LOVE ON THE ROCKS

LOVE

THE HALLMARK OF THE TRUE BELIEVER

THE SUPREME LOVE RELATIONSHIP
One of "the signs of the times" is the widespread deterioration of human love. Society is exasperated! Mankind is at a breaking point. Ethnic conflicts, violence, economic exploitation, trade wars, unemployment, poverty, family tensions, materialism, selfishness, corruption, decaying ethics, indecency, and immorality are producing lawlessness, anarchy, and contributing to the breakdown of cordial human relationships. The Bible prophesies concerning these brutal, loveless times at the end of the age are evident. We don’t like to admit it, but it seems "we’ve arrived." And it's going to get worse.

Y’shua (Jesus) the Saviour, and the one true Messiah, said:

"Most people's love will grow cold. At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another .. Brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents, and cause them to be put to death." (Matt. 24:12,10. 10:21)

The prophet Micah warned of our days. He said:

"Do not trust in a neighbour; do not have confidence in a friend . . . For son treats father contumely, daughter rises up against her mother, daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. A man's enemies are the men of his own household." (Micah 7:6)

The Apostle Paul wrote:

"But realize this, that in the last days, difficult and perilous times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God." (2 Tim. 3:1-4)

Examples are seen all around us.

IN THE FAMILY. Brothers are rising up against brothers, sons against fathers; husbands and wives are screaming at one another, and at their kids. Families, the basic units in society, are being undermined, and alternative de facto relationships are multiplying; it
is easier to opt out rather than to love, heal and pull together. Abuse of children is becoming a major social crime.

In India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, many marriages are not arranged to provide a happy, loving relationship. They are arrangements of extortion; the young women are often treated as expendable. Countless young brides are burned to death each year. In many countries, women are treated as sex slaves.

IN SOCIETY. A hatred of restraint, and a rebellion against legitimate laws, are being ingrained in all generations. Promiscuity is resulting in foeticide. Ethnic rivalries, religious intolerance and political tamasha (nonsense), are involving multitudes in social brawls, communal riots and violent conflicts.

IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA, politics and money promote conflict and instability. It’s the lust for power and greed for wealth that fans tensions and fuels brutal wars. Then there’s the illegitimate business concerns, such as the drug trade; vicious, enslaving and mind-blowing. There’s the pornography and related rackets that twist human minds and produce schizophrenics, sadists, rapists and perverted beasts.

It's becoming an increasingly sick, sick world. It's not love-sick. It's lack-of-love-sick! Multitudes of people today have known virtually nothing of true love throughout their lives. They have been exploited and abused. They have no concept of true love. To many, “love” simply means “sexual gratification.” True love is non-existent.

Many are homeless and friendless. Love to them is a dime, a half rupee dropped into their outstretched paws.

Others ache for love in the midst of their affluence. Love is what people need. A baby cries for it. A teenager begins a search for it.

A young adult thinks he has found it, but he often becomes disillusioned because what he finds, does not measure up to his expectations.
“There's got to be genuine love, somewhere!! There's got to be a sincere response somewhere, to remedy my lonely heart and to fill the emptiness that makes me feel undone. A loving human response!”

There’s a saying, “A dog is a man's best friend.” That's not in the Bible, but if you had a word with the prophet Micah, he might say, “Well that's kind of what I'm talking about!” Some people give up hope for human love, and they settle for the friendship of a dog, a cat, a pony, or a parrot on their shoulder. But isn't that sad?

Humans who have such potential to love, have learned so little about true love!

It’s in the midst of this LACK-OF-LOVE WORLD that followers of Y’shua must manifest the light and life of their Master. The Son of God came to bring LIGHT to a dark world, and to bring LOVE to very lonely people.

And He said to His disciples:

“By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” And, “You have heard that it was said, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR, AND HATE YOUR ENEMY.’ But I say to you, ‘LOVE YOUR ENEMIES, AND PRAY FOR THOSE WHO PERSECUTE YOU’.” (John 13:35. Matt 5:43-44)

THE HALLMARK OF THE TRUE BELIEVER

We are living in the last days, in perilous times, and in loveless days. And the question we must answer is, ‘What type of people should we be?”

The Scripture says we should be holy and godly, “looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God.” (2 Peter 3:11-12).

If we are Godly, our lives will be a manifestation of the love of God. You know very well that ‘GOD IS LOVE.’

That’s true, but it does not mean that God is SENTIMENTAL, or that He’s like an old grandfather dotting over his grandchildren. Our Heavenly Father, YAHWEH, is “indescribably love.” His pure love has no measure.
You may measure the universe, but you can't measure the love of God! It was that love that created us. It was that love that sent the Son to secure our redemption after we got bogged down in sin. It is the same love that is moving in the world today, offering salvation to all who seek Him. And He’s saving thousands of lost sinners every day.

