

EMBRACING VALUE-ADDING INTIMACY CONNECTION



JOSEPH KING

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**LOVE THAT
REALLY
WORKS**

Bible version, is the KJV King James Version of 1611, with only some minor word changes in the case of clearly archaic words.

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DEDICATION

This booklet is all about love and is written for everybody because Precious and I believe that everybody needs some loving. Yes, love has been hidden from so many; it has also been abused by so many. In these last days as the hearts of many grow cold, the LORD has commissioned me to set the record straight in this matter. Love must be properly understood if it can richly shared and enjoyed.

So from the heart of the LORD, through mine, to yours, receive this word on the greatest gift and fruit of the SPIRIT. Hopefully, it will release you to love others in a whole new dimension.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Of course, I could never have known love except that LOVE HIMSELF has revealed love to me; my highest regards on this project go to the FATHER who has loved us so inspiringly much. From HIS kindest gesture, I have learnt what love is all about.

I am also deeply indebted to our LORD CHRIST JESUS who was willing to be the demonstration of the FATHER'S love. That HE gave up all for all of us, and would even so give it up for the least of us is love beyond words can describe.

Now without the HOLY SPIRIT all this love would be quite a mystery:

**And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of
God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost
which is given unto us.**

Romans 5:5

Precious and I are deeply indebted to the SPIRIT in showing us this glorious love that truly works. Our whole ministry is based and functioning in it. That we humbly obey and serve in this respect is only because of HIS love-ministry working in us.

Yes, from HIS counsel, we have learnt the love that really works. This infinite knowledge has blessed our marriage and indeed our life in the richest way.

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VALUE-ADDING INTIMACY

By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has this world's goods and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him.

1 John 3:16-19

What is this thing called love? What? Is this thing called love? What is this thing called? Love!

It is quite amazing to observe that the subject of love is still confusing men and women. After so many heart breaks, after so many broken promises, after so many disappointments, so many are left

confused as to what love really is. What is even more amazing is that the subject seems to be confusing to both the Church and the world.

Believers in our loving God are just as unsure as unbelievers as to what love is. Many have been as disappointed as unbelievers in this regard. Many have hardened after several disappointments and can testify to being unable to love.

And so, we are left with a hardened world where more and more people every day are quitting on love. Just as the LORD predicted, we can see with our own eyes that in these last days the hearts of men have grown cold (Matthew 24:12).

The evidence of this heartless experience is replete all around us: Marriages are failing as divorce cases pile and rise both in the Church and the world; domestic violence is equally present and rising in occasion in both the Church and the world; dysfunctional families and sibling rivalry and estrangement is occurring in ever increasing measure in both communities; violent crime, wars, rumors of wars, genocidal ethnic cleansing and all manner of strife is taking place in many societies, some of which have seen the usage of God's name in religious vindications against others; unattended to poor, sick, homeless, hungry, and other desperate cases abound as a result of the hatred going on.

Prostitution, pornography, homosexuality and all manner of sexual perversion feed on this heartless scenario and aggravate it as men confuse love with

a selfish value-seeking intimacy that leaves our generation less compassionate and more contentious.

And yet, this is not God's plan for men. HE earnestly desires that we should love one another. The whole law is summed up in this subject, that we love God and one another (Mark 12:30-33). More seriously is the fact that God is love and that HE created men in HIS image and likeness (1 John 4:8; Genesis 1:26, 27).

Consequently, we can deduce that in the eyes of God man should be a compassionate creature. Love ought to be our identity and not something we are confused about. I could even say that **God created**

**men to love and be loved. Humanity, like divinity,
was always intended to be a glorious love affair.**



THE GENESIS OF LOVE

So, what went wrong? How comes there is very little love going around? Why are men confused about love? Can this gross loss of intimacy be rekindled so that men can love again?

In order to ascertain what went wrong, we would have to track this subject from the beginning. A good place to start is the creation of all things as narrated in the scriptures. The first chapter of Genesis details a most orderly account of what we call the creation story stating that everything that God made was *good* until HE made man on the sixth day, and that was *very good*. A proper understanding of this episode would inform us that God created everything, or at least the entire earth, for man.

This would explain why God created everything else before HE created man. It also would explain why God created man in HIS own image and likeness and placed him to have dominion over everything (Genesis 1:28). Consequently, without God necessarily making it obvious with HIS words, we can deduce that HE loved man. And this love was demonstrated by what HE did for him.

