

## More on the Wondrous Love of God

*Words Are Wholly Inadequate for the Task*



I gave myself to the Lord at the age of twelve. Much water has gone under the bridge of my life in the interval between then and now. In that time I have tried often, and without resounding success, to tell what I *feel* about the love of God, but I am only a blue jay twittering an unappreciated song lost amidst the clangor of other sounds. I am a two-bit actor spouting my own buffoonery in a Shakespearean play where I don't belong. But I am not alone. There will never be a time when anyone can fully express the depth and uniqueness of the love of God.

*"If I tried till eternity, I never could tell what He's done for me"* – simple but very expressive.

In eternity we shall be able to see the "face" of God and continue to live in that indescribable glory. We will be able to talk about His glory in the new speech or mode of expression given to us, but we can never, in an eternity of being, have the ability to describe the love of God and the exquisite pain God (in Christ) suffered in purchasing our redemption. Yes, "Morning by morning new mercies I see," but even that phrase is

so very limited. The term "morning" refers to the rising of the sun and to space and to time: these entities are themselves severely restricted, whereas the love of God is not. God's love knows no boundaries; it is like the gushing forth of the waters of a timeless geyser that never runs dry. It will take an eternity of being for us to begin to describe a love that was itself God, who was Himself the great everlasting and Supreme Being inhabiting and encompassing all space and time and beyond – and no, Virginia, there is no "beyond."

This indescribable Being gave up rights and power and glory, not for the angels that had sinned, but only for you and me. In the split second of eternity called time (now that is a confusing expression!) He gave up all the perquisites of ultra being and suffered an infinity of pain and degradation for a vile creature called man. And can we, in the time allotted to us on earth, do justice to describing this love? There is no way. But we try. *I* try because that love compels me to attempt to say with stammering lips what is nevertheless beyond my ability to speak. And I will continue to make the attempt because the love of God is like "fire shut up in my bones." In some way I have to give vent to the tremendous heat buildup within me.

When we finally reach eternity we will continually describe and talk about such love – but we shall never fully tell it. It will not be that our minds will be limited in that wondrous realm called heaven; quite the contrary. We shall be able to fully describe love, but only on a never-ending basis

because divine love is continually new. It is continually new in the sense that it will never cease to show us its kaleidoscopic beauty so that even our tongues that have been loosed from their previous mortal limitations will never come to the end of talking about the love of God.

We will work and talk of His love. We will gather together and talk of His love. As we roam the universe we will feel compelled to talk about the love of God in our new, gloriously unbridled “speech.” What person who has truly known it in his heart and life can be silent about the love of God — here or on the other side of eternity?

Throughout the vast reaches of eternal existence we will always be praising God for a love that is (and here, once again, we are limited dreadfully by our own hackneyed speech) so awesome and great that even the speech of immortality cannot reach to the end of divine love’s transcendent glory and forever changing, dazzling beauty.

“When hoary time shall pass away,  
And earthly thrones and kingdoms fall;  
When men who here refuse to pray,  
On rocks and hills and mountains call;  
God’s love, so sure, shall still endure,  
All measureless and strong;  
Redeeming grace to Adam’s race –  
The saints’ and angels’ song.”  
-Quote from “The Love of God,” by F.M. Lehman



Now that we have seen what the cross can do to its victim, do we still “love” the cross? Sometimes we believe and say what is “religiously correct” without probing into reasons for what we believe and say. For example, there is a beloved old hymn that voices this sentiment:

“And I love that old cross where the dearest and best  
For a world of lost sinners was slain.”

This is a hymn I really like. It expresses what I myself feel about the cross – except for two little lines. I will still sing the song because I know what the writer meant and I am not about to throw away this meaningful hymn for one word. But I want you to think about what the first line says: “I love that old cross.” Do we really love the cross that brought such excruciating pain and humiliation to the One we consider to be our “dearest and best”? As another line of the song says, we do

“cherish” the cross, but only in the sense that we need that cruel instrument for our salvation. We have to clutch it fervently to our chests even as it sears the very flesh it touches. The cross is an indispensable part of our redemption. But – love the cross? The Scriptures do not tell us that Jesus loved the cross even though He set His face like flint to go to Jerusalem and be crucified on it.

Jesus didn’t love the cross, but no one could turn Him aside from it. He didn’t love the cross; He loved us. That is why He endured the pain and the shame of the cross. We don’t love the cross; we love Him who died on it. That is why we in turn die with Him on that torturous mechanism.

No, no, I don’t love the cross. I cherish it as I would a once-in-a-lifetime find that would eventually make me extremely wealthy and powerful, but I certainly don’t love it. It killed my Master and it brings me much distress and pain. We are all like a bear painfully caught in the powerful jaws of a steel trap. But unlike the bear, we deliberately thrust our leg into the trap and we will eventually profit greatly from the agonizing experience. Apostle Paul reminds us, “And let us not be weary in well doing [enduring the trap]: for in due season we shall reap [gain the glories and pleasures of heaven], if we faint not.” The trap is the cross and if we had not impaled ourselves on it, we would never have been available for the Hunter to take us home with Him.

So I have determined to be like Paul: I will glory in the cross because Christ died there for me. He died on the cross in a glorious show of love that has never been equaled, and He expects me to die there also. I will do just that; I will force myself on the cross, this unavoidable trap in the Christian life, and if you try to take it from me, I will fight claw and fang to nestle more closely to it – but I do not love the trap or the cross.