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The Message

The Scott County Times

Wednesday 18A April 2, 2008

How is your love life?

By the Rev. L.D. Reed, Sr.
REVLDRD@AOL.COM

How is your love life? I trust that you feel loved. If no one else loves you, God loves you. It says so in John 3:16. John 3:16 lets us know that God so loved the world that He selflessly gave His only begotten Son. Now that is love. God spared not His Son, but sent Him to die for you and me. That is love. Jesus loves us, too. He said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Now that is love. Jesus died for you and me. He sacrificed His body for us. That is love.

Now, what about you? Do you love God and if so, how do you show your love to God? I am sure that you have confessed that you love God. Surely, you have sung that song that says, "Oh, how I love Jesus, because He first loved me." When you love someone, you would like them to show love back, don't you?

Do you adore God? Surely, if you love someone you would adore them. When you think about God's goodness does a smile just automatically appear on your face? When you think about His mercy and grace that He has showered upon you does your heart rejoice? Have you ever had an inclination to prostrate yourself before Him? When you feel His overwhelming presence, do you give in and allow His Spirit to lift you?

When you communicate with God, do you do all of the talking? When is the last time you listened to Him? Has He never asked you to help someone that you may not have if He had not asked you? Has He ever asked

you to do something that required you to get out of your comfort zone?

Do you obey God? Surely, if you loved God then you would obey Him. For His word declares in 1 John 5:3, "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous." Jesus said in John 14:15, "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." We are commanded to love Him with our hearts, souls, and minds.

So, how is your love life? Are your human relationships suffering because your relationship with God is not where it should be? Or, is your relationship with God suffering because you are more enamored with the people, the pleasures, the positions, or the possessions in your life?

I thought I knew how to love. I later learned that I did not know what love was until I heard the Good News of Jesus' love for me. The sacred and self-sacrificing love He displayed when He died upon the cross for my sin awakened a deeper sensitivity within me, which drew me to call upon Him to save me from my impoverished idea of what love was and save my soul from the wretchedness of my sin.

I, admit, my love life is not perfect, but I rejoice in that He is perfecting me day by day, taking me from glory to glory for His word and His Spirit empowers and compels me to love according to His righteous standards.

If you are not showing love for God, take this time right now to repent and return His love. I encourage you to accept His Son as your Savior and Lord and you will experience what true love is. For God Is Love!!!

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The Bible Speaks by Steve Perry

SALVATION BY GRACE

"For, by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works lest any man should boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9.) Yes, we are saved by the grace (unmerited favor) of God, through or by our faith. There are then, two sides of salvation. God's part (grace) and our part (faith). Paul said, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom we also have access by faith into his grace..." (Romans 5:1-2; note also Romans 4:16.) Just as water enters our homes through the water pipes, we enter into the grace of God through faith. God did His part by sending His son to die for us; (Hebrews 2:9; John 3:16; Romans 5:6,8) therefore we must do our part, Believe!

Notice that "Grace" is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. Paul said, "By the grace of God I am what I am." (1 Corinthians 15:9-10.) Jesus said, "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do." (Luke 17:10.) The free gift of salvation is by the grace of God. (Romans 3:24; 5:15-18, 6:23.) We cannot save ourselves. After we have, by faith, done all that God requires us to do to be saved and stay saved, we are still "unprofitable servants" saved by Grace!

Although Grace is not of ourselves, faith is. Faith is our part. Jesus said, "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins," and, "he that believe not shall be damned." (John 8: 24; Mark 16:16.) To the Romans Paul said, "With the heart man believes unto righteousness." (Romans 10:10.) The Bible also says, "Without faith it is impossible to please Him: For he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Hebrews 11:6.) Yes, we must believe in God and His son, Jesus Christ. God has provided the word that we might believe, but whether we do so or not is our choice. (John 20:30-31; Romans 10:17.)

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