

# Hearts of Love

Tom & Debbie Tillman "to touch the world for Jesus Christ"

A free monthly publication of Hearts of Love Ministries.

Volume 31 Issue 08 © August, 2023

## Anger, Pride, Regret or Faithfulness

Last time I wrote about God's work within us to produce Godly patience; you'll remember, I said that God is always bringing trials into our lives in order to form us more and more, day by day, into the image and likeness of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ and the foremost characteristic of Jesus Christ which He is working into our lives is patience. Only with true Godly patience could the Lord Jesus Christ have gone through all that He did, for us, willingly suffering the horror of crucifixion while never complaining or even resisting. That is what God is doing in us; He is the One Who chose us, from the foundation of the World, called us, in His perfect timing and saved us, eternally; He is the One Who began His redeeming work within us and He is the One Who will continue to complete it until the moment He comes for us, one day soon, in the Rapture.

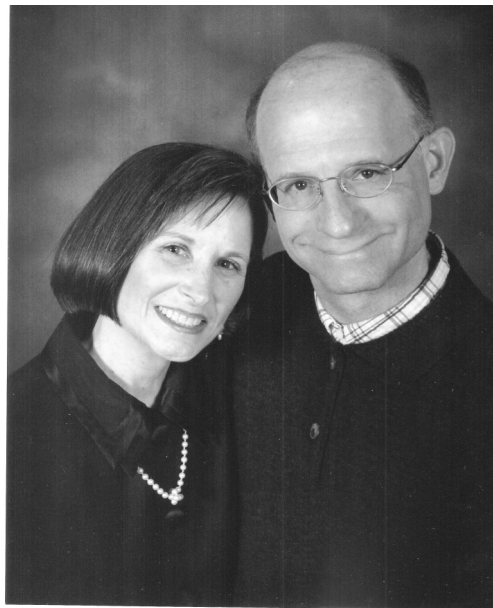
*'For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.'* Philippians 2:13

*'Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.'* Philippians 1:6

The way in which He does His work within us is through many and varied trials:

*'My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into diverse temptations (trials);<sup>3</sup> Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.<sup>4</sup> But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.'* James 1:2

There is something else, not from God, which can act as a serious trial in our lives; it's not something which God is doing but He is allowing it; it is the result of our response to trials; we might lash out in anger and then spend months or years in regret as we work to repair the breach we've been responsible for causing. That breach



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**May God richly bless you!**

Tom & Debbie

*He has committed to us the word of Reconciliation. Therefore, we are Ambassadors for Christ.*

*2 Corinthians 5:19,20*

might be between us and friends, or family, spouse or children; we can even cause a great gulf between ourselves and God; He doesn't leave us but we leave Him by refusing to pray or read His Word; we might blame Him for the problems our own sin has caused. He doesn't make us chose to be angry but that can often be our response to His trials; then, with the anger, we can say or do things which have long-lasting effect. We can then become consumed with crippling regret. Our response to regret then often results in *'digging in our heels,'* and pridefully refusing to humble ourselves before those we've hurt in our anger, displayed in harsh words and actions. We then refuse to humble ourselves before God, to come to Him in repentance and faith, believing in His love and forgiveness which is always poured out without measure from His Throne of Grace.

*'Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.'* Hebrews 4:16

There are many men whose families are exploding or imploding all around him. He has, perhaps, over

the years, reacted or responded to his wife and children with fits of anger, embittering his children, and children-in-law, against him for what they might describe as 'abusive' upbringing.

A tense stalemate can ensue in that he may say, 'I'm sorry,' but they don't feel that he means it, that he is not taking full responsibility for his words and actions; perhaps he apologizes but then adds... 'but... you did thus and so... you're also to blame... you owe me respect as the father!!!'

When we have caused division by our words or actions, we often blame others by saying or thinking... 'but they started it!' or, 'They need to apologize to me too... I'm not the only one guilty, here!' and, so, the division continues and grows because of our pride, which we nurture and feed; it's that pride which will not allow us to truly humble ourselves before others, especially wives and children.

Don't get me wrong... I'm not saying that there aren't, often, two sides to every battle but this is my main point: as husbands, as

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fathers, as those who are commissioned as the spiritual leaders in the home... the responsibility always lies with us; we are the ones who must humble ourselves before our family. We have been appointed, by God, as the spiritual head of the family and God was not suggesting... He was commanding.

God created marriage and the family to be a visual representation of God's relationship within Himself, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit... and, then, of His ever-loving relationship toward us.

God, Himself, initiated and took full responsibility for healing and restoring the breach in our relationship with Him. We didn't, first, come to Him in repentance and faith... He first came to us in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ; He took it upon Himself to humble Himself and come to pay the full price for our sinful pride.

Then, having chosen a certain people for Himself, first Israel and then, every one of us who would be among the chosen Bride for His Son... He destroyed the wall between us, conquering sin, conquering death and bringing to us, Eternal Life.

He created the family within the Church, His Bride: the husband who

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represents God to his family, the wife who represents the Holy Spirit within the family and both, subject to the Lord Jesus Christ as Head over all. Then, as children are created, by God, they are brought to God through the ministry of father and mother, being drawn to Salvation through both. Here is the point of saying that the ultimate responsibility within the family falls to the father; he is to humbly shepherd the flock which God has placed in his care. He can either do so faithfully and carefully or he can do so pridefully and selfishly; either way he/we/I will stand before God to give an account of our shepherding of our flock/family. And let me add something else... within the Church, God has established the Pastor as His representative before every family. That is the reason that God requires a Pastor to be married and not divorced and remarried apart from Scriptural sanction; he is to be an example to the flock of God's enduring faithfulness and love toward us. That is one of the reasons why Catholicism's requirement that their priests be unmarried and 'celibate' is such a dastardly twisting of the truth of God's Word.

And it is also the reason, I believe, that elder leadership within a church is not Scripturally sound. God has appointed one head shepherd within a church, the Pastor; Jesus did not lead and make decisions after taking a vote from His disciple board. If a church has elders, their main function is to serve the flock, not lord it over the flock. When elders rule, they often create a self sustaining, self approving, self gratifying little kingdom of their own.

*'But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. <sup>26</sup> But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; <sup>27</sup> And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: <sup>28</sup> Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.'* Matt 20:25

When elders or pastors rule, people suffer; when pastors and elders serve, the people are blessed. God exercises His full authority over us in love: always patient, always

kind, always forgiving, never keeping an account of our sin, never behaving rudely, never provoked, never thinking evil, never rejoicing in iniquity, but always rejoicing in the truth; He bears all things, He believes all things, He hopes all things, He endures all things.... His love for us never fails.

God and His love are Who and What the Pastor is supposed to model.

God and His love are Who and What the husband and father in a family is supposed to model.

When we are wrong, we are commanded to quickly humble ourselves before our wives and children. If we, instead, act in prideful self gratification, that is the picture of God they are learning to reject.

*'Daddy, can you show me a picture of Jesus? Daddy you're the one I see... I really love you and I want to be like you, Daddy, you're a picture for me...'*

*'Even so, husbands love your wives, even as Jesus loves the Church... and give her honor, **give her honor, give her honor, that your prayers might be unhindered.**'* 1 Pet 3:7

*'And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.'* Eph 6:4

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**The Harvest is Great, but the laborers are few.** Matt 9:38



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