**BUT TIME IS RUNNING OUT.**

The Return of the Messiah is Near!

“This same Y’shua (Jesus), who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.” (Acts 1:11)

And that day is drawing very near. What should be our response to this?

It would be very easy to panic; or on the other extreme, to be indifferent: (“Let Him come, we’re not bothered!”)

The Bible does not call us to panic, but it does warn us of careless attitudes. The Bible calls us to live like followers of the Saviour ought to live! The Father has called us to share His life; and His immediate plan is that we should begin to grow to maturity. This, of course, is a process; and as we grow, we learn the principles of God and how to operate as He does.

The Father is longing to share His Godly qualities with each one of us. He wants to lift us way above a mere human operating plane, and to learn His divine qualities and principles. He wants us, increasingly, to THINK, to SPEAK and to WORK as He does. His intention is that we should become like His Beloved Son!

At first this all seems “too much.” We might say, “If I am a little bit like Jesus then I’ll be happy!” Yes, it's so often like that. A little bit holy; a little truthful; a little sanctified; a little godly; a little prayerful; a little zealous. “Shouldn't be fanatical, you know!!”

As you are aware, there is much failure in the Christian Church. As believers we are not always what we should be. And although we wish I not become absolutely perfect here on earth, we are exhorted to “perfect holiness in the fear of God.” (2 Corinthians 7:1).
Certainly we have not been called to **apathy**. We have not been called to **carnality**. And it would be a terrible mistake to settle down for something inferior to God's perfect will for us.

In this message I want to talk about the **hallmark** (trademark, if you like) of the true follower of Jesus.

What is it about a believer that makes him different to the “people in the world” - if there is indeed a difference? Of course the name “Christian” is regarded by some as a bad word because of faulty testimonies, and because of the shame created by “nominal Christians,” or an abusive priesthood.

Sometimes people will challenge us and ask, “What is different about YOU people? You are not much different to us - you're not even as good as we are!”

That may or may not be true. But it shouldn't be! There is something different about a **believer** - it's the love of God manifest in his life. The **hallmark** of the believer is true, sincere Godly **LOVE**.

I'm sure this is not the first message on Love that you have heard. But I want you to think deeply about this essential characteristic, for love is **not an option**; it is a **command** of our Father. Foremost . . .

**“LOVE THE LORD, YAHWEH YOUR GOD!”**

This is not one of the Ten Commandments, but it's there in Deuteronomy 6:4-5:

“Hear, O Israel! The LORD (Yahweh) is our God, the LORD (Yahweh) is one! And you shall love the LORD (Yahweh) your God with *all your heart*, and with *all your soul*, and with *all your strength*.”

Such love for our Heavenly Father is not a lip service. It comes out of a deep appreciation of the One we know as our Creator, and Saviour. It is an appreciation of the PERSON, and the WORK of God. It is an appreciation of the ways, the principles, and the precepts of God. It is an appreciation of the **Word of God**. It also comes out of a deep love for His **NAME**.

This love comes from a redeemed heart, and a cleansed heart. Loving God with ALL your heart is possible only when a person's life is totally surrendered to, and is living in fellowship with the Father and the Son.
“That which we have seen and heard we declare to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Y’shua Messiah.” (1 John 1:3)

Love for God will be expressed in worship, and in our walk in fellowship with Him; but it will also be expressed in our personal behaviour.

And it will be expressed in love for other people.

“The love of Christ controls and urges and impels us.” (2 Cor. 5:14. Amplified Bible)

“If someone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar.” (1 John 4:20)

“Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought to love one another.” (1 John 4:11)

Love for God will also be expressed in OBEDIENCE to His will, and to His directions.

We are not talking now about HUMAN love, but something much more superior - the LOVE OF GOD.

**LOVE IS FROM GOD** (1 John 4:7)

When our Saviour said, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another,” He was not telling us to summon up our most noble human love to shower upon our beloved brethren and ‘sistren.’ How could we possibly love even as He loved, with our human-quality love? No! God is love, and love is OF God, and love is FROM God, and love is TOWARDS God.

The Master is asking us, and commanding us, to do something humanly impossible, it’s the loving of YAHWEH with all our heart. But that’s impossible - unless we possess the supernatural type of
love -- the love of Yahweh-Y’shua – reigning in our hearts and minds! So we should pray and ask Him to fill us with His love.

CONSIDER THE LOVE OF GOD

“For YHWH, the Almighty God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten, His one-and-only, unique, eternal Son, so that whoever believes in Him, should not perish, but have eternal (everlasting) life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge and condemn the world; but so that the world might be saved through Him.” (John 3:16-17)

My present concern is regarding the matter of the absolute love of the Father, as expressed supremely in the giving of His eternal Son to be a Sacrifice for us, and expressed so perfectly in the willingness of Y’shua to become “the Lamb of God.”

