

UPWARD CALL

Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but this is my one aim: to forget everything that's behind, and to strain every nerve to go after what lies ahead. I press on toward the finish line, where the prize waiting for me is the upward call of God

IN KING JESUS.

(Philippians 3:13-14)

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Adam Tried to Save the Love of His Life

Recently, a well-known tele-evangelist stated that when he gets to heaven, he is going to kick Adam in the pants for what he did to us, and with this grand statement, as if on cue, his audience laughed. I did not find his comment very funny. Frankly, I found it very arrogant. It is as if this preacher were stating that he would have done it differently and perhaps not even have sinned. It lacked love and forgiveness, which is not surprising because, sadly, this brother sees the wrath of God trumping the love of God. Are we not to forgive Adam? Are we not to love him? After all, we are commanded to forgive and to love, even our enemies, for this is the heart of our God that scripture says is love (1 John 4:8, 16). Love is God's very essence. It is who He is.; He defines love Scripture does not state that God is wrath.

When I see Adam, I just might hug him, if this is the affectionate way of greeting one another among the glorified, and thank him for being a type of the last Adam (Romans 5:14). In the account of Adam and Eve as recorded in Genesis, the book of beginnings, there are many types that point to Christ and His sacrificial love for *all* mankind. As I read the record, I sense the love of God reaching out to His creation. When Adam disobeyed God by following his wife in eating the forbidden fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, many see an angry God who cursed the ground and banished Adam and his wife from the garden. But I see a loving and merciful God who reached out His hand of redemption and love to Adam and Eve. They were naked, so what did God do? He made garments of skin and clothed them. Of course, this is a type of the ultimate sacrifice that was to come through God's Son, and yet, on a practical level, it was God's provision for them and His way of saying to Adam and Eve that they too would be redeemed.

We know that things changed in the inner man of Adam and Eve, which was passed on to their entire race that followed. And yes; God made childbirth painful and cursed the ground on account of their transgression, but I believe there was far more compassion and love on the part of God. He was not mean to them in that day. Childbirth pain was probably to curtail the number of births and the cursed ground was probably to reduce the lifespan of man. Even their banishment from the garden was for good reason. It would have been a disaster for mankind if they had been allowed to partake of the tree of life after having partaken of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It was not God's desire or His purpose for mankind to live in that condition forever. Death had to enter the picture in order to bring a halt to this condition. Even so, Adam lived a long and fruitful life of 930 years on earth.

We know that through His Son, God the Father has something much greater for mankind. It is called immortal life that will come in Christ through resurrection and transformation/transfiguration, which will come at the end of our present age for the conquerors in Christ.

I believe something else is often overlooked in this account, and that is the love of Adam for his helpmate Eve. Adam was created in the image and likeness of Elohim, the one who is love. Adam was created with the love of God in his heart. When all the animals were paraded before Adam so that he could name them, his heart of love saw them in pairs; and it must have struck a chord in his heart. He was all alone in a new world filled with life, and he had no counterpart or helpmate. Elohim knew this because this is, as we say, how He wired Adam. Adam was not complete without a suitable helper. What was Adam's response when

he saw his helper fashioned from his body? *This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.* [Literally!] Then Moses recorded: *For this reason, a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh* (Genesis 2:23-24).

Paul, in his great circular epistle titled *Ephesians*, quoted these verses as he wrote of a secret that is great. He compared the relationship of a husband and wife to the relationship of Christ and His ecclesia. The secret that was revealed through Paul speaks of the love of Christ for His ecclesia, which is His body. Many look at this as an emphasis on the marriage relationship, but Paul's emphasis was actually on the body relationship. This could be called *body love*.

Let the wives be subject to their own husbands, as to the Lord, for the husband is head of the wife even as Christ is Head of the ecclesia, and He is the Saviour of the body. Nevertheless, as the ecclesia is subject to Christ, thus are the wives also to their husbands in everything. Husbands, be loving your wives according as Christ also loves the ecclesia, and gives Himself up for its sake, that He should be hallowing it, cleansing it in the bath of the water (with His declaration), that He should be presenting to Himself a glorious ecclesia, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that it may be holy and flawless. Thus, ***the husbands also ought to be loving their own wives as their own bodies. He who is loving his own wife is loving himself. For no one at any time hates his own flesh, but is nurturing and cherishing it, according as Christ also the ecclesia, for we are members of His body. For this "a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall be one flesh." This secret is great: yet I am saying this as to Christ and as to the ecclesia.*** (Ephesians 5:22-32 CLV (bold italic added))

Christ is the Savior of the body. Why? Because He loves His body! Likewise, husbands ought to love their wives in the same manner because they have been made one flesh with their wives. One cannot hate his own flesh; he must love it and nurture it. Have you ever heard stories in which a husband risks his own life to save his wife whom he loves? There are accounts of men coming between their wives and the danger they face, even if it means sure death for them. Personally, I am always on the lookout for danger that could harm my wife and am ready to protect her. Why? Because it is body love! Why is this so? It is because we have body love inherited from Adam. Did you get that? We inherited it from Adam. ***Eve was the love of Adam's life. He tried to save her! He had to try even if it meant sure death.*** This principle that was laid down at the very beginning has not changed because God does not change. Remember, God is love; and love always rules and wins in every situation. ***Love never fails.***

Yes; God had to chastise Adam for his one transgression, but it was all in the plan of God that he would fail on this level. However, he did not fail on the higher command to love. Eve was of Adam's flesh. If he had allowed her to stand on her own in deception, then Adam would have declared that he hated his own body. The Lord knew that Adam loved Eve, for He created him that way. He put it in the heart of Adam to love the woman that came from his side and was bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. The Lord expected Adam to disobey because love was in his heart. He would have been incomplete without her. If she had to die, then he would die with her. Adam had no choice but to follow his wife, for if he had not eaten with her, he would have broken a much higher law of God, the law of love. Love trumps all, and God put this love in the heart of Adam, and this same love has been passed on to us. I thank God for the first Adam, who was a type of Him who was to come, and his love for his helpmate. I thank God for the last Adam, Jesus, who stepped between man and the curse of death to redeem a body for Himself. Adam loved Eve as Christ loves the ecclesia, which is His body. So, let us not to be so judgmental of Adam, but let us rejoice in his example of body love. To all husbands: ***Be loving your own wife as your own body!***