

**DISCIPLESHIP 3
GOD'S PLAN
SERIES**

**UNIT 1 - LESSON 3, 4, 5
LOVE WHICH RELEASES FAITH - 1
LOVE WHICH RELEASES FAITH - 2
WALKING IN LOVE**

for

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LIVING ACCORDING TO GOD'S PLAN (WAYS)

UNIT I - FAITH

LESSON 3- LOVE WHICH RELEASES FAITH (PART 1)

The premise upon which this course of study "**LIVING ACCORDING TO GOD'S PLAN**" is based, is that our **Father God is a God of ORDER**.

I, for one, praise and thank God that He is a God of order and has a plan for our lives.

Maybe this doesn't apply to you. Maybe your life, your living never gets out of plum (order) bringing into your life chaos and confusion. But mine does.

Sometimes my life becomes so chaotic and so out of order that my inner peace is shattered and I begin thinking - what's the use of all this, why don't I just give it up, no body really cares or understands. I never have time or the money to do what I want to do.

Now that kind of thinking is just so much hog wash - it is purely stinking thinking.

I AM DOING WHAT I WANT TO DO. The problem when this happens is that I have allowed myself to get caught up in the chaos and confusion of the world - I have allowed myself, my life, my way of thinking to be ordered and directed by the wiles, schemes, and plans of the devil, rather than by the plan of my Father.

What I want you to realize and understand is that if your life is full of chaos and confusion - if the things you are involved in, or the things going on around you seem to be ruling you and are out of control - if your life is full of disorder, **THEN YOUR LIFE IS BEING DIRECTED BY SATAN AND NOT BY YOUR FATHER GOD.**

The Devil is the Father of chaos, confusion and disorder. Our God is a God of **ORDER** and He instructs us to do things decently and in order. Amen.

I truly appreciate the fact that my Father is a God of Order and that He wants to establish His order in my life.

It is my prayer for you that you understand that God desires to establish His order in the lives of all His children; that you understand that God in His infinite wisdom, out of pure, unselfish love for you has developed a plan, a system, whereby if followed by you, His children, will result in you enjoying the fullness of His provisions for you.

Jesus said, "**...I AM COME THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE LIFE (RESURRECTION LIFE) AND THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE IT MORE ABUNDANTLY**"

NOW the **ABUNDANT LIFE** is for those who have Resurrection Life dwelling in them as a result of the new birth in Jesus Christ, and who are **ORDERING THE COURSE OF THEIR LIVES ACCORDING TO THE WAY OF GOD.**

The ways of God for us begins with **FAITH**, "**...the just shall live by faith**" (Romans 1:17). **FAITH** which is **RELEASED**, energized by love (selfless acts of love) according to Galatians 5:6.

In this lesson we want to talk about "LOVE WHICH RELEASES FAITH" for Abundant living.

LOVE WHICH RELEASES FAITH (PART 1)

- **a. Love - definition (Galatians 5:6)**

(1) Lit. Gk. agape - love which prompts ACTION

(2) Agape love is best demonstrated in the actions of God who LOVED THE WORLD SO MUCH THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON THAT WHOSOEVER BELIEVED IN HIM WOULD NOT PERISH BUT HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE. It is a self sacrificing, self denying LOVE.

- **b. Love - First direction of (Matthew 22:37,38)**

The First and great commandment says that first of all that love which release faith for Abundant Living is directed to God.

NOTE: Points of Clarification

(1) The word commandment is another way of saying God's Ways For You which when followed will bring His blessings into your life. Obeying commandments does not bring eternal life BUT, RATHER, ABUNDANT LIFE.

(2) The abundant life which comes from obedience, from obeying God's commandments is in direct proportion to your obedience to the revelation of God's ways.

This means that if you are only a little bit obedient, then you will be enjoying only a little of the abundant life. The more of God's ways you are committed to and are following, the more of the abundant life you will have and enjoy. 3 John 2 says, "I desire above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as your soul prospereth."

Thus the more we get God's ways in our soul, in our heart, the more of the abundant living we will enjoy

- SOUL GROWTH EQUALS
LEARNING AND LIVING ACCORDING TO GOD'S PLAN.

(3) Loving God

If I asked you, "Do you love God?" You no doubt would say - "Yes" and rightly so. One who has received the new birth in Jesus Christ can't but have a love for their heavenly Father.

BUT is the love you have for God agape love? Love which knows no bounds. A love which will allow you to put aside, deny, crucify the self and follow Jesus. A

love that keeps your Father God and His ways first and foremost in your mind and living.

