

The Beauty of Holiness Is the Beauty of Love

by George Ridout

The sermon explores the nature of love as holiness, its characteristics, and the effects of divine love in our lives.

Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:5, Matthew 5:48, John 14:15, 1 Corinthians 13:4, Philippians 3:12, 1 Peter 1:16, 1 John 4:16

Topics: "Divine Love", "Christian Holiness"

Description

George Ridout preaches on the concept of Perfect Love as the essence of holiness, emphasizing the importance of loving God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength, which leads to a soul free from wrong temper and governed by pure love. The sermon delves into the spectrum of love with nine key ingredients such as patience, kindness, generosity, humility, and sincerity, as outlined in 1 Corinthians 13. Various theologians and writers like Thomas a'Kempis, Doddridge, Ignatius, Irenaeus, and Marcarius are referenced to illustrate the profound impact of Divine Love and the pursuit of perfection through complete surrender to God.

Transcript

"Love is the one kind of holiness existing in different degrees in various believers, " said an old writer. Holiness has been described as Perfect Love -- "The loving God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength, this implies that no wrong temper, none contrary to love, remains in the soul and that all the thoughts, words and actions are governed by pure love. "

Love is the master passion of the soul, hence Jesus placed all service and all obedience and all fidelity to him on Love. He said: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy strength. "

Dr. Daniel Steele in describing his entrance into the experience of Perfect Love said: "This has been accompanied with such a feeling of inward cleanness, that I doubt not that the Purifier has taken up His abode in the temple of my heart. But the direct testimony of the heavenly Guest is Love, Love, all consuming Love, flaming in the heart of Jesus -- Woe to me, I feel that sin cannot abide in the flames of this furnace kindled to such an intensity about me. "

One of the most illuminating interpretations of love as set forth in Thirteenth of First Corinthians has been by Professor Drummond in "The Greatest Thing in the World. " He sets forth Love Contrasted, Love Analyzed, Love Defended. In his analysis of Love he says:

"The spectrum of love has nine ingredients:

"Patience -- Love suffereth long.

"Kindness -- And is kind.

"Generosity -- Love envieth not.

"Humility -- Love vaunteth not itself; is not puffed up.

"Courtesy -- Doth not behave itself unseemly.

"Unselfishness -- Seeketh not her own.

"Good Temper -- Is not easily provoked.

"Guilelessness -- Thinketh no evil.

"Sincerity -- Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth. "

In that wonderful little book of the ages, "The Imitation of Christ, " Thomas a'Kempisspeaking of the "Wonderful Effect of Divine Love, " says:

"Love is circumspect, humble, and upright; not yielding to softness, levity, or vanity; love is sober, steady, chaste, quiet, and keeps a guard over all the senses.

"Nothing is sweeter than love, nothing stronger, nothing higher, nothing broader, nothing more pleasant, nothing better, either in heaven or earth, because love is born of God; and, rising above all created things, can find its rest in Him alone.

"Love watches, and, slumbering, does not sleep; if weary, it wearies not; if restrained, it is not straitened; if fearful, it is not dismayed; but as a living flame and flowing torch it burst supward, and safely keeps its onward course.

"If any man loves, he will know what is the utterance of love. "

Doddridge was touching this realm of Divine Love when he sang:

"Do not I love thee, O my Lord, Then let me nothing love; Dead be my heart to every joy Where Jesus cannot move.

"Thou knowest I love thee, dearest Lord But O, I long to soar Far from the sphere of mortal joys, And learn to love thee more. "

The consecration of our Love powers hold all things in proper proportion.

Thou art the sea of Love, Where all my pleasures roll, The circle where my passions move And center of my soul.

My passions hold a pleasing reign When Love inspires the breast, Love the divinest of the train, The Sovereign of the rest.

Perfection

Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, who was given to the wild beasts at Rome when one hundred and seven years of age, said: "I thank thee, O Lord, that Thou vouchsafed to honor me with a perfect love towards Thee. "

Irenaeus taught that those were perfect "who present soul, body, and spirit faultless to the Lord. Therefore, those are perfect who have the spirit and perseverance of God, and have preserved their souls and bodies without fault. "

Marcarius taught the doctrine more clearly than any of the Fathers. Of our duties and privilege, he says: "It is perfect purity from sin, freedom from all the shameful lusts and passions, and the assumption of perfect virtue; that is, the purification of the heart by the plenary and experimental communion of the perfect and divine Spirit. "

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