Oh the love of the Father, and the Son, Y’shua! Are we not so thankful for this Divine love that has provided salvation, and so much more, for us?

“We love Him, because He first loved us.” (1 John 4:19)

Lord Jesus I love you, I know You are mine.
For You, all the follies of sin I resign.

And as a result of His amazing love, we pray and long for His love to be manifest in our daily lives.

Now my dear reader, I want you to know and love …

THE HALLOWED NAME OF GOD

YHWH - YAHWEH

Yes, our Heavenly Father does have a Name. It is not ‘GOD’. God is a title. It is not ‘LORD’. That’s also a title, but not a name. It is not “FATHER.” That is an endearment word expressing relationship.

The Father has revealed His Name - a long time ago - to Moses. It was at the burning bush. And when the Voice within the burning bush commanded Moses to go to Egypt to confront Pharaoh, Moses said:
“Look, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I shall say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you.’ Now they may say to me, ‘What is His name?’ What shall I say to them?”

“And God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM’; and He said, ‘Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” And God, furthermore, said to Moses, ‘Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘YAHWEH, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. THIS IS MY NAME FOREVER, and THIS IS MY MEMORIAL NAME TO ALL GENERATIONS’.” (Exodus 3:15)

A little later, God spoke further to Moses and said to him:

‘I am YAHWEH; and I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as God Almighty, but by my Name, YAHWEH, I did not make Myself known to them’. (Exodus 6:2-3)

Israel was commanded to love, not merely. “the Lord,” but specifically, YAHWEH, with all their heart.

Why do we make this distinction? Because the Father does, and because Moses by inspiration, wrote the word YHWH, not Adonai, “Lord.”

(There are, of course, many times where Adonai (Lord) is used in the Old Testament correctly and is not as a substitute. But 6855 times in the Old Testament, the Name YHWH is written, but it has come across to our English Bibles as LORD.

Adonai accurately translates as Lord or Master, but the Name of YHWH, does not translate accurately as “Lord.” But the Jews, were afraid of speaking the holy Name lest they “miss-use” it. So “Yahweh” became a no-no, and they used the substitutes Adonai, or HaShem (The Name), for God.

But God never commanded His people, “Don’t speak my Name.” Rather, He said, “You shall not take the name of YHWH your God in vain.” (Exodus 20:7)

A problem with translating YHWH as “LORD” is that the word LORD, which simply means ‘Master,’ can be misapplied, as there are many “Lords” in the world. In the UK there is a whole House of Lords.

In the Old Testament, Baal was also called “Lord,” just as today new-agers call the so-called Maitreya Buddha, Lord. And the New Age people try to make out that Lord Maitreya is the Master of Masters, and Lord of all.

We, of course, do not accept that! But we need to be very specific! We must be careful, and we must make it clear, when we use the
words Lord or God, who we’re talking about, and that it is the Heavenly Father whose Name is YAHWEH, and, that the Name of the only begotten Son whom God sent into the world ... is Y'SHUA/Jesus the Messiah / the Word of God.

And why ‘Y’shua?’ He was born in ancient Israel, and was given, by an angel, His Name, Y’shua. (Matt. 1:21). He was a Jew with a Hebrew name. He was not an Anglo-Saxon, an American, a Chinese, an Indian, or a Latino, and He was not a European man with feminine features as is often portrayed in many Middle Age paintings. He is Y’shua the Mighty to save. He is Jesus, full of joy, love and godliness.

He was a powerful Israelite like Y’hoshua (Joshua) in the Old Testament; like Daniel; like Joseph; like Caleb. But of course, Y’shua is greater than all of them. Indeed He is more than a Jew. He is the One who transcends all nations; He is the eternal Creator who made us all.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning before all time.

All things came into being through Him; and apart from Him, nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life; and that life was the light of men.” (John 1:1-4)

LOVE FOR THE NAME OF THE MOST HIGH

“For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown for HIS NAME.’ (Hebrews 6:10)

“Your NAME is like purified oil.” (Song of Songs 1:3)

“I will sing praises to Your NAME.” (Psalm 18:49)

In our English Bibles, you must remember, whenever the word LORD in small capitals is used, it is a substitute for the original, declared NAME of YHWH.

These letters are usually printed as YHWH of YHVH, and mostly it is pronounced as Yahweh. (The pronunciation of the letter V when in the middle of the word, is changed from V to W.)

There may be slight differences in pronunciation, of course, from tongue to tongue, but the original Name should be used in ALL
languages. There is no justification for using substitutes, and corruptions, and names of other “gods” should not be used in reference to the God of the Bible. When they are discovered, they should be eliminated.

The word “Jehovah,” for example, is NOT a word found in the Hebrew or Greek texts of the Bible. It is a coined word from the 17th century - an attempt to vocalize the letters YHWH, by inserting the vowels of Adonai between the letters of YHWH. - YaHoWaH.