In John 21:15-17, Jesus is asking Peter "Do you love Me." Peter do you have agape love for Me." Jesus asks Peter 3 times do you love me and all Peter could answer at that time was, "Lord, you know that I have tender affection/feelings for you. Peter did not have agape love but tender affection for Jesus.

Peter's later life, however, demonstrated that as he was obedient to the directive of Jesus to "Feed my lambs", that HIS TENDER AFFECTION truly became agape, self sacrificing, self denying LOVE.

Your Father God will bless your tender affection for Him, BUT the greater blessings and truly abundant living will come through agape love.

YOU SEE, you can have tender affection for God and still be self indulgent. As you, however, make the determination to SUBMIT to God's ways and begin to order your life accordingly, then that tender affection will begin to take on the appearance and character of agape love and all of a sudden you will realize, WHAO - God is really blessing me.

WHY? Because that agape love is releasing your faith to believe God is who He says is and that He is a rewarder of them who diligently seek Him.

Thank you Jesus. Amen!

LESSON 4 - LOVE WHICH RELEASES FAITH (PART 2)

IT IS GOD'S WAY (PLAN) THAT LOVE WHICH ACTIVATES, ENERGIZES, RELEASES FAITH BE AGAPE LOVE WHICH IS SECONDLY DIRECTED TO ONE ANOTHER.

John 13:34 says, " A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another: as I have loved you, that you love one another."

We see from this passage God's way for us, also, includes acts of love (agape - selfless, self sacrificing, self denying love) to one another). We are to love one another even as He has loved us. Amen?

I Corinthians 13:1 - 8a, characterizes for us the out working of agape love in relationships with one another.

- LOVE SUFFERS LONG. - Love is patient and kind
- LOVE ENVIETH NOT - Love finds its fulfillment in contentment; being content; it is being able to rejoice over God's blessings to others.
- LOVE VAUNTETH NOT ITSELF. - Love is not boastful. It does not allow you to think about and lift up yourself. There is a vulgarity in boasting.
- LOVE DOES NOT BEHAVE ITS SELF UNSEEMINGLY. - Love exercises courtesy. It is not rude or offensive. It is polite.
- LOVE SEEKETH NOT HER OWN. - Love's motivation for being moved to action is the needs of others. It does not allow us to be motivated to action because of our need to serve, to be involved or to show love.
- LOVE IS NOT EASILY PROVOKED. - Love does not have a bad temper. It does not fly off the handle. It has self under control.
- LOVE THINKETH NO EVIL. - Love gives the benefit of doubt and puts the best construction on things.
- LOVE REJOICETH NOT IN INIQUITY: BUT REJOICES IN TRUTH. - Love does not and can not get joy from sin, nor get joy or rejoice when someone else is in sin (does something wrong, I told you so). But rejoices when truth is revealed and received.
- LOVE BEARETH ALL THINGS. - Love puts up an umbrella for others. Has the meaning of giving protection.
- LOVE HOPETH ALL THINGS. - Love is optimistic about others. It has a positive outlook.
- LOVE ENDURETH ALL THINGS. - Love remains strong in relationships with others, even when those relationships are being tried and tested.

- LOVE NEVER FAILETH. - Under the most trying circumstances in its out working in our relationship love never breaks down. It will, always see you through.

If we will order the course of our lives according to God's plan (ways), exercising this kind of love, this love which will release our faith to receive God's blessings will be inwrought in us and out worked through us to others and God's protection and blessings will be most evident in our lives.

LESSON 5 - WALKING IN LOVE

Question: Can we do what we want to do, as long as we are not doing something criminal, or not involved in any immorality and expect God's blessings upon what we are doing and in our lives?

The answer is NO!!! We will have God's providential care but not His blessings.

WHY? Because the simple facts are that our Father God chooses in His infinite wisdom to bless those things which we do, which are PLEASING TO HIM, things which are according to His ways. Likewise, He withholds His blessings when we are doing our own thing.

James 1:25 - "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

However some will say or at least think, "Isn't God being selfish and a manipulator."

SELFISH NO!! You see we need to fully understand and comprehend that we belong to God.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20, "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and your spirit, which are God's."

God has the right of ownership which right is to use His property as He desires.

Now, that which God is doing in each of His pieces of property is to restore and perfect it. The purpose is to conform it (His property - you and me) into the image of His beloved Son from eternity, Jesus Christ.

Romans 8:29 - "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren."

IS GOD A MANIPULATOR? YES!! To manipulate something or someone is not evil or bad, unless the purpose of the manipulation is evil.

To manipulate means to handle with skill. Manipulation is artful, skillful management or control.

I, for one, praise God that He, my Father is a skilled, artful manager, controller and director of my life.

