

GLAD TIDINGS

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

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Keep Yourself In God's Love

Jerry Fite

We often hear of *unconditional love* when speaking of various relationships in life.

Religious teachers speak of such love when describing God's love for us. He loved us “unconditionally” in that we did nothing to deserve favorable recognition. While we were at enmity with God, He sent His Son to die in order to save us from sin. Paul writes, “*But God commendeth His own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*” (Romans 5:8). John says that God's love was directed toward us before we loved Him (*I John 4:10*). So in one sense one could scripturally say that God loved us unconditionally in sending His Son to die for the sins of “*the world*” (John 3:16).

While such understanding should draw us closer to such a loving God, we should not assume we will automatically be saved unconditionally. Scripture also reveals faith, repentance, confessing Jesus as Lord and baptism for the remission of sins as essential conditions to one's salvation (*Acts 16:30-31, Acts 2:38, Romans 10:9-10, Mark 16:15-16*). God expressed his love unconditionally in sending His son, but we are

saved from sins conditionally, by manifesting obedience of faith in coming to Christ (*Galatians 3:26-29*).

While God's saving love is always a constant, Christians must keep themselves in His love. Jude exhorts Christians to “. . . *Keep yourselves in the love of God*” (Jude 21). Let us consider the actions a Christian must do in order to abide in His love.

We must *build ourselves up in our faith* (Jude 20). This is not just any faith but a “holy faith”. This distinctive faith originates from only one source—*the Gospel* (Romans 10:17, Galatians 1:8, 23, Jude 3). From this foundation, we must continue to “*build ourselves up in Him*” (Colossians 2:6). This is accomplished by strengthening ourselves in the word that produces our faith. This faith separates us from a world of sin, but we “*must keep ourselves unspotted from the world*” (James 1:27). As we build ourselves up in faith, we will be keeping ourselves in God's love.

We must also keep “*praying in the Holy Spirit*” (Jude 20). The Holy Spirit has taught us about prayer. We must continue to

petition God as the Holy Spirit has directed. Our supplications should be offered up “*according to God's will*”, not only governing what we ask, but limiting the answers to God's wisdom (*I John 5:14*). Prayer in connection with the Spirit's purpose for prayer will keep us “*watching*” or remaining spiritually alert (*Ephesians 6:18*). We should also “*pray without ceasing*” making prayer a constant in our lives (*I Thessalonians 5:17*). Prayer in keeping in tune with the will of God, and remaining spiritually alert will also keep us in the Love of God.

Looking for the Lord's return will keep us in God's love. Jude puts it this way: “*looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life*” (Jude 21). The Lord's return is an expression of His mercy, for we will be saved from the grave and resurrected unto eternal glory in Heaven. Keeping our attention on seeing the Lord one day helps keep us spiritually pure today (*I John 3:3*). This “hope” will also keep us in God's love. God's love is great. Let us remain there.