Herein, we are given a perfect understanding of love: **When God loves HE does good or we can say that HE loves so that HE can do good.** We see this in HIS glorious motive in creation. HE created all things because HE loved man. Man, so to say, is the essence of the creation story. Because God so loved man, HE created all things for his benefit. HIS love for man is the proper definition of value-adding intimacy: **The love God has for man compelled**

HIM to orchestrate a series of incredible benefits for man.

One could then say that the creation story is a classic portion of God's love story. HIS love for man is creatively displayed in the wonderful details of the material world.

We must then realize that God created man so that HE could give him everything.

It is also conceivable that HE created man to love HIM. It is possible that God hoped this value-adding intimacy would be reciprocated. **In being good to the man, in giving him everything, in loving him unreservedly, it is possible that God sought for man to return this generosity with equal measure.**

This is particularly obvious given the fact that God is love and that man is created in HIS image and likeness. Consequently, in creating another love creature we can deduce that God sought to share love with the man. HE loved the man and hoped that the man should love HIM as well.

If that is the case, and since God's love is followed with good deeds, we can then say that God hoped man would extend good deeds to HIM.

This value-adding intimacy was designed in such a way that God would give to man who would in turn give back to HIM in a continual and eternal cycle of *glorious compassion*.

And this is the true business of love: God sought to *share* with man everything HE had, everything HE made. This eternal cycle of glorious compassion is manifested in the Kingdom of God where man is marvelously celebrated as a kingly priest sharing all power with the Almighty God (1 Peter 2:9). In this Kingdom, God is King of kings and man is king of all God has (Revelation 1:5).

Any effort at understanding Adam, the first man, does well to begin with this concept: Adam was God's love, placed on the earth with royal privilege over and above all creation. This value-adding intimacy is appropriately demonstrated in the first actions and words God served him with:

Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth" And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food.

Genesis 1:28, 29

Value-adding intimacy is all about *responsible compassion*: God loved man enough to bless him, and provide for him. HE didn't just sing a song about man, or speak kind words to him; HE backed HIS divine compassion with such *grand commitment* that is truly amazing.

In fact divine revelation enabled King David to capture this amazement voiced by the angels regarding the wonderful love God has for man when he exclaimed:

What is man that You are so mindful of him, and the son of man that You should visit him? For You have made him a little lower than *Elohim*, and you have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have placed everything under his feet.

Psalm 8:4-6

Consequently, something must be clarified here as this matter has been so abused by religion: God did not begin to love man when HE sent HIS beloved Son Jesus. Many religious patriots minister on the love of God as though it begun with John 3:16. This

is so wrong. To be sure, God loved man long before Christ was sent to the world; even before HE made man.

And God did not love man at first sight either. HE did not make the man, admire what HE made, and then love him.

I have elaborately explained how the creation story is indeed a love story. God created everything because HE loved man. And since HE created man last after HE had made everything, it follows that as HE created everything HE loved man even though HE had not created him. And yet, the love God had for man can be predated even before the creation story to the foundation of the world. The apostle Paul was able by revelation of the Spirit to trace this compassion when he cites:

For whom God foreknew, HE also predestined to be conformed to the image of HIS Son, that HE might be the first born among many brethren.

Romans 8:28, 29

So, herein we see that **God did not love man at *first sight* but at *first thought***. Before HE created man, before HE saw man, when HE foreknew him yet HE sought glorious realities for him. HE sought for man to be like HIS eternal Son, Jesus, and more still, to be related to HIM as brethren.

Man, so to say, is at his most perfect the express image, likeness, and nature of Jesus Christ. As such, we can deduce that **God's love for man sought to include him in the God-family**.

It is this love that compelled Christ to humble HIMSELF and seek the salvation of man. John 3:16 was not *the beginning of this love* as much as it was *the flowering of this love*. When Christ laid down HIS glorious life for our sake, HE demonstrated the most glorious proof of a love that had existed since the foundation of time. HIS vicarious death on the cross disqualifies any doubt that man could have regarding the love God has for him.