It simply create a new hybrid word.

But Jehovah’s Witnesses are sure they’ve got it right! They haven’t! They’ve built their cult on a faulty Anglicization of the original word.

This may come as a shock to some of my readers who say, “But I’ve called God, Jehovah, nearly all my life; and we love to sing the song about JEHOVAH JIREH.”

Yes, I know. But you can always change! If you want to be correct, sing about YAHWEH-YIREH.

But don’t be fearful, dear reader, I am not trying to convert you into a Hebrew speaker. I am simply emphasizing that there is an ORIGINAL Name, and that the Name of our Heavenly Master is most precious. The Almighty is not going to be angry, however, if we pronounce His Name wrong. But actually, His Name is one of the most easy words to say - a baby will find it much easier to say ‘Yawe’ or ‘Yawa” than to pronounce ‘Lord’, ‘God’, ‘Jesus’, or even ‘Mummy’ or ‘Daddy’.

My dear reader, your name is important to YOU, isn’t it? And if I spell your name wrong on your address label, you will notice it; and if you are like everyone else in the world, you don’t like it spelt wrong. Myself included! Just this week I received two letters, one was addressed to Don Estantoni, and the other one, to Done Station. The first expression makes me feel like a Spaniard with Italian blood (which I’m not); and the second name makes me feel like a dilapidated railway platform. I’m not amused!

I'm sure the Almighty is neither amused, nor nonamused, by our wrong pronunciation of His Name. But I believe He is concerned when people start calling Him 'X', 'Y', 'Z', - false names. Today, sadly, every “god” is being called LORD.

Shakespeare said, ‘A rose by any other name will smell as sweet.’ That's true! But it is not true that you can call the Heavenly Father by any name, and expect the name to fit. That is exactly what New Age philosophy says.

And a more-or-less guess at the true Name, is not good enough. I might tell you about Dorj Gush, and the tremendous power He had.
But I'm sure the man who was in the White House, would not be impressed.

If you love your human father, you will love his name, and be proud of it; and certainly you will correct any corruption of the name. Then why not speak the correct rendition of our Heavenly Father's Name?

But some Christians and Jews argue, “We shouldn't speak the Name of the Father!”

If anyone is afraid to speak the Father’s Name, then they had better not use the word HalleluYAH, and they had better not read Psalm 68:4 in the old King James, or the new King James, where the short form of the Father’s Name is used - Jah and Yah.

No! It is not wrong to speak the Father’s Name, if we do so reverently. Y’shua told His disciples to pray ... “Our Father in Heaven, HALLOWED be THY NAME.” (Matt 5:9). Hallowed does not mean eliminated. It means to be regarded with greatest respect and awe, and treated as holy. We must be on guard then, against using the Names of our Father and our Saviour irreverently or lightly. They are sacred - holy and to be reverenced.

Some will say, “Oh it’s too late in the day to change from words and pronunciations we've always used.” That thought however, is rather like an old man on the way to hell, who after hearing the truth, says, “Oh it’s too late to change my direction now!”

If you know the Truth, adhere to the Truth, and proclaim the Truth!

And my dear reader, I believe there is a revival on the way; not simply a restoration of the original, authentic Names, but also a deeper LOVE for Yahweh/Y’shua.

While “love” in the world is deteriorating, may our love for our Master become fervent in these last days. And He says to us, if we will but listen:

“You have made my heart beat faster, my sister, my bride; you have made my heart beat faster with a single glance of your eyes.” (Solomon 4:9)

LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER

Y’shua said to His followers: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.” (John 13:34)
This is a fundamental! If we can’t love our brethren, how can we ever love our enemies as our Master commanded us to do? (Matthew 5:44)

Love for the brethren is reiterated in many passages. Here’s a few:

“Through love serve one another.” (Gal. 5:13).

“Let love be without hypocrisy.” (Romans 12:9)

“We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. . . . Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another ... if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us... If someone says, ‘I love God,’ but hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this 16 commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.” (1 John 3:16, 4:11-12, 20-21)

It is tragic today that true love does not always exist even among believers. Sometimes it seems that Christians are more known for their divisions than for their love for one another.

Many of the problems amongst believers could be taken good care of, by the flow of divine love. As Peter says:

“Love covers a multitude of sins.” (1 Peter 4:8).

I am sure you will agree that love can take care of minor faults and problems. But love will also take care of even big faults. Genuine divine love always recognises the reality - that our Father always seeks restoration and rectification amongst His people.

Divine love will lead to a spiritual reaction and a blessed solution. Love. But Un-love – the absence of love – leads to carnal reactions with all the inevitable sorrow and harm. This does not mean that evils can merely be overlooked, or that broken relationships should simply be ignored. But when there is love, there can be a true spiritual response that will bring rectification and blessing in the lives of those concerned.

