

LOVE OF GOD

CONTACT US

17 Sibelius, Retreat Cape Town 7549
Afrique du Sud +27 817 609 511
info@mevchristocentrique.org
mevchristocentrique.org



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Love is a very common word. In all human societies and at all times, this word is intended to be at the centre of all relationships. Whatever the orientation that Man gives to it, love remains an attraction considered as a "justification" of an affective relationship between humans on the one hand, and on the other hand between humans and the other elements of creation, in particular with the elements of flora and fauna (example: pets, flowers, natural landscapes...), and this attachment always has as its aim to procure a state of well-being for "oneself", first of all, and eventually for others. Also, in the face of social anxieties and disappointments, humans sometimes maintain, in sublimation, a relationship of attachment to immaterial beings from whom they expect assistance and protection.

Generally, in his search for "love", Man develops, consciously or unconsciously, the tendency to satisfy his ego first. Thus, for Man, this attachment is based on a vibration whose waves must be pleasing to oneself, first of all. If Man engages in an affective or devotional relationship and receives nothing in return, he will immediately conclude that there is no "love" in this relationship, even if the relationship is satisfactory for the other.

We can also point out that even in the parent-child relationship, there is a standard of satisfaction expected by both parties. If this standard is not met, the relationship may be annihilated.

The psalmist says that even if my father and mother

forsake me, the Lord will take me in (Psalm 27:10). This biblical passage reminds us that even between parents and children, "love" can disappear for a few discomforts. Thus, what man calls "love" is a frantic search for self-satisfaction and personal comfort. If we look closely at the orientation that man gives to the word "love", we can clearly see the predominant place occupied by the "I" (ego). But, in the following lines, we will go through the Holy Scriptures and learn the Truth of God's "Love" for Man.

In 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, the Word reveals to us the true meaning of Love: "Love has patience, is kind; love is not envious, is not vain, is not puffed up; does not behave indecently, does not seek her own, is not easily provoked, thinks no evil. Love does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices in the truth, quietly covers all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things. Love never fails. But if there are prophecies, they will be abolished; if tongues, they shall cease; if knowledge, it will be abolished."

This true sense of Love proceeds from the absolute that is in God the Creator, manifested and fulfilled in Jesus Christ; and John 3:16 makes the fundamental revelation of it in these words, " For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ." This is God's Love for us!

Yes, Christ came to fulfil God's love for mankind, and it is true! The Word testifies that Christ loved us first, His Love is unrequited and unselfish. He simply loves us, good or

or bad, and His Love remains available to all.

Indeed, from the very beginning of His mission, when the children of Israel were challenging Him, Christ, out of Love, never ceased to remind us that He is the One the Scriptures speak of and that He gives eternal life. This Truth is rendered in John 5:39-40 when Christ says: "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life. And they are the ones witnessing of Me, AND YOU WILL NOT COME TO ME THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE LIFE." Through Love, Christ eternal life.

Furthermore, God's Love in Christ does not keep us in a shackle or under some kind of subjection, but this Love is offered to us simply through Christ, who gives us freedom, and empowers us to respond. This is why receiving Christ into our lives is a deliberate and individual commitment, after having gained knowledge, and not an act of coercion or proselytism. This love sets us free from the bondage of sin and removes us from condemnation: Christ justifies us and gives us grace.

However, a question can be asked: What good has this love of God done and what good will it do, if we can look at the evil, the catastrophes, the poverty, the wars, the social conflicts, the economic crises, the political instabilities, and the social injustices, which the world has been going through for centuries? Certainly, these things do not spare God's children either; they are also victims.

In response, the Word exhorts us not to despair or worry, for our Father knows that all these things weigh down the world and that we need the well-being,

including food, peace, social stability, and comfort that the natural environment and the economic and social framework offer (Matthew 6:32; Philippians 4:6) And in the face of all that is going on in the world, Christ warned and strengthened us when He said, "I have spoken these things to you so that you might have peace in Me. In the world you shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer. I have overcome the world." (John 16:33) But what then is this Love accomplished in Christ and in what way has Christ overcome the world? The Word gives us the answer when it teaches in John 3:16: "...that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

God's Love for Man is offered, to give eternal life to everyone who believes in Jesus Christ: this Love has the purpose of redeeming Man from the lust of this world, from sin and condemnation, so that Man passes from the power of Satan to God. This is how God overcame the world. This may sound simplistic, but it is the Truth. Indeed, the Love revealed and fulfilled in Jesus Christ sets up the encounter between Man and His God, and prepares Man, by means of Faith, for eternal life. Love in Christ is without counterpart to Man; it is before Man was created and before all creation. It precedes the foundation of the world, for it is in God the Creator. It is given to the world by Grace, which is in Christ Jesus, thus offering us the way to become children of God, by adoption, according to the purposes God has formed in Himself (Ephesians 1:3-12).

The Gospel of life brings Love to all nations, so that they may come to life, as it is written: "I will deliver you from the Jewish people as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, to open their eyes in order to turn them

from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me." (Acts 26:17-18). The "inheritance of the sanctified" is eternal life. This is what God's love for man is and will be used for in all ages!

This being a gift, let us receive this Love offered by God, by believing in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, and all the rest will be given to us in addition.

"Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, nor about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap, nor gather into barns, and your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? God's love is given in Christ, and it remains as long as Christ, resurrected, is alive. And God loves, but not as the world pretends to "love": out of Love, God gives us Grace in Jesus Christ, and there is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male or female, He calls us all to Salvation, through Faith.

In the face of the adversities of this world, and when the Love of God seems to be weighed against personal trials, let us abide in prayer and in Faith, and have peace, being reassured by this exhortation of Christ: "These things I have spoken to you, that you may have peace in me. You will have tribulation in the world; but take heart, I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

My brother, my sister, for you who are in Christ, the Love of God has overcome the world, for you are delivered from the bondage of sin and condemnation to justification of sins and salvation.