

*A Stop by Quiet Waters*  
By  
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**“The Wonder of the Love of God!”**

You are either on your way home from church or still ministering to people after the service. I can't help but wonder how you are feeling. Sometimes I came home elated, full of joy and rejoicing because I experienced the power of the Holy Spirit as I preached and saw the Spirit move visibly among the people. Other times I came home feeling I had failed miserably and in such deep discouragement that I would burst into tears and cry inconsolably. There were also those in-between times when everything just seemed “flat,” and I came home wondering what was the use of it all, so little seemed to be happening in the people.

Wherever you are, let me share with you how God feels about you right now, how He felt about you yesterday, and how He will feel about you tomorrow. This is far more encouraging than what you or your people feel about you and your ministry today.

These thoughts came as I was pondering what to preach to a congregation where I was recently the guest speaker. I didn't want to just “pull a sermon out of the barrel” for them, so I asked the Lord to put in my mind what He wanted them to hear. The thoughts and Scriptures began to come so fast that I could hardly keep up as I wrote them down. When it was over I saw that God had given me 6 things to tell them about His love for them.

These are for you where you are right now.

**The first thing he said was, “*I love them with an everlasting love.*”** His love for you never changes, which is the clear implication of Philippians 1:6. “*God who began a good work in you will continue it...*” God says that His love for you drives Him in His work in your life. His goal and determination are to see you be all He redeemed you to be.

What He began in your life He will continue until you stand in the very presence of Jesus Christ. He is at work in you even though much of the time you don't realize it. However, every once in a while an experience or an event will reveal some of this inner work and you will be amazed at what you see in yourself, what comes out of your mouth, or what you suddenly find yourself doing – all because of his un-ending love.

**The second thing He said was, “*I love them enough to discipline them.*”** Hebrews 12:6 tells us that, “*The Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son.*” He loves you as one of His children! His love for you is not like that of many parents today who give in to their children's desires and demands, out of fear that the child will think or feel their parent does not truly love them, even though that thing is not good for the child. True parental love is not a “give my child whatever he/she wants” thing.

He loves you too much to allow you to be harmed or damaged by what He knows is not good for you. God, your heavenly Father, is willing to run the risk of you not understanding Him at present because He knows the time is coming when you will understand and then be grateful to him for what He led you through, what He kept you from, and what He brought you to.

**The third thing he said was: “I will never regret how I have loved you and what my love for you cost me.”** Probably more than any one else in our lifetime, Mel Gibson has helped us see the depth of the love of God for us in the **Passion of the Christ** movie. I watched it again this year during the week before Easter and wept deeply over what the Lord Jesus was willing to endure for my salvation. It was a price God gladly paid because the dividends were priceless! No matter what the world does with God’s Son, he will never be sorry He gave Him for you. The price was not too great though it cost Him everything.

My heart goes out to those parents who watched a son or daughter go off to war in Iraq, only to come home in a coffin. For some of them the price was too great to pay for the results of our involvement in that part of the world, and they have become protesters against the war. You will never find God doing this to you because of the death of His Son, Jesus.

He knows how you struggle, fall, fail, doubt, fear, are tempted, etc., but He is still with you and has no regrets about giving Christ for you, no matter how miserably you seem to be performing at present. He is with you to help you and will never leave you, for to do so would be to withdraw His love from you.

**The fourth thing he said was, “My love causes me to look forward to the day when you’ll be with me in my eternal kingdom and know and see me as I now do you.”** He wants this for you! In John 14:2-3 the Lord Jesus told us that he was going to prepare a place for us in his Father’s home so that we would be with Him where He was.

The purpose of the work of redemption was to undo the Satanic destruction of God’s ultimate intention of an eternal kingdom of perfect relationships. He first revealed this in Genesis in the Garden of Eden. Everything we lost there will be given to us again through Christ in the kingdom of heaven.

The restoration of these relationships has already begun through our redemption. You have a living relationship with God here below, but He has a much fuller and more intimate one coming. It is His heart’s desire to have you with Him in the fullness of his presence. This is yours because the Lord Jesus already paid the full price for it, and you can add nothing to it. Just believe it, embrace it, look forward to it, and see your ministry here below as one of helping your people to see and embrace this same astounding truth. As the old gospel song puts it, “*This world is not my home, I’m just a’passin through, my treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue...*”

**The fifth thing he said was, “My love for you is real, tangible, experiential”.** Psalm 63:3 and 5 say, “*Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you... My soul will be satisfied as with the richest of foods...*” The Psalmist experienced the love of God in such a real and tangible way that nothing else in all his life could bring him the deep satisfaction, contentment, and fulfillment the touch of God could bring. When he was experiencing God’s love there was nothing he wanted to take its place.

Brother Laurence, in his little book, The Practice of the Presence of God, says the same thing. I believe you know what I mean, for you have felt the love of God at different times. He often sneaks up on me with such an encounter when I least expect it, but I would trade nothing in all this world for those times when He lets me sense His love for me.

**The sixth thing he said was: “When you are filled with my love you will no longer fear judgment.”** His love drives out our fears. John, that, “Son of thunder,” as Jesus called him, wrote of this in 1 John 4:18: “*There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.*” We are so performance driven (at least I struggle with this) that we keep slipping back into the false thinking that God doesn’t love me very much because I mess up so often, fail so miserably, am so lacking in giftedness for serving Him, etc.

In His eyes, what He wants from us most is to open ourselves up to the fullness of his love for us so that we can be set free from those kinds of struggles. Then we will love others more freely and fully than we have ever done before. We will be motivated by His love and His love alone – his love for us, and his love for those around us no matter who they are, what they look or smell like, or where we find them.

It is the evil one who keeps trying to distort and deny God’s love for you, and make you doubt it deep within. He is still coming, as he did in Eden, with his half truths and outright lies about God, our Father in heaven. God loves us with an everlasting, unchanging, redeeming, life-transforming love. The liar wants to make you feel you have to somehow earn God’s love, and yet he tells you that you never can and never will really know God’s love, that it isn’t for people like you.

Lies, all lies! God’s love is never earned, only received, embraced, celebrated. Celebrate his love! It is for you!

Your brother in Christ,

Dick Germaine