It is the law of the love of Christ. That love will help to restore those who have fallen. That love will bring forgiveness. It will eliminate a spirit of revenge. It can cancel the rivalries, the jealousies, the stubbornness and the pettiness. It will silence the condemnations, slander and gossip.
The Apostle Paul says: “Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfil the law of Christ.” (Gal. 6:1-2)

The sad fact is that few believers will take this spiritual response on board. It means that few are spiritual. Most of us are weak spiritually, but strong in carnality.

Could the Master say to us – to you and me, my reader, “You are spiritual. Take care of my sheep. Go after that sheep that's caught in the thickets, or fallen into a pit”? Or would we say, “Sorry Sir, I can't do that”?

Why is there such failure in the realm of loving? Why does love not prevail? It could be largely because our efforts are largely focused on the love of the flesh, and not on God.

**LOVE BETWEEN HUSBANDS AND WIVES**

Many marriages break down because they are based only on human love. And Christian marriages can break down for this same reason.

Our brother Paul makes another exhortation: “Husbands, love your wives!” (Eph 5:25). How is that possible?

One Christian man says, “I love my wife?” Another man asks: “What? All the time?” ‘Yes, sir!’ “Good for you, brother. You've found the secret? “Yes. Love is from God.”

Right! And let's not forget the rest of Paul's verse which says, “Love . . . just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her.”

Christian human love does not necessarily guarantee a successful marriage. There are non-Christians who love their partner just as much as the average Christian - maybe even more. Even robbers, pirates and the mafia love their friends. But with what quality? They are loving with tainted human love.

I'm not saying that human love is wrong! I'm saying that the followers of Jesus Christ are called to live on a much higher plane, and that they are chosen to be “holy and blameless before Him – in love.” (Ephesians 1:4)
So when the Scriptures say, “Love your wife, or your husband,” we cannot reply, “I can’t!” Because the Master is not asking us to love with human love. He’s saying, “Love her, or him, with the love that I supply. Draw from Me, and the love will flow.”

This is the tremendous privilege of those who are called to share the LIFE of the Redeemer on High. Yes, the life of the true believer can be, and should be, a supernatural one. It is the life of the Father reaching down to us through His Holy Spirit. It is “Christ in you the Hope of Glory.” (Colossians 1:26-27)

**THE HOLINESS OF GOD PRODUCES LOVE**

The Fullness of Yahweh, of course, is comprised of an indescribable quality called holiness. This is the very core of His being. And it radiates glory and produces light, life, intelligence, righteousness and love. Like the rays of the sun that reaches out continuously, permeating the physical galaxy.

God's love reaches to every person, everywhere, but not everyone embraces that love. Mankind has been so twisted in his understanding and spiritual comprehension that he is impounded in a state of blindness. And thus he remains - until the grace of God reaches Him.

It's the quality of God's love that Paul is talking about. Our best human resource will never pass the test. It will fail again and again. It will crack up under pressures. And that, so often, is the trouble with our human relationships.

The breakdown in marriages of worldly people is understandable. But what about the breakdown in Christian marriages? Same problem - human love has declined (even if it hasn't totally collapsed), and the couple have not learned to allow the LOVE OF GOD to reign over, or to over-rule the issues.

We do not need to despise human love. Divine love and Human love should be blended together. But we should not depend simply of human love to carry us through.

Most married couples continue living together even after the love has gone and the marriage has soured. Often tension prevails; and some say it is "hell" to live with my partner.
This state of affairs often drags both partners down, each claiming that they cannot live a true Christian life because of their partner. She says, “I can't love my husband because he's become unlovable.” And he says, “I can't love my wife. She won't listen to me,” or this and that! It's Love on the rocks!

There may be very deep problems. But there is a solution. It's God's love. It may take time for the two partners to come to the place where they are both willing to surrender their lives to the flow of divine love. But that's where the remedy lies.

But to all who believe in, and receive Y’shua as Saviour, and who surrender their lives to Him, to them is given the right to share in the life of Christ. They have the privilege and right to ‘plug in’ to the divine Power House, the divine supernatural Life that transforms the normal human life, and seals it as belonging to the Almighty. And this powerful LIFE produces HOLINESS, which in turn promotes true LOVE.

There is usually an inward battle between the human and the spiritual in every believer who is determined to follow Christ. I well know that battle in my life.

As Christians, we don't always express the Life of Jesus in our daily lives. And we forget that Y’shua, said, “I am ... the LIFE (your life).” (John 14:6)

Let’s check our lives. Many of us claim to be fundamentalists - based solidly on the Word of God. We hold to “the Book” tenaciously, and we are forte-plus in preaching the truth. Like many staunch reformers, some of us will face opposition, and seek to stand firm for the truth till the enemies rob us of our breath. But sometimes, if we had the opportunity, we would burn our enemies in return. We don't have LOVE when we regard it as a ‘fundamental right’ to cut down anybody who does not agree with us. We pray for our enemies, sure – like this:

“Do thou Lord be pleased to crush mine enemy under thine almighty heal.”

