

“Imitation Love”

by Wayne Goff

There is a hit song produced by Anita Bryant and later by Marie Osmond entitled “Paper Roses.” I didn’t much care for the song myself, but the lyrics are haunting. It speaks of being deceived by what was perceived to be love, but which was not. As the song states:

**“So take away the flowers that you gave me,
And send the kind that you remind me of.**

**Paper roses, paper roses,
Oh how real those roses seem to me,
But they’re only imitation,
Like your imitation love for me.”**

One can imagine from these words the *pain* inflicted on one thought to be loved but who was only *deceived* into thinking that they really were loved. For reasons unknown to me, that song has been going through my head recently. And it made me think of those disciples of the Lord who profess love for God but who really only have “imitation love” for Him.

Paul warned Titus of these people and wrote: *“They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work”* Titus 1:16. True love is shown by one’s actions or works. There were those who professed a love for Christ **in word** but who did not perfect that love **by actions**. The lesson for us is obvious. We must not only profess our love for God, for Christ, and for His church in the words of our songs, sermons, and classes, but also in our very lives.

- **Deny ungodliness & worldly lusts, Titus 2:12**
- **Live soberly, righteously, godly, Titus 2:12**
- **Keep Christ’s Word and perfect love, 1 Jn. 2:5**
- **Love your brother, 1 Jn. 2:10; 3:10-11, 14**
- **Live sacrificially, 1 Jn. 3:16-17**
- **Love God and keep His commandments, 1 Jn. 5:2-3**

If anyone professes a love for God, and yet denies Him by their sinful actions, then they do not truly love God, but are only offering an “imitation love.” Dear reader, it is my hope that you have a true love for God and that this love is expressed in every action of your life. *“For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that **you should follow His steps**”* (1 Peter 2:21).

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