

Glad Tidings

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

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More and More – Love For Others

(Jerry Fite)

Love is easier to define than measure. It is the seeking of another's well-being, out of a sense of valuing them. A man may be your friend or your enemy, but because he is created in the image of God, his unique value will demand you seek his well-being. But how much love is sufficient, and to what extent do you manifest your love toward others?

Paul wrote, “*But concerning love of the brethren ye have no need that one write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another; for indeed ye do it toward all the brethren that are in all Macedonia. But we exhort you, brethren that ye abound more and more...*” (1 Thessalonians 4:9-10). The Thessalonians knew they were to love brethren, so no one needed to reveal God's demand for such. The Thessalonians loved one another, so no one needed someone tell them to put God's demand into action. But Paul could exhort them to abound more and more in love, because there is plenty of room in love before one fills it to the limit.

Do we look beyond the evil done to us to love the evil do-

er? Do we do so always? Paul says we must. “*See that none render unto any one evil for evil but always follow after that which is good, one toward another, and toward all*” (1 Thessalonians 4:15). Loving those who love us is much easier than loving those who do us harm. But love does not react to evil with more evil, but responds with good (Romans 12:20-21). Maybe looking beyond the evil done to you to focus on loving your enemy is an area of love where you need to abound more. Doing such “always” takes such focus beyond today and into tomorrow to fulfill yet again.

Brethren brought together in Christ unite in a common salvation, but may possess personalities, and manifest ways that may not endear them to us. God acknowledges this possibility in our relationship with others when He exhorts that “*with longsuffering*” we should “*be forbearing one another in love*” (Ephesians 4:2). We should not be easily exasperated, but be longsuffering with others. We should not be harsh in our judgment and treatment of others, but manifest the gentleness of forbearance when others test our patience. Is this an

area of love where you need to abound more and more?

Seeking the well-being of others is not a blessing to bestow only on the greatest or most popular, but is for the least as well. Jesus says when you do good to the least of brethren “*ye did it unto me*” (Matthew 25:40). This should encourage us to consider those brethren among us who may not stand out regularly in our minds. There is room for love to expand in our lives by expanding the recipients of our love.

Go through your pictorial directory and observe the faces of those with whom you are not too familiar. They may have been missing services due to discouragement or other reasons. Why not extend your love to them with words of encouragement? Try to extend a friendship to a person not well known to you. This is love abounding more and more as you broaden the sphere of those deserving of your love.

Love has dimensions which leaves room for it to abound. Knowing love and manifesting love is not enough. We must abound in love more and more. Are you excelling in love?