Oh our vanity! Our bankruptcy! If we do not have love, a genuine love that prays for the salvation and spiritual progress of others, where is our hallmark? If we curse rather than bless, where is the Seal that says we belong to God? Brother Paul, please speak up!

“If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I deliver my
body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.” (1 Cor.13:1-3)

Yes, I might be a fundamentalist, a down-right (or upright) Bible believer engaged in so many charitable and “spiritual works,” but without Godly love demonstrated in my life, I am empty, vain and add up spiritually, to a big ZERO (that's an inflated piece of space with a hole in the middle - O).

The love of God is reaching down to this world:

“By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:35)

This is a fundamental! This is our Saviour's command!

Let’s expand it: We will not be known as Jesus’ disciples by our human love, but through God’s love flowing through us. Human love will always be influenced by circumstances. It is biased. Divine love is above circumstances. As Paul says, it is patient, kind, and not arrogant. It does not seek its own; it endures all things and never fails. (1 Cor. 13:4-8).

If Christians were filled with this type of love, then Christianity would be something the unsaved would definitely take notice of. Yes! Indeed!

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR AS YOURSELF

This is a command given in the Old Testament (Lev. 19:18), which the Lord Jesus quotes in Matthew 22:39. And as it is repeated in the New Testament, how can we say this was a command only for a former dispensation?

Sometimes we find it much easier loving our neighbour’s pet dog, rather than the neighbour himself. But the command of God is not, “Love the neighbours that you like”; or, “Love the ones that are decent and who measure up to your minimum requirements to qualify as a neighbour to be loved.”
And WHO is my neighbour? Y’shua answered this question by giving the account of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-37).

It is not a matter of who is your neighbour, but, “to whom you can be a good neighbour.” The Good Samaritan was a good neighbour, and he helped someone who was not of his own community, and was robbed and battered on his journey.

To fulfil the command, we must be a good neighbour to anyone in need - whether he lives in the house next door, or whether he lives in a neighbouring state or area.

There are devoted souls, as you know, belonging to charitable societies who go out of their way to find and help people in need. These 'Good Samaritans' are not necessarily followers of Y’shua. But we say, Bless them, and tell them they are doing a good job!

But if a non-believer can express love to the needy, what a shameful thing it is, if believers who have a much greater love potential within them - for they have divine love inside - if they fail to exercise that love!

This, my dear reader, is something we each should seriously take stock of. We say we follow the God of immeasurable love who gave His only Son to deliver us — His enemies. But we ourselves are dwarfs in love. We're very petty (I said, petty, not pretty), in the matter of love. I'm not talking about you, dear reader, but about “us Christians” in general.

One other point about loving our neighbours. Again! The Lord’s commands can only be truly fulfilled by divine love.

"... the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us." (Romans 5:5)

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES!
This was not an Old Testament command, but it comes from the lips of Y’shua Himself:

“‘You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbour, and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you; in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 5:43-45).

If we try to love our ENEMIES with our human love, we will inevitably fail, for the human nature will promote a spirit of resentment and revenge.

There are, of course, people who, through a “positive attitude and philosophy,” are able to refrain from hatred when persecuted. Their response may be one of pity for the enemy.

But the ability show pity to your enemy and to refrain from a vindictive, hateful response, is not the same as “Love your enemies.” Loving your enemy is a positive desire, and a deliberate response that seeks only good for the enemy. Human love may strive to express “goodwill” to an enemy, but the resentment may remain inside the memory and heart.

To really love your enemies you need a supernatural type of love for them.

You might say, “That’s a bit too much! How is it possible to love enemies? It’s impossible!” Yes, if we rely on our very limited human resources.

It may be that our enemy hates us because of our expressed faith. He may hate the Saviour we love. He may be embittered by the principles we stand for. He may hate us because of his own personal convictions, and thus he feels obliged to persecute us in the name of his god, or convictions.

And as believers, we need to be on guard against a similar hatred in our response to people who teach something we don’t believe - no matter what they may be proclaiming. They may be satanists who blaspheme the Name of the One we love; but we cannot sink into a carnal, worldly, spirit of bitterness and loathing.
Yes, we need to proclaim the Truth - but we must do it in love and in humility. **Love** and **Truth** do not argue heatedly, or gloat with spiritual superiority. They do not harbour a spirit of vindictiveness and enmity.

We are not called to compromise the Truth, but ...

“Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth. We shall know by this that we are of the truth, and shall assure our heart before Him.” (1 John 3:18-19)

To love our enemies is a basic lesson we have to learn.

Y’shua prayed for His enemies: **"Father, forgive them,"** for they do not know what they are doing.”

