

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Love must abound

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ur spiritual lives flow in three distinct channels: faith, hope and love.

These avenues of spiritual expression are to grow, abound and overflow in each one of us. Paul commended the spiritual progress of the new converts in Thessalonica by noting that their “*faith groweth exceedingly, and the love of each one of you all toward another aboundeth;*” (II Thessalonians 1:3). The God of hope fills Christians in Rome with joy and peace in believing so that they “*abound in hope...*” (Romans 15:13). While God never puts a quota on numerical growth, He does expect each child of God to abound in faith, hope and love.

Our love for God should abound, but not like flood waters that flow over the banks in all directions. Paul gives direction to abounding love: “*And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment; so they ye may approve the things that are excellent; they ye may be sincere and void of offence unto the day of Christ*” (Philippians 1:9-10). Knowing God’s will to the extent of recognizing things that differ is following God’s direction of

abounding love.

Often we hear people speak of their love for God abounding, only to see a love not channeled in the knowledge of God’s Word. Love today is often fueled by subjective feeling instead of guided by knowledge of a “*thus saith the Lord*”. And to judge things as good or evil is almost blasphemy to the concept of love in many minds. But the maturing Christian is constantly exercising his or her mind in this area (Hebrews 5:14). And in the same channel is the Christian manifesting true love towards God. Approving the things that are excellent, and having an abounding love approved of by God is the glorious result.

Our love for our brethren should also abound. While the Thessalonians were commended for their manifestations of “*love for the brethren*”, Paul exhorts them, “*that ye abound more and more*” (I Thessalonians 4:9-10). Look around, you will probably find another brother or sister who needs your encouragement. Always seek to expand the perimeters of those benefiting from your love by helping one more new soul.

An abounding love must be nurtured. If not, we may find ourselves “*leaving*” our “*first love*” instead of abounding in our love for God (cf. Revelation 2:4). We may find ourselves digressing from the knowledge of true love for the brethren by loving in “*word only*” (I John 3:18).

This week we have a great opportunity to strengthen our abounding love for God and for one another by attending our Gospel Meeting each day. Daily, we will be instructed in God’s Word, providing the direction for our abounding love. We will grow in our love and appreciation for the Lord as we are reminded from the Scriptures of His “*great love*” for us (Ephesians 2:4-5). We will also have a daily opportunity to encourage and exhort one another by meeting together and worshipping God together (Hebrews 10:25, Ephesians 5:19).

Love is never to stand still. It is to abound. Be busy in nurturing your love. Feed it with the directives from God’s Word, exercise it by making righteous judgments, and always be seeking another soul to help.