The apostle John was so mesmerized by this kind of compassion and referred to it as the very epitome of love:

In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent HIS only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through HM. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that HE loved us and sent HIS Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 1

John 4:9, 10

What is important to realize is the fact that the relationship God has with man did not begin with any set of legal rules: To be sure, it was never intended to be a *legal responsibility* on either part. Similarly, God's commitment to man did not begin with any religious ritual: To be sure, it was never intended to be a *religious activity* shrouded in traditional occasions. Instead, **the story of God and man begun with love.** It was a love story from the very beginning. It was a relationship founded on value-adding intimacy. That is what it was, what it was always intended to be, and what it will be forever and ever.

What went wrong can be traced to when man shifted from value-adding intimacy to a dubious value-seeking intimacy. There is a huge world of

difference between the two. In fact, the difference is as high as the heavens are from the earth.

We have partially observed the initial results of the value-adding intimacy God shared with man. In order to have a rich understanding as to what occasioned man's shift to a value-seeking intimacy; we need to appreciate some more detail regarding the results of this value-adding intimacy man shared with God.

Consequently, we see that the initial results of this value-adding intimacy essentially witnesses God crowning man with glory, giving him dominion over the earth, providing him with a Garden of Pleasure from where he could rule and reign over the earth and enjoy glorious pleasure.

What is never captured by many religious teachers on the subject of God's love is how much more God wanted man to have. To appreciate this account, we would need to realize that from when God foreknew man, from *HIS love at first thought*, it was always the plan of God, and it still is, to have man conformed to the image and likeness of Christ and also adopt him as brethren to Christ. Consequently, **any brethren to Christ must be appreciated as a son of God.**

So we can say that in creating man in the format that HE used, God sought to make sons for HIMSELF and brethren for Christ. This being the case would suggest that God envisaged a glorious family of royal-divinity that from everlasting had comprised the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, but from thenceforth would include man as well.

THE ULTIMATE LOVE TEST

If we understand things this way, then we should not find it strange to realize that the earth was a testing ground of man's love. God had demonstrated HIS love in creating everything for the man and in creating the man in HIS likeness and image. HE had demonstrated HIS love in blessing the man, crowning HIM with glory and honor, giving him dominion, and everything he could ever need.

But there was more: The rest of what God had to offer was dependent on whether man was willing to share everything with God as well. God had more for the man if he was willing to share his crown of glory and honor with HIM, share his dominion of the earth with HIM, share his blessing with HIM, share everything he had, every animal, creature,

every fruit with HIM, share the Garden of Pleasure, his beautiful wife and children with HIM. **Value-adding intimacy required on man's part** *a reciprocation of gratitude to God*; a sense of genuine and compassionate obligation that would see him share all he had with God.

The critical symbol of this test was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Whether man was willing to exercise this value-adding intimacy that God had demonstrated to him would be reflected in a simple instruction that had eternal consequences. In the middle of the Garden of Eden God places the testing tree to ascertain the love of man. The instruction is to eat all other fruits with the exception of the one from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

That God would instruct the man as much after crowning him with glory, honor and dominion over the earth tells a lot about what HE sought. Resisting the temptation to eat the fruit in spite of being its owner would tantamount to declaring that he shared with God the rights on earth. This would have been man's value-adding intimacy response to God.

If man had done so, God sought to give him even more. But, you might wonder *what more did God have for the man after giving him all tangible benefits, every living and non-living being on the earth? What more did God have for man having crowned him with glory and honor, and given him dominion over the earth?*

It is my studied and revealed opinion that for so many years the Church has been oblivious of the

possibility of God having more for the man than he had entrusted him with following creation. It's just never been mentioned and worse still, taught. I am also certain that the matter seemed to have eluded the first Adam.

Thus said, remember that man in the true sense of God's intentions was not just another creature but more seriously, HIS son. Man was a member of the God-family, made in their likeness and image, and conformed to be brethren to Christ, the only begotten Son of God. Appreciating God as love should make it inconceivable that HE was content on man living separately from the other part of royal-divinity: *Why would God create heaven and earth in the beginning, and then insist on being separate from man, HIS son, while living in heaven with the rest of the God-family?* It does not make sense. *If we were created*

so that Christ may be the firstborn among many brethren, why would HIS abode be in heaven and ours on earth?

As such, it must be understood that it was never God's intention to keep man living on the earth forever. It was always HIS intention that man should be an integral part of royal-divinity, continually in fellowship with HIM, and forever in HIS presence. Consequently, the earth was a testing ground where man would have to demonstrate his commitment to live in value-adding intimacy with God.