Most of us may not have bitter enemies. Often we may have **uncordial relationships** caused by incompatibility, or by disagreements and frictions. But there may be times when we may have a really deadly enemy; an enemy who would seek to destroy us; an enemy who does not hesitate to slander us and to drag us to the court; one who vows he will see the end of us.

It is when we face such an enemy that we need not only to pray for deliverance from evil, but to learn to love and pray for that enemy. We must **BLESS** them that curse and persecute us. (Luke 6:27-28)

Now you know that these precepts are in the Sermon on the Mount; that they are commands of our Master, Jesus /Y’shua. They are not merely lofty ideals. They are principles that we need to learn. And yet, when it comes to the practical life, some will say, “It's not possible to put these precepts into practice. It's alright for Jesus to command these things. For Him it is easy. He’s God! I'm not! I'm an ordinary man!”

So you say you are an ordinary man or woman! But you don’t need not be an **ordinary** man or woman. You can be a **God-enabled** disciple of Y’shua/Jesus, because you have received new **LIFE FROM GOD**.

“Beloved, let us **love one another,** for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.” (1 John 4:7)

This verse does not mean that everyone who happens to have human love is born again. It does not mean a robber is born of God because he loves his mates. No, John is speaking of divine love that brings forth fruit in our lives.

I knew a Tibetan Buddhist lady who was such a loving person. She would do anything for you. Does it mean she was born again? No. But sometimes the human love of such a person outshines the counterfeit thing many parade as 'spiritual, divine love.' (I regularly
pray for this dear lady and her family. Her Tibetan name means “Flower.” She and her family live in Lhasa. You may be led to pray for them also.)

The next question is, “How can we learn to love with divine love”? How does it “work” in our practical lives? What is the secret?

There are no “secrets” dear believer. But what you call secrets are actually divine principles which you have right in front of your eyes if you are reading the Sacred Scriptures.

The Christian life begins with the new birth. When we receive the Lord Jesus as our personal Saviour, the Spirit of God implants the LIFE of God in our spirits.

**THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF A WHOLE NEW LIFE.** This new life is a process in which we grasp, more and more, the principles of the Father, and the principles of His kingdom. Two KEY words for the spiritual life are SURRENDER and ABIDE.

The first “secret,” is what the Apostle Paul says:

“For from Him (Yahweh) and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen. I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to PRESENT YOUR BODIES A LIVING AND HOLY SACRIFICE, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”  
(Romans 11:36-12:2)

This means a surrender of our lives, totally, to our Saviour so that He might fill us totally with His Holy Spirit. It was our Saviour, Y’shua, who teaches us the second “secret” - ABIDING.

“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides (stays) in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for APART FROM ME YOU CAN DO NOTHING ...

“If you ABIDE in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you. By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.

“This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.” (John 15:4,5,7,8,12)

The Apostle John takes up this subject in his epistle:
“If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us ... God is love, and the one who ABIDES in love ABIDES in God, and God ABIDES in him. By this, love is perfected with us ... because as HE IS, so also are we in this world.” (1 John 4:12,16,17)

To abide in the Father and the Son, is to LIVE in Him, and to draw LIFE and DIRECTION and ENABLING from Him, moment by moment. This comes to the very heart of our relationship to Him. It is not simply believing all about Jesus Christ. It is fellowship and life in Him.

To ABIDE in Christ we need two essential things: FELLOWSHIP and FAITH. Our Fellowship with the Saviour is maintained through LISTENING and TALKING to Him - listening to the Word of God, and talking to Him - in prayer in your car, or walking down the street.

FAITH is a deliberate response to the life of God poured into our spirits. Faith is a continuous TRUST and DEPENDENCE upon Him. It is BELIEVING GOD, and acting on that belief. It is walking “hand in hand” with our beloved Master.

The true Christian Life, I repeat, is a process; and as we continue to ABIDE, and continue to SURRENDER our lives to Him, the Father conforms us into the image of His Son, and we grow in faith, and in experience in the ways of God.

So when we read, “Put on love” (Col .3:14) , it involves this spiritual process. Love is not something you can put on like a garment. It is divine attribute that is implanted in our hearts (our innermost being) at the New Birth, and it expresses itself in our behaviour, if we are indeed children of the Father, and disciples of Y’shua.

Let us pray, beloved, right now, that this divine love will fill our lives, and the lives of our friends, associates and loved ones everywhere.

And now dear reader, in the rest of this book, let’s look at who and what we true believers are — (an integral part of the Bride of Christ). And let’s be enthralled, and even captivated, with our . . .

