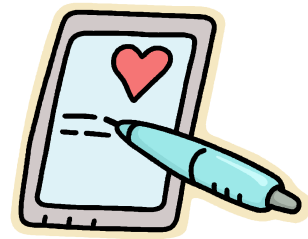


WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT

August 2007

“PERMANENT RESIDENCE”



Joy, Peace, Satisfaction, and the wonderful Presence of God, in and on our lives comes when we live an obedient, yielded life. The commandments of the Lord are for our good. Some of the Word we will be sharing is strong – not to harm or condemn us but to help us and do us good. May you be blessed and encouraged as the Lord brings understanding and increase in your lives.

There has been emphasis lately in the church on reaching out to others. Choosing to live beyond ourselves – it is our responsibility and duty to touch and impact lives wherever we are and wherever we go. The love of God (in and through us) draws people, and the Word of God brings salvation. We have written before of the love of God and will again examine it as God fulfills His Word – “*For God himself is teaching you to love one another.*” (1 Thes. 4:9 LB) There are ever-widening circles of love in our lives. We know the Scripture in Matthew 22:37,38 where Jesus says to love the Lord with all we have and all we are. The same Scripture in the Message Paraphrase says, “*Love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer and intelligence. This is the most important, the first on any list. But there is a second to set alongside it: Love others as well as you love yourself.*” It is good from time to time to check ourselves – Are we loving Him that way? Are we loving our neighbor as ourselves? Are we loving ourselves? I believe God is revealing, helping, and healing us so we can reach out, touch and spread the love of God to others. We as women are wonderful vessels and givers of love and tenderness. God made us this way and delights to use us to show others who He is. There is a special love for our spouses, children, and our extended families. There is a special love for our brothers and sisters in Christ. May God give us a great love for people – when those who don’t know the Lord yet – they may not be His children yet – but they are His Creation. And so we will look at the life of love again – this time using Scripture from the Message Paraphrase. May it be fresh, alive, and new to you! The Lord is ever teaching us by His Spirit (sometimes repeating Himself!) lest we forget what is truly important. You may notice that many of these Scriptures are about loving our fellow-believers. As we “walk them out” I believe the Lord will teach and equip us to reach those who don’t know Him yet – those whom He loves and died for.

“...This is not a new commandment but simply a repetition of our original and basic charter: that we love each other. Love means following His commandments, and His unifying commandment that you conduct your lives in love.” (2 John 5,6 MSG)

He loved us first. “*First we were loved, now we love. He loved us first.*” (1 John 4:19 MSG) Romans 5:5 says, that the love of God has been poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us. The fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22,23) love is already in our spirit in seed form. The seed grows when we cultivate the ground (soil) of our hearts keeping them soft, tender, and friable (broken up, not hard) watered (by the Word), walk in the Light, and guard, care for, and keep your hearts in Him.

We learn to love what God loves. Our love is by choice, decision, and certainly on purpose. 1 Corinthians 14:1 MSG says, “*Go after a life of love as if your life depended on it – because it does.*”

“God is love. When we take up permanent residence in a life of love, we live in God and God lives in us.

This way, love has the run of the house, becomes at home and mature in us, so that we’re free of worry on Judgment Day – our standing in the world is identical with Christ’s. There is no room in love for fear. Well-formed love banishes fear. Since fear is crippling, a fearful life – fear of death, fear of judgment is one not yet fully formed in love.” (1 John 4:16-19)

“Let the Word of Christ – the Message – have the run of the house. Give it plenty of room in your lives. Let every detail of your lives – words, actions, whatever – be done in the name of the Master, Jesus, thanking God the Father every step of the way.” (Colossians 3:16,17 MSG).

“God wants us to grow up, to know the whole truth and tell it in love – like Christ in everything. We take our lead from Christ, who is the source of everything we do. He keeps us in step with each other. His very breathe and blood flow through us, nourishes us so that we will grow up healthy in God, robust in love.” (Ephesians 4:15,16 MSG).

“It is absolutely clear that God has called you to a free life. Just make sure that you don’t use this freedom as an excuse to do whatever you want to do and destroy your freedom. Rather, use your freedom to serve one another in love; that’s how freedom grows. For everything we know about God’s Word is summed up in a single sentence: Love others as you love yourself. That’s an act of true freedom.” (Galatians 5:13,14 MSG).

“My dear children, let’s not just talk about love; let’s practice real love. This is the only way we’ll know we’re living truly, living in God’s reality.” (1 John 3:18,19 MSG).