Had man resisted the temptation to eat the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, his reward was to share heaven and earth together with the LORD.

The earth in this sense was the place where God placed man to qualify for authority and power in heaven as well.

By making man in HIS image and likeness, by crowning man, blessing him, and giving him dominion over everything, God ensured that man was not devoid of something to offer.

Value-adding intimacy is premised on the willingness to give, the desire to share. And one cannot give or share what he does not have. So, the privileges God made available to man were among other things also intended to ensure that man was able to give. Just as God is a giver because HE is a lover, HE intended that man should be a giver because he is the image and likeness of love.

What is important to note is the fact that man was created to be a fulfilled creature. God made him to be as all-sufficient as HE is. Within his self were the same creative abilities God has that could summon for him whatever he needed. So, man lacked nothing and all that was necessary and expected of him was to share with God all he had in a perpetual and glorious value-adding intimacy.

If he had resisted the temptation to disobey God's instruction not to eat the fruit, he would have demonstrated his contribution to their value-adding intimacy. And like I said, the reward was a promotion from sharing the earth with God to sharing heaven with HIM. **Had man demonstrated obedience to God in his own property and domain, God would have raised him to command the heavens, a higher property and domain.** Man

would be elevated to command more than the birds, animals, and fish that he named and ruled on earth to commanding angels, cherubim's, and seraphim's that God reigns over in heaven.

Like Christ, man would not consider it robbery to be equal with God (Philippians 2:6). Like Christ, man would govern from heaven above, the earth below. **Reciprocating God's love with equal measure would have substantially added man's value beyond finite imagination.**

Instead, man disobeyed God in preference of a value-seeking intimacy that devalued him far below what he was. Rather than resisting the temptation to eat the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil, man ate it and lost everything.

WRONG CALCULATIONS

Examining what made him eat it, understanding the calculations he made when he succumbed to Satan's lies explains the shift I alluded to earlier. For the devil had deceived him of some gains if he ate it:

God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.

Genesis 3:5

And they too, made similar considerations. They perceived there was something to gain in eating it:

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

Genesis 3:6

You can see that rather than attending to the instruction of God which would have shown them adding value to HIM as their obedience would suggest their commitment to share the earth with him, they sought their own advantages. Deceived by the devil that they were not like God, they sought to be like HIM without giving HIM anything. They sought to be like HIM for their own benefit, their own advantage. Rather than employing a value-adding intimacy in regards to God, they engaged a value-seeking intimacy.

The origin of this value-seeking intimacy was Satan. Before tempting man with it, he had engaged it in heaven when as Lucifer, the archangel responsible for worship, he covetously sought to be like God with rather disastrous consequences:

How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!

How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.' Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, to

the lowest depths of the Pit.

Isaiah 14:12-15

This fascination with God was terribly skewed and perverse; a self-conceited inclination and a clear value-seeking intimacy with God. Clearly from his confessions one can see an obsessive preoccupation with himself (note the 'I will's: they are six in as many sentences). In the end, this covetousness cost him his place in heaven.

The same can be said of man. When he fell to Satan's web of deception, evoking a self-conceited compassion, he lost the privilege that was his manifest destiny as a son of God. Rather than ascend to heaven, he declined to a rebellious life of failure, loss, and tragedy; he plunged in a downward spiral we have euphemistically labeled the fall.

Man fell to oblivion when he should have ascended to glorious prominence because he shifted from a glorious value-adding intimacy to a dubious value-seeking intimacy. Had he engaged the former instead of the latter, not only would he have grown to glory in heaven, but he would have grown further into the heights and depths of love.

The fact that since the fall of Adam love has eluded men with disastrous consequences is testimony of the results of value-seeking intimacy. All the sufferings of mankind, indeed of all creation, can be traced to this fundamental vice.

Value-seeking intimacy is an ugly and evil measure that should never be anyone's guide in dealing with God and men. It is the root of envy, jealousy, strife, theft, adultery, fornication, witchcraft, hatred, war,

and all the vices you can imagine. Value-seeking intimacy does not love to give, it loves to get. It does not seek to bless, it seeks to curse.