Love Relationship with Y’shua, our Saviour and Heavenly Master.
“Let us rejoice and be glad and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His Bride has prepared herself.” (Revelation 19:7)

“The Messiah also loved the Ekklesia (the corporate – combined, united Body of Believers, and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of water with the Word, and that He might present the Ekklesia to Himself, a glorious Bride, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing - but that she should be holy and without blemish.” (Ephesians 5:25-27)

Ekklesia is the Greek word Paul uses to express this truth of the corporate Body of believers which is called the Bride of Christ. We use the word “church,” and that’s all right as long as we understand, that term, means the combined, united, full body of believers.

(The English word “church” however, is such a confused term today. It is generally used for everything except the true meaning of Ekklesia.)

The Scriptures reveals the fact that all true believers of this present age of grace, (from Pentecost – Acts 2 - until the Rapture) are members of the Messiah’s corporate Bride.

The anointed apostle Paul who has been used of God to write about half of the New Testament, says:

“This is a profound mystery - but I am speaking with reference to the Messiah and the Ekklesia (the corporate Body).” (Ephesians 5:32)

Long, long ago, King Solomon, to whom God gave the great gift of wisdom, prophetically describes the profound love of the Messiah for His Bride:

“You have made My heart beat faster, My Bride; You have made My heart beat faster with a single glance of your eyes, with a single strand of your necklace. How beautiful is your
love, My sister, My Bride! How much better is your love, than wine.” (Song of Songs 4:7-10)

MY FRIEND, we are treading on sacred ground in considering what may be the most important of all relationships. We are dealing with something most precious, both to the Bridegroom, Y’shua, and to the believer who is in love with Him.

I say, this may be the most crucial of all relationships. Your relationship to your mother, to your father, your husband or wife, and your children is very important. Your relationship to your close friends, to your employer, and to business associates is also very important, but your relationship to your Heavenly Master, the Lord Jesus, is far more important than all these others, for the simple reason that He is your very life; and your total well-being depends upon Him.

The Messiah is the Source of your fullness. He is the Source of your love, joy, peace, satisfaction, health, effectiveness, blessing and wholeness. He is the Author of your faith, and also the Perfector of that faith.

Without Him you would be like any hell-deserving sinner, without hope, condemned under sin, and a slave to evil vices. Without the Saviour, dear believer, you would be lost - you would be empty, vain and destitute.

But with Y’shua the Messiah in you, the Hope (assurance) of Glory, you are complete (Colossians 1:27, 2: 3, 9, 10). You are complete in Him, for in Him dwells all the fullness of the Eternal One; and in Him are all the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God. Oh! Can you see that your relationship to the Lord Jesus is the most vital relationship of all?

If anything happens to this relationship, your life will wither. If anything causes this relationship to deteriorate, your life will become barren, you will be of little use to your Master, to your family, your friends, or to the world. It is essential that our relationship with Y’shua, Jesus, be cultivated, and that it should deepen into fullness.
Every one of us who has trusted the Lord Jesus to be our Saviour, has a relationship to Him. This relationship can be viewed in various ways.

We have a relationship to Him as Creator to creature. We have a relationship as Saviour-saved; we have a relationship as King-ambassador; as High Priest-priest, as Brother-brother; as Redeemer-kinsman; as Potter-clay; as Master-disciple; as Friend to friend. And yet, encompassing every aspect of our relationship to the Saviour, is this great, mysterious relationship of love.

The Father initiated a relationship with us because of love - because of His eternal, compelling, abundant love. Look how John expresses it in his first epistle:

“God is love. By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” (1 John 4:8-10)

Love pursued us, and love won us! Yes, God’s pure, unselfish love! And yet, love cannot remain all alone. Love expects a relationship. Love seeks love; and love begets love. And the Father expects the loving response of His sons and daughters. Love. HalleluYah!

But there is a deeper reason why our relationship to the Lord Jesus is essentially a love relationship. It’s because the Father planned that the corporate Body of all believers of this present age (from Pentecost to the Rapture), should become the corporate Bride of His beloved and eternal Son.

My friend, I want this thrilling truth to grip you. I pray it will so possess you, that it will awaken you to the reality of who you are, and what you mean to Y’shua/ Jesus. If it does, it can change your thinking, and change your life. It can powerfully motivate your life, and make you a vital instrument in the building and edifying of the Ekklesia - the Body of the Messiah.

You, believer, are not merely a saved sinner! (Praise Yahweh that you are indeed that!). But you are also a member of the Bride of Christ. You are a greatly privileged saint who has been chosen to share the most intimate fellowship with God’s Anointed Son throughout eternity.

This is the greatest privilege any one could possibly have! Can you think of any other privilege at all, that can compare with this?

You might have the privilege of belonging to a wealthy family. You might rise to become a great ruler in your country. You might have the privilege of being born into a noble royal family, and being an heir to the throne of a great kingdom. Would any of this compare with the
privilege of belonging to the Bride who will reign with the Messiah throughout eternity?

Think, however you will! You might have the blessing of having a most beautiful, handsome, intelligent, qualified, