

... indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

1John 1:3

Store In My Heart Zechariah 1:2-3

The Lord was very angry with your fathers. Therefore say to them, Thus declares the Lord of hosts: Return to me, says the Lord of hosts, and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts.

While Haggai urged the Jews who returned to Jerusalem after captivity to build the temple, Zechariah told them to return to the Lord.

The Jews were sent into exile because they had turned away from God. Those who had returned were still not focusing on God. Zechariah's message promised peace and prosperity if they would wholly commit themselves to truly serve the Lord with their hearts and actions. True judgments with kindness and mercy toward the needy among them was needed.

Obedience in our action is what God wants from us. We do well to consider our devotion to the Lord, lest we find ourselves cast from Him.



The Power Of Love

Carl Witty

"Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make Our home with him'" - John 14:23. These words, spoken in answer to a question raised by Judas, explained to that disciple how some in the world would know Jesus, while others would not. The presence of the Father and Son would be with those who, out of love, would keep (obey) the words of Jesus. The path of obedience is the path of love followed by the Divine Presence.

The greatest power in the universe available to human beings is the power of love. It is not arms or armies of the earth, the alliances of nations, or the wealth of mankind. It is the power of love. This article will introduce that great power for your consideration. When all else fails, love will prevail. *"And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love" - 1Corinthians 13:13.* We will consider love from three viewpoints.

Love has great power on ourselves. Every emotion, good or bad, reacts back upon us. Anger, pity, scorn, etc., all reflect back into the one who expresses those emotions. When we love others, we ourselves become better people. People with hearts full of love for others enjoy a quality of life others only dream of. The principle expressed in **Galatians 6:7-8** is especially applicable to love: *"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life."* This principle is central in the exercise of our faith. **Galatians 5:14** - *"For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"* The commands in the Old Testament law relating to others all reflect this truth. **Exodus 20:13-17** gave the commands about murder, adultery, stealing, bearing false witness and coveting. Our love for our neighbor *"as yourself"* shows this great power.

Love has great power on others. Love allows us to even exert a certain power toward our enemies. *"If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."* - **Romans 12:20-21.**

The conquering power of love is illustrated in **Proverbs 15:1** - *"A soft answer turns away wrath."* Brother C. D. Plum, an aged preacher from Parkersburg, West Virginia, told me the story of baptizing a lady during a gospel meeting who warned brother Plum of her husband's violent temper

and what he might do when he learned of her becoming a Christian. Brother Plum went to visit her husband (a saloon keeper) and tried to talk to him. The husband slammed a fist into brother Plum's jaw, knocking him to the floor. Brother Plum slowly got to his feet and pointed his finger to the other side of his face. The husband stared in disbelief, then lowered his fist and began to weep. Brother Plum baptized the man before the gospel meeting concluded. There is no more disarming action that we may take than that of loving others. God's love in repeatedly forgiving Israel is vividly portrayed as a conquering and drawing action in **Jeremiah 31:3** - *"Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you."* The drawing power of Christ's death for us was predicted in **John 12:32** - *"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me"* (KJV). Love has a binding power on others: **Colossians 2:2** *"...their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love..."* and in **3:14** - *"And above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection."*

Love has the power to direct God's blessings. The One whose mighty power orders and guides the universe is influenced by our love. *"If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him"* - **John 14:23**. God is keenly aware of our love for Him - *"For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister"* - **Hebrews 6:10**. There is a strong connection between the unfolding of God's plans and our love for God. *"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose"* - **Romans 8:28**. The love we express toward God is motivated by a consideration of what God has done, and is now doing toward us. *"We love Him because He first loved us"* - **1John 4:19**. *"But if anyone loves God, this one is known by Him"* - **1Corinthians 8:3**. God knows our love for Him, and our blessings are proportionate to that love.

Do we realize the enormous power of love? Probably not. But we can grow in our understanding of that power and its influences on ourselves, upon others, and even on God Himself. May God help us to grow in love, and thus enjoy the benefits of such love. The greatest example of the power of love is that of Jesus, whose love for us took Him to the cross to die for us. *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life"* - **John 3:16**. When we give our lives in service to God we demonstrate our love for Him.

Frances H. Havergal has well expressed the power of love in her hymn, "Take My Life and Let It Be":

"Take my life, and let it be Consecrated, Lord, to Thee; Take my hands, and let them move At the impulse of Thy love. Take my love; my Lord I pour At Thy feet its treasure-store; Take myself, and I will be Ever, only, all for Thee."

Contact Us

We like opportunities to speak with others about the Lord.

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The
CHURCH OF CHRIST
MEETS HERE



10:20 AM • Sunday Worship Service
5:00 PM • Sunday Night Bible Study
7:00 PM • Wednesday Bible Study

For Our Information

Jim Soliday's has a heart cath scheduled for December 30th.

JoBeth Henderson chemo treatments on Tuesdays.

Deberah Brooks is back home and doing better after physical therapy following her fall.

Paula Laubach is still dealing with a difficult cough in addition to her back and leg pain.

Leta Rivera still has regular help from a caregiver but is feeling some better.

Tommy Robinson will have radiation treatment for his cancer.

Sunday Evening - **Isaiah 40:27** Wednesday - **Singing**