Value-seeking intimacy is all about *me, myself, and I*. It is the motive that occasions every sin, every fear, every crime, every guilt and every unbelief.

When Satan coveted the throne of God, he sought his own good regardless the evil consequence it would have on others including God HIMSELF. When he intimated with the woman, he sought his own good regardless the evil his proposals would have on man. And when man employed it, he sought his own privileges at the expense of God. Adam and Eve did not even pay the slightest attention to consider the offense they would cause God when they ate the fruit. In a rush judgment

they presumed to be biased in their favor, they discounted HIS utmost warning given for their benefit and ate the forbidden fruit. It was a wrong calculation.

LUST IS NOT LOVE

Value-seeking intimacy has corrupted mankind, devalued it, and alienated it from the glorious realities God had crowned it with. As man has disregarded the richness of his spirit, as he has ignored his semblance with God, as he has sought after *the offers of the world* rather than *the opportunities of God's word*, man has moved further and further into a gross darkness that has eclipsed him from the blessing of God. **Value-seeking intimacy has occasioned curses on man that have programmed a consistence of evil that defines human history since the fall.**

What is important to realize is that whereas value-adding intimacy sought to unite man with God in a

fusion of royal-divinity, value-seeking intimacy separated man from God so that the two were estranged. It is because of value-seeking intimacy that Adam hid from a God that previously he was closely associated with as companion and LORD (Genesis 3:8). It is because of man's value-seeking intimacy that his methods are incomprehensibly minor to that of God. This tragic disparity has moved God to lamentably declare:

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor your ways My ways," says the LORD. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.

Isaiah 55:8, 9

Value-seeking intimacy programmed mankind into a lifestyle contrary to the one that God had intended in the beginning. Rather than live for the glory of God, rather than bless others in a cycle of glorious compassion, value-seeking intimacy accustomed men to offend God, disregard neighbor, and live in self-conceit.

This continued for so long so much that overtime man digressed into an abyss of practiced and seasoned selfishness. To be sure, the attitude has not always been apparent. Value-seeking intimacy is from its genesis a covert operation that manipulates and tricks its victim.

As such, because men preferred to relate in this dubious fashion, they have always sought in many deceptive ways to disguise their evil intentions.

Overtime, a pattern of self-seeking actions have been masked in a pretentious exercise of value-adding deliberation. Love, so to say, has been reduced from a verb to a noun, from actions to words.

In essence, humanity became a grand project of hypocrisy where darkened hearts manipulated others with soothing words.

So the discrepancy is observed thus: While in the context of value-adding intimacy loving means giving, value-seeking intimacy pretends to communicate love while in reality intending *to seize* rather than *give*.

For instance, when a man in the context of value-adding intimacy says he loves a woman, he would only say so after he has demonstrated that word

with good deeds. His commitment is unconditional and his intention is to bless the woman (and vice versa). On the other hand, in the context of value-seeking intimacy, when a man says he loves a woman it is merely an exercise of words that mask his intention to gain from the woman rather than profit her.

This hypocrisy is demonstrated throughout the human experience. It includes such pledges of love that men pronounce for their countries, their children, their jobs, their neighbors, etcetera.... Take the classic case of politicians who profess to love their countries: For the most part, their declared patriotism during rallies often masks their hideous intention to attain power for their own selfish reasons. Once in power, most are seen to

engage in corruption, bribery, and other dubious means of self-aggrandizement.

This seems to have been the tragedy in Africa where nationalists have fought for 'liberation' in protracted wars where women and children have died in the name of 'love for the nation'. However, once in power these pseudo 'revolutionaries' have displayed a level of corruption that far exceeds the very regimes they fought in the name of patriotism. When they said they loved their countries, they really meant they were seeking to profit from their countries in a covetous exercise of unparalleled greed.

The same can be said about people that claim they love their job. A more discerning assessment of this

seemingly responsible claim would often reveal a dubious aspiration for *what the job can do for them rather than what they can do for the job*.

This is where the seed of corruption is found: Someone takes a job with an organization not so much to profit the organization but to leverage on the opportunity the job provides to gain from the organization. That is why you will see people working in places they really do not care about as long as they got their pay or have an opportunity to steal.

This twisted aspiration is akin with that of prostitutes (politically correctly referred to as sex workers): Most of whom are not in it for the sex as much as for what the trade can give them. In rehabilitating many girls and even men caught in this immoral vice, I have found that most were driven by economic difficulties to peddle their flesh.