“My beloved friends, let us continue to love each other since love comes from God. Everyone who loves is born of God and experiences a relationship with God. The person who refuses to love doesn’t know the first thing about God, because God is love – so you can’t know him if you don’t love. This is how God showed his love for us: God sent his only Son into the world so we might live through him. This is the kind of love we are talking about – not that we once upon a time loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to clear away our sins and the damage they’re done to our relationship with God.

My dear, dear friends. If God loved us like this, we certainly ought to love each other. No one has seen God, ever. But if we love one another, God dwells deeply within us, and his love becomes complete in us – perfect love!

This is how we know we’re living steadily and deeply in him, and he in us: *“He’s given us life from his life, from his very own Spirit. Also, we’ve seen for ourselves and continue to state openly that the Father sent his Son as Savior of the World. Everyone who confesses that Jesus is God’s Son participates continuously in an intimate relationship with God. We know it so well, we’ve embraced it heart and soul, this love that comes from God.” (1 John 4:7-15 MSG)*

“This is how we’ve come to understand and experience love: Christ sacrificed his life for us. This is why we ought to live sacrificially for our fellow believers, and not just be out for ourselves. If you see some brother or sister in need and have the means to do something about it but turn a cold shoulder and do nothing, what happens to God’s Love. It disappears. And you made it disappear.” (1 John 3:16,17 MSG).

“But what happens when we live God’s way? He brings gifts into our lives, much the same way that fruit appears in an orchard – things like affection for others, exuberance about life, serenity. We develop a willingness to stick with things, a sense of compassion in the heart, and a conviction that a basic holiness permeates things and people. We find ourselves involved in loyal commitments, not needing to force our way in life, able to marshal and direct our energies wisely.” (Galatians 5:22-24 MSG).

“Watch what God does, and then you do it, like children who learn proper behavior from their parent. Mostly what God does is love you. Keep company with him and learn a life of love. Observe how Christ loved us. His love was not cautious but extravagant. He didn’t love in order to get something from us but to give everything of himself to us. Love like that.” (Ephesians 5:1,2 MSG)

God’s Word commands us to walk in love (Ephesians 5:2 RSV) *“I want you to get out there and walk – better yet run! - on the road God called you to travel. I don’t want anyone strolling off, down some path that goes nowhere. And mark that you do this with humility and discipline – not fits and starts, but steadily pouring yourselves out for each other in acts of love, alert at noticing differences and quick at mending fences.”*

“You were all called to travel on the same road and in the same direction, so stay together, both outwardly and inwardly. You have one Master, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of All, who rules over all, works through all, and is present in all. Everything you are and think and do is permeated with Oneness.” (Ephesians 4:2-6 MSG)

*“The way we know we’ve been transferred from death to life is that we love our brothers and sisters.”
(1 John 3:11 MSG)*

“If anyone boasts, I love God,” and goes right on hating his brother or sister, thinking nothing of it, he is a liar. If he won’t love the person he can see, how can he love the God he can’t see? The command we have from Christ is blunt: Loving God includes loving people. You’ve got to love both!

Every person who believes Jesus is, in fact, the Messiah, is God – begotten. If we love the One who conceives the child, we’ll surely love the child who was conceived. The reality test on whether or not we love God’s children is this: Do we love God? Do we keep His command? The proof that we love God comes when we keep His commandments and they are not at all troublesome.” (John 4:20-21, 5:1-3 MSG)

“So, chosen by God for this new life of love, dress in the wardrobe God picked out for you: Compassion, kindness, humility, quiet strength, discipline. Be even-tempered, content with second place, quick to forgive an offense. Forgive as quickly and completely as the Master forgave you. And regardless of what else you put on, **wear love.** It’s your basic, all-purpose garment. Never be without it.” (Colossians 3:12-14 MSG)

So this is my prayer: *“that your love will flourish and that you will not only love much, but well. Learn to love appropriately. You need to use your head and test your feelings so that your love is sincere and intelligent, not sentimental gush. Live a lover’s life, circumspect and exemplary, a life Jesus will be proud of: bountiful in fruits from the soul, making Jesus Christ attractive to all, getting everyone involved in the glory and praise of God.” (Philippians 1:9-11 MSG)*

The LOVE OF GOD – live there, wear it, speak it, pray it, share it, give it away! Praise & Glory to Him!!!

In the Name of the ONE who is LOVE,
Toni Quinn
“For His Glory” Women’s Ministry

