his own wisdom and strength} does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Cor. 2:14)

I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes. (Matt. 11:25)

Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted {in your thinking too} and become as {dependent and trusting} little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. (Matt. 18:3)

The corruption and disorder that rises out of the heart of fallen man is a result of being bound to a nature that is naturally independent, self-sufficient, self-seeking and self-exalting. Satan is the one who fostered this form of life on the world. Because it is in direct conflict with the Son’s way of life, those who live by

this carnal wisdom will not be able to see the light of truth. “This wisdom {that leads to a self-centered form of life} does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic {of the devil}. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.” (Jam. 3:15-16)

The Lord therefore says that we must be prepared to become like trusting and dependent little children before we can enter into His kingdom where everyone shares with Him in His life of holy love. In God’s eternal kingdom, everything originates in Him. His children are led by His Spirit in everything they do. “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.” (Rom. 8:14) Like a child being led by a parent, the children of God depend on Him to direct all their steps. This is the wisdom that completely delivers the followers of Christ from the independent, self-sufficient, self-seeking and self-exalting form of life that Satan fostered on the world. And “unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.”

Jesus set the example by never doing anything out from Himself. He said, “I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear {from the Spirit}, I judge {make decisions and act}; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.” (John 5:30) As He walked in this Spirit-directed way of life, trusting in the wisdom of His Father to work out all things for the eternal good, He revealed His Father’s glory—holy love—in everything He did. The Father never left Him alone. In effect, the Father was living through Jesus and sharing with Him in the eternal life of holy love.

I do nothing of Myself...The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him. (John 8:28-29)

Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me?...the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me... (John 14:10-11)

He who has seen Me has seen the Father... (John 14:9)

If Jesus would have done anything out from Himself in His own power as God, He could not have also lived fully as Man. He specifically came as the Second Adam or Last Adam to reestablish the way of life that God originally intended for the first man Adam to walk in. Jesus could not have asked us to follow Him and walk as He did if He had lived by His own independent power. We do not have that kind of power in us. And yet, He instructed us to walk as He did and to manifest the same life of holy love that He revealed. He expects us to do it by choosing to live through Him in the same way He lived through the Father. We are to become vessels of His life and works. It entails learning of Him and fully yielding to the life that was in Him. Only in this way can He manifest His life through the mortal body of each believer.

In order to have a true sense of the evil found in such things as self-seeking, pride, envy, contentions, selfish anger, bitterness and an unforgiving spirit, you only need to see how these carnal traits kill Christ's spirit of love. They are in their whole nature nothing else but the murderers and crucifiers of the true Christ of God. Not as the high priests did many hundreds of years ago, nailing His outward humanity to an outward cross, but they crucify afresh the Son of God in the soul. Every individual who gives way to these selfish traits and does not seek to be delivered from this evil by permitting Christ to live through them with His life of holy love, crucifies Christ all over again.

Christ becomes our atonement and reconciliation with God as we yield to the salvation He has come to give to everyone who receives Him. If we resist this work that permits Him to manifest His life of holy love through the vessel, we effectively reject Him and everything He did to make this salvation possible.

The Lord has many different names. But they all point to one fact: He is the "light of life." (John 8:12) "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." (John 1:4) Every creature that is to be holy in love, whether in heaven or on earth, must receive this life from Him. And wherever the Son is not the source of life, there is fallen nature left to itself with its own tormenting self-life.

The soul experiences a void when it is not filled with Christ's Spirit of Love. It is the reason why fallen man is always looking for something more from the temporal realm. His restless soul causes him to spend his days on earth endlessly looking for something to fill the void. The various works of the flesh rise out of this inward need. "Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery... contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath {selfish anger}, selfish ambitions {self-seeking}, dissensions...and the like." (Gal. 5:19-21) These evil tendencies, which have their source in the old self-seeking nature, are purged away wherever the fullness of the Son's Spirit resides within the heart. "As the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." (John 7:38) Not only does this consistent flow of Living Water from the heavenly realms purge out everything that is contrary to God's nature of love, it wells up into a display of His eternal life of holy love.

Whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life. (John 4:14 NIV)

Let it therefore be known that your willingness to indulge in "contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath {selfish anger}, selfish ambitions {all self-seeking}, dissensions...and the like" (Gal. 5:20) is a rejection of the life of Christ, regardless of what you profess to believe. "Those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God." (v. 21) In the same sense that the Jews rejected Jesus when they said, "We will not have this Man to reign over us," you reject Him when you refuse to permit Him to live through you with His Spirit of Love and save you from your self-centered, self-seeking and self-exalting nature.

The sum of all that has been said is this: All evil, whatever it is, all misery of every kind, has its source in man choosing to live independently of God—to be left alone to direct his own steps through life. It separates him from the eternal life of God. On the other hand, all that truly leads to lasting goodness and happiness, glory and joy, can come from nothing else but the invisible, uncreated Light and Spirit of God possessing the vessel and turning it into a display of His heavenly life of holy love.

It is in this sense that fallen man is totally dependent upon Jesus Christ, the Son of God, to be his Redeemer. God only is unselfish love; and the nature of divine love that was revealed through Jesus can be nowhere else but in God and where He is permitted to dwell and work. Those who will turn away from their independent and self-directed form of life in order to live through the life of the Son and be led by His Spirit, will naturally bear His heavenly fruit.

I {the Son} have made you {the Father} known to them {by revealing divine love in bodily form}, and will continue to make you known {by sharing the life with them} in order that the love you have for me {divine love} may be in them and that I myself may be in them. (John 17:26 NIV)

I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. (John 15:5)

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. (Gal. 5:22-23)

