

Unrequited Love

by Wayne Goff

“And I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved” (2 Corinthians 12:15).

The apostle Paul felt the pang of love lost. He had spent much of his precious time as an apostle of Jesus Christ converting these people, nursing these disciples, and correcting them, and yet they seem to have turned against him in spite of it all! False teachers had crept in and worried their minds with questions of Paul's apostleship, and Paul was grieved over it. They did not return his love in kind.

Our heavenly Father must feel the same way. Though God ***“so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son...”*** (John 3:16), yet so few of us love Him in return. How would **you** feel if you gave the very best gift you owned to someone who simply snubbed at its meaning? It would be extremely painful, to say the least.

Some brethren feel that way toward the Lord, I fear. It is a **burden** to hear the gospel preached. It is a **pain** to worship with the saints. The *least excuse* is offered to miss a spiritual feast. It is an example again of **unrequited love**. People who love the Lord do not act in such a manner. They are glad when someone says, *“Let us into to the House of the Lord”* (Ps. 122:1). They proudly explain their actions with the words: *“We love Him because He first loved us”* (1 Jn. 4:19).

I feel sorry for those who view the Lord's love, His enormously gracious sacrifice, and His valued church with such contempt. They have not yet learned how to love the Lord with all their heart, soul, mind and strength (Mk. 12:30). I hope and pray that some day they learn to love God because He certainly deserves our love.

How does one learn to love God? By *learning* of Him in His Word, by *believing* and *trusting* in His love, and by *returning* His love in your actions. *“Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends”* (Jn. 15:13). If that doesn't move one to put in the effort to learn of Jesus (Matt. 11:29), then nothing will. Do you **love** the Lord? Do your **actions** prove your love for God?

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