And yet, whether it is white collar or blue collar, covertly corrupt or obviously immoral, this dubious love is really not love but covetousness. It may profess love but in reality it is lust. It is not about *'what I would like to do for you'* but more about *'what you can do for me'*. Very predatory in its calculations, it seeks to take rather than to give. No wonder that in its conceited trail, it has wrecked many lives many companies, many nations.

It gets more appalling when observed in the context of marriage and in relation with God. The reason many marriages are failing can be traced to value-seeking intimacy. Most people join in matrimony seeking their personal benefit rather than their spouses benefit. Marriage is so often about *'what he or what she can do for me'*. And since it rarely is about what one can do for the other, so when people take

stock about what has not been done for them they quit on it.

I have heard several people complain about how their marriage is wasting their time because '*they are getting nothing out of it*'. Most people marry because they seek sexual pleasure, financial security, or any such vain things from other people and when these are in short supply they quit on the marriage.

The same can be said about people's relationship with God: When people profess they love God, quite a number of them are masking their desire for God to do something for them. That is why many turn to God in times of trouble, depression, or need. They expect that God should salvage them.

They will attend church with their needs on their minds. They will kneel and pray with their needs on their minds. They will join the choir and sing aloud with their needs on their mind. Whatever service they render to God is premised in their expectation that HE should attend to their needs. And so when these needs are not attended to as soon as they expect, if there is a delay or God ministers to their need in a manner different from their preference, they walk out of church, the choir, and prayer. Their worship is a value-seeking intimacy that actually separates them from God rather than endears HIM to them.

But God is not deceived nor is HE mocked (Galatians 6:7): HIS eyes discern the hearts of men and observes their hypocrisy (1 Kings 8:39). HE is appalled that men draw close to HIM in a value-

seeking intimacy that actually belies their hatred for HIM and fellow men. Like the kind Father that HE is, HE implores men to return to a value-adding intimacy with HIM that will benefit those around them:

Tell my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know My ways as a nation that did righteousness, and did not forsake the ordinance of their God .They ask of me the ordinance of justice; they take delight in approaching their God. “Why have we fasted,” they say, and You have not seen? Why have we afflicted our souls, and You take no notice?” “In fact, in the day of your fast you find pleasure, and exploit all your laborers. Indeed you fast for strife and debate, and to strike with the fist of wickedness. You will not fast as you do this day to make your voice heard on high.

Isaiah 58:1-4

How cruel the human experience has been as a result of this lustful legacy. **Value-seeking intimacy has so corrupted the human experience that even when men sought to relate with God, this corruption stood on the way.** As men loathed one another, as they coveted the others possessions, and as they have lived essentially for themselves, men have suffered for it. Unfulfilled in all their lust, lost for who they are, and endangering to others and themselves, man descended in a downward spiral of chaos and failure till this darkness has pushed many to the very throes of hell fire.

JESUS: THE LOVE SOLUTION

The solution to this tragedy is why Jesus came. Fortunately for men, God did not stop loving. To be sure, HE just cannot. HIS value-adding intimacy in as far as man is concerned has yielded an eternal commitment to man. Beloved, **God did not change because man changed. HE continued to seek good for man even when man forsook HIM for his own evil ways.**

Through so many patriarchs, prophets, laws, kings, scribes, and angelic messengers, God continued to woo man back to value-adding intimacy. In one of the clearest demonstrations of HIS value-adding intimacy for man, the LORD urges the prophet

Hosea to marry a prostitute which HE equates to the rebellion of men:

Go; take yourself a wife of harlotry and children of harlotry. For the land has committed great harlotry by departing from the LORD.

Hosea 1:2

In comparing HIS love for us to such as the one of a man faithfully married to a harlot, God demonstrates HIS eternal value-adding compassion and commitment to man. Regardless of the extent of devaluation man has incurred as a result of perversion, God yet sent several emissaries to return man to HIS original intention. And when all had failed, HE did the unthinkable when HE finally sent HIS only begotten Son to die as a propitiation

for man's sins thereby making it possible to reconcile man with divinity once and for all (2 Corinthians 5:18, 19).

