

THE UPWARD CALL

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet;
but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,
**I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God
IN CHRIST JESUS.***

(Philippians 3:13-14 NASB)

#04-1043

Knowing “My Love”

April 26, 2010

The last two issues (#04-1041 and #04-1042) have been about a conversation I had with the Lord. I asked: “**Why did You *intentionally* allow, even expect, Adam, Your creation, to move outside Your will?**” I heard in reply: “**Because I had to redeem My love. Love is redemptive in nature, and I had to redeem it.**” I won’t go over ground already covered, so please read the previous issues if you have not already done so.

As an aside, I happen to believe the Lord’s word that “My sheep hear My voice.”

If you have stayed with me on this discussion and not rejected it, you know that Adam’s failure (sin) was according to God’s plan to redeem His agape (love) so that He might achieve His purpose of being *All in all*. You should know by now that *all* is a major theme that runs through many of my writings.

As I have written previously, I believe, based on Scripture, that Adam had no choice but to follow Eve in eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He loved Eve as his own body, and this love demanded, even required him to try to redeem or save her. If he had not tried to save his wife, then he would have broken God’s law of body-love. Of course, he could not save her; nevertheless, he had to try, and God fully intended for him to do so as a type of what God was going to successfully do through His Son to redeem all mankind from sin and death. On one level, Adam failed by disobeying God’s one command; on another level, Adam passed the test of love. However, his love also failed, for he could not save the love of his life; instead, it brought death into his race, all according to God’s plan.

If you have a difficult time accepting this, then I encourage you to read and compare Genesis 2:18-24 to Ephesians 5:22-33. It is obvious that, in presenting God’s divine law that a man ought to love his wife as his own body, Paul clearly connected this to Adam loving his helpmate as his own body. Paul used two types, Adam and Eve and the contemporary husband and wife, to reveal the mystery of Christ and His ecclesia. What I find interesting is that many who see the mystery of Christ and His ecclesia fail to see that this mystery began with Adam and Eve, and they miss the bigger picture that God is reconciling all mankind back to Himself. This is all part of God’s plan.

The lesson in all this is found in two words: **But God**. God alone must and will redeem His love. All else must and will fail, no matter how good the intention and how right the action. If it does not come from God, then it is destined for failure. The lesson of Adam is that he tried to redeem Eve through his own love, but that was not enough; it takes God’s love, a selfless, unconditional, redemptive, absolute love.

It is not a new thought to me that Adam’s failure was an integral and essential part of God’s plan to bring about His purpose of becoming *All in all*. I have written elsewhere on how and why God had to allow man, who was created in His image, to fail. If you have difficulty accepting this, then I would encourage you to meditate on this word from Paul: **For God has shut up [locks up] all in disobedience [stubbornness] so that He may show mercy to all** (Romans 11:32 NASB [CV]). Please see Volume 1, Chapter 8. *Locks Up All in Stubbornness in The Purpose and Plan of the Eons*.

If you are still with me, a pressing question remains: Why did God choose to do it this way? Why didn’t He just create a perfect universe filled with Himself and His love? Why redeem it in the first place? Some might say that the answer is beyond our understanding. In some measure, this is true. Others might say that God can do whatever He wants and this is how He chose to do it; end of discussion. True; He chose to do it this way, but I think God delights when we seek Him out for answers.

I am not saying that I have all the answers, I still see in part; but I will confess that I diligently seek God for His truth. In my conversation with the Lord, I asked Him the question of why He did it this way. He replied to my question with a question.

I heard: “**How would Adam, that is, man ever know My love or understand it if he were not allowed to fail? He had to fail to know what he was missing in his life—My love.**”

Adam had to fail so that he and his race would come to know the true meaning of **God is love**. Simply, he didn't know what true *agape* was (is) until he missed it, at least in its purest sense, and began to see the contrast to love. This does not mean that God stopped loving Adam. Quite the contrary; He expressed His love for Adam and Eve by covering their nakedness with the hide of a sacrificed animal, probably a lamb. Of course, this was a type of the sacrifice of the true Lamb of God slain from before the disruption of the world.

If Adam had continued on in the garden without transgressing God's command, he never would have fully comprehended God's *agape*. He would have been living out some measure of his own love for his wife that, most likely, would have failed over time, without ever truly knowing the extent or true nature of God's absolute love (*agape*) that never fails (1 Corinthians 13).

I believe that, in His wisdom, God planned for us to learn of His very character, that is, His nature or essence, through contrasts. We learn of Him by learning what is not of Him. Let me explain.

How do we define or explain the knowledge we acquire of the physical or natural realm? How do we define or explain the things we see all around us? For example, how do we define or explain light?

We do this is by observing and experiencing the many contrasts or opposites, as well as the many gradients and similarities we see all around us. However, it seems to me that the contrasts are far more important in helping us define or explain our environment. For example, we explain *light* by the contrast of *dark*; we explain *up* by the contrast of *down*; we explain *hot* by the contrast of *cold*; we explain *land* by the contrast of *sea*; we explain *color* by the contrast of the many *hues, shades, and tints* all around us; we explain *silence* by the contrast of *sound*; and so on. Remove dark from man's world and how would man define light? Paint the earth and the heavens all green and how would man define color? Simply, we need contrast to define our world.

Further, it is through contrast that we learn to value or appreciate one thing over another. Thus, we might value or prefer sunny days over cloudy days, or hot over cold, or blue over green.

This is the wisdom of our Creator. He has built into His creation a myriad of contrasts. Can you imagine how boring it would be without these many contrasts and, we might add, the seemingly infinite variety we see all around us? In our immortal bodies, I imagine and expect that we will be forever exploring the vastness of God's creative genius that has no end or limitation.

Now, the same argument can be made with what could be called the attributes of life or the essence of life. We need contrast to define and know life. Actually, how do we define or know *life* without *death*? How do we define or know *love* without *hate*? How do we define or know *good* without *evil*? How do we define or know *joy* without *sorrow*? How do we know what we have missed without knowing its opposite? We need contrast. This is the wisdom of God. I believe that this is the very reason why God planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden in the first place and expected Adam to partake of it. It was an essential step for man to come to know his Creator. How would man know the essence or nature of God, especially His *agape*, if he were not exposed to a contrast of God's essence?

Clearly, for the first 33½ years of his life, Adam was living in the midst of the *agape* of God, but could he define it or appreciate it for its value? Could Adam define or explain God? How could he? After all, all he knew was God and his experience with God. Simply, Adam had no way of defining God's love, His goodness, or anything else about God. God could have been evil and not good and Adam would have had no way of knowing it. If God had told Adam that His relationship with him was evil, Adam would have accepted it as evil, not knowing that it was actually good. Do you get the point?

In conclusion, by God's standard, love is redemptive in nature; therefore, God had to redeem love so that we would know Him and His love and all creation would be filled with *agape*. To do this, He intentionally allowed, even demanded, Adam to fail so that he, along with all mankind, would come to know the *agape* of God that does not fail by contrasting it to what is not *agape*. Mankind would never have understood the nature of God's love if he had not failed. Thus, failure was not only expected but was demanded of Adam and all mankind that have followed. Praise God for His wisdom.