You know what happens to property which is not manipulate. The buildings decay, the yard or garden or fields or orchard becomes over grown with weeds so that the good grass, vegetables, crops, or fruit is choked out.

OUR FATHER GOD IS MANIPULATING, handling us with skill, molding us, restoring us, conforming us to be like Jesus.

So, in order to motivate us in the right direction, He is saying, "If you will live your life according to my plan, my ways, I will bless the work of your hands with the best, and I

will subdue your enemies." We are being motivated to live by Faith which is activated by love for this is the basis and foundation of God's plan for us His children.

LOVE as we have seen is the catalyst which releases the POWER OF FAITH IN OUR LIVES.

In lesson 4 we saw how agape love expresses itself in one's relationships with others.

Love:

- suffers long, being kind
- is not envious
- is not boastful
- behaves properly
- does not seek its own way or wants
- is not easily provoked
- does not think evil
- has no joy in sin
- is protective of others
- is optimistic not negative
- is strong in and through testing
- never fails

This lessons is WALKING IN LOVE. Here the Holy Spirit would show us God's plan for walking in love. In Ephesians 4:32 we find three elements, which when put into action will result in these expressions of love from 1 Corinthians 13:1-8 being evident in our relationships with one another.

THESE THREE ELEMENTS OF WALKING IN LOVE ARE BEING:

1. **KIND** to one another
2. **TENDERHEARTED** toward one another
3. **FORGIVING** as God has forgiven us

Let us now, analyze these three elements of walking in love, that we might put them into action in our lives, and thus be walking in love our Father God's way.

1. The first element in God's plan for walking in love from Ephesians 4:32 is,

" . . . be ye KIND to one another . . ."

Being kind means according to the Greek word here translated "kind" is to be serviceable. Serviceable according to Websters Dictionary means:

- that can be of service; ready for use; useful; usable
- that will give good service; durable service
- willing to serve; attentive and obligating

Thus to be kind to one another means to be a servant to one another.

Galatians 5:13 - "to serve one another by love."

We are to be usable - a slave for one another. So to walk in love according to God's plan is first of all to be a servant looking for an opportunity to serve others.

2. The second element in God's plan for walking in love from Ephesians 4:32 is,

"...be ye TENDERHEARTED..."

The Greek word here translated tenderhearted comes from the same root word which in other passages of Scripture is rendered "compassion". Compassion is a description of feelings which comes from deep within a person which moves that person to action.

Thus to be tenderhearted towards one another means to have feelings of compassion which will move us with a sense of urgency to help the one who is in a needful situation. It is to be tender toward one another as opposed to being tough with or towards one another. It is being sensitive to each others needs.

Now from the life of Jesus we want to look at three areas of need in which we are to have compassion.

(1) Matthew 9:36

To love as Jesus loved is to have a burden, to be moved with compassion for those who are spiritually weak and scattered and floundering having no shepherd to guide them and to feed them. They need to be reconciled to their Father and we are to be those ministers of reconciliation. This is being tenderhearted.

(2) Matthew 14:4

Our Father God wants us to have a burden for those who are sick. He wants us to be moved with compassion for them. To visit the sick, encourage them, to lay hands on them and heal them. To do what ever we can to give them relief and help. This is being tenderhearted.

(3) Matthew 15:32

We are to be concerned about the physical needs of our brothers and sisters. We are to have compassion for them and be moved with an urgency to help them in their need for food, shelter and clothing. To love them, to be tenderhearted towards them is to do all that we can to help them. Not just sympathize with them, but help them.

Being tenderhearted (have compassion) is the second element in God's plan for walking in love.

3. The third element in God's plan for walking in love from Ephesians 4:32 is,

". . .FORGIVING one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

The literal translation of Ephesians 4:32 is "forgiving yourselves." I see from this translation three areas of forgiveness.

(1) We are to forgive ourselves. We are to consciously pronounce upon ourselves that we are forgive of all sin past, present and future. That in Jesus Christ we are forgiven. If you have not done this, you will not be able to be a minister of reconciliation and forgive others.

(2) When one of our brothers or sisters is being weighted down by the burden of sin and guilt we are to be those ministers of reconciliation and pronounce upon them the forgiveness of their sins. This is part of the great commission which Jesus gave us in John 20:21-23.

(3) You, yourselves are to forgive those brothers and sisters who have wronged, sinned against you. It does not matter what they have done to you, or how badly they may have treated you. To love as Jesus loved will move us, constrain us to forgive them. If you do not forgive them, bitterness will be structured in your soul, which will result in separating you from fellowship with your Father God. And, also, might very likely result in sickness in your body.

Forgiving one another is then the third element in God's plan for walking in love.

END of Series

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