Consequently, Christ's death for us is the grandest gesture of God's love (Romans 5:6-8). It surpasses the creation story; it completes the ministry of the prophets and fulfills the object of the law. It is the full flowering of a love that has predated the foundation of the world. In sending Christ to die for us, God demonstrated true love, rich compassion, genuine affection.

You cannot begin to say you know love until you have known this love. In this compassion, an innocent man was hanged in the place of guilty men

so that they could receive eternal pardon for their transgression.

Even Christ HIMSELF marveled at this affection when HE exclaimed:

**Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay
down his life for his friends.**

John 15:13

Important to realize is the fact that we had not done anything to deserve this generosity. On the contrary, we deserved death for our iniquity and yet God sought our good in sending Christ to die for us.

This had become unthinkable in the human experience. Men did not know such love that overlooks offense and seeks good. Think about it:

For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die.

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:6-8

This is the love of amazing grace, of how sweet the sound that saves wretched sinners that were lost and blind. It is the love that redeemed at glorious expense what had been reduced to no value.

God could have destroyed us all, HE could have created another set of men, but because of HIS value-adding intimacy, HE sent Christ to restore our value.

So many religious patrons have so minimized what God did when they unduly focus on the price Christ paid. More to this love can be known if we realize how much value HIS price rendered men.

For once HE died in the place of man as an offering for sin, HE then reconciled man to God and made possible for man to be a son of God (John 1:12, 13; Galatians 3:26-29). HE gave us omnipotent value. The death of Christ restored the value of man beyond any ability hitherto fore.

No riches, knowledge, blessing, or any advantage was able to gain man this privilege. But when the Son of God laid down HIS life as a ransom for the sins of men, HE single handedly converted the value of men from the human experience to divine measure. Previously distanced from God, Christ made it possible to reconcile the human experience with the divine nature of God.

Faith in the cross of Christ is what we call the gospel. The results of that faith are not limited to the elimination of sin but must of necessity include the amazing reality of our reconciliation with God. Those who believe in Christ are not condemned and have passed judgment to life eternal (1 John 5:11, 12).

Furthermore, they are joint heirs with HIM as sons of God (Romans 8:17). And even more amazing, in HIS resurrection and ascension, they are raised together with HIM and are seated with HIM and in HIM at the right hand of the Father (Ephesians 2:6).

Beloved:

**Love has been perfected among us in this:
that we may have boldness in the Day of Judgment;
because as He is so are we in this world.**

1 John 4:17

The miracle of this love is that man no longer needs to be the same old wicked person guided by a value-seeking intimacy that corrupts them and everyone they interact with:

**And we have known and believed the love that God
has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love
abides in God and God in him.**

1 John 4:16

Everyone can be a whole new being instilled with the Holy Spirit that leads them in a value-adding intimacy that blesses them and whoever they interact with (2 Corinthians 5:17).

This love, not any other, the love that adds value, that celebrates men in spite of their apparent failings is then the postmark of the believer in Christ. Praying to the Father just before HIS arrest, Christ confessed as much when HE said:

I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word: that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as we are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You loved Me.

John 17:20-23

This is the defining qualification of our Christ-likeness. We are one with God when we believe in HIS Son. We are no longer estranged from HIM. HIS love for us is consummated in the conversion of our humanity to HIS divinity. This love is the greatest entity in all of eternity: the believer in Christ, Christ in the believer, and the Father in Christ. We are, in Christ, factored in the God-

family. We are divine. And love is the quintessential factor in this great work.

No other miracle or wonder even begins to compare with genuine love (1 Corinthians 13:8-13). However great our faith can be without love we would still not be divine (1 Corinthians 13:2). This is why false prophets that will accomplish great miracles and signs in the last days will still be an offense to God; their great works notwithstanding done in the name of JESUS were not administered in love but vain boasting and self-conceit.

Even in the body of Christ, it is essential that we appreciate the critical function of love in our ministries. The gifts of the Holy Spirit in our lives are essential for our edification and for witness but

HIS ultimate ministry remains to keep us one in a value-adding intimacy with God and others. Without love we really do not have any ministry worth associating with the name of our LORD and the Father.

That is why Jesus gave the examples of the last day when HE will shun men that shall claim they worked miracles as evidence of their fellowship with him. He knew there to be a higher standard than the acts of the Holy Spirit exhibited in one's life:

Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 'Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons

in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’

**‘And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart
from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’**

Matthew 7:21-23

And yet, HE goes further to elaborate how acts of kindness to others will be essential in identifying those that are righteous:

All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on the right hand, but the goats on the left. ‘Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and You took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and You visited Me; I was in prison

and you came to Me.' Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, in as much as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'

Matthew 25:32-40

My friend, eternal life belongs to those who assume value-adding intimacy as their guide in relations. **Life was meant for, and always intended to be, about the benefit of God and others. God created us in HIS likeness so that we may profit in profiting HIM and others.**

In this I agree with the renowned evangelist Dr. T.L Osborn who suggests that *our success is in the success of others based on our effort*. Eternal life, the Kingdom

of God, riches untold, are set apart for those who have set their goal and find fulfillment in benefiting God and others.



TRUE LOVE: THE LIFE PRESCRIPTION

Beloved, value-adding intimacy is the essence of Christian living; it is the definition of godliness. **We are in this life to profit God and men. Our profit is sealed in *the glory* we extend to God through *the privileges* we bestow on others.** This is what God sought more than sacrifices and fasts (Isaiah 58). This is the love that works. It is the means to joy, peace, blessing, and all round victory. Jesus lived this way, seeking to do HIS Fathers will and laying down HIS life for the benefit of men.

In the end, HE has been so highly exalted above all creation (Philippians 2:5-11). The early church lived this way: Apostles like Paul, viewed life as both a privilege to God and a mission to men (Philippians 1:12-17; 2 Timothy 1:11, 12).

Facing the possibility of death as a result of his ministry, lounging from his prison cell he penned this value-adding intimacy to the church in Philippi:

For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor, yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you. And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith.

Philippians 1:21-25

Everyone must live this way: We must live for the progress of others, for their profit. Value-adding intimacy will convert our aspirations from selfish results to one that will profit God and HIS people.

Now this is what life was meant to be about. The life of Jesus was a supernatural one because of this cause. HIS compassion for men, HIS obedience to God occasioned a series of miracles and wonders that *glorified God* and *delivered men*. Today, we seek the same signs in many sermons on faith and yet **the key to the miraculous is love. Faith must work through love or it will produce the wrong results** (Galatians 5:6; Ephesians 3:17).

If the Church must be the glory God intended it to be, if we must shine so bright a light that men should be drawn to God, we must walk in value-adding intimacy. Our motives should gravitate to the basic desire to *please God* and *progress our*

neighbor. The moment we adopt this cause, our doors will swing wide open.

Prosperity is not in *a palace of cash* as much as it is in *a place of love*. Neither is deliverance the result of *much prayer* as it is the result of *much loving*: Prosperity came to a Gentile widow that was willing to share her last meal with a hungry prophet (1 Kings 17:10-16). Unlike the school of prophets, although she may never have prayed with Elijah yet because she fed him, her home had overflowing meals during a severe famine.

Similarly, deliverance came to Peter in prison because of the love of the saints more than their prayers. That is why when he knocked at their door while they still prayed; they doubted if he was the

one. Their love had overtaken their prayer to give great deliverance to the apostle (Acts 12).

Do you want your marriage to work? Do you desire to get a promotion at work?

Whatever you desire, find it in assuming value-adding intimacy. **Seek God's glory in all you do, live for the profit of others, and you will ignite a fire of privilege that will be impossible to quench.** Your good marriage is not dependent on the character of your spouse as much as it is dependent on whether you are willing to seek their profit. Similarly, your promotion is not dependent on the favor of your superiors as much as it is dependent on whether you are willing to seek the profit of your organization.

Switch off the *I, me and myself* gear and you will have closed down the cause of failure, fear, guilt and tragedy. Live for the glory of God, in obedience to HIS word, in a value-adding intimacy with HIM and those around you and you will trigger a series of wonders that will propel you to summits of glory.

LOVE THAT REALLY WORKS is a tool in your hands that seeks to help you live the glorious life that God intended for you before time. As you read it, open your mind to its counsel as the words therein revise your soul from a value-seeking intimacy to a value-adding intimacy. From this time forward and forever more, love will guide you to blessings untold and wonders unknown.

Beloved, don't quit on love because of the perversion of your times. Like you have read through this material, let it enable you join the love chariot and disciple you in the greatest lesson of all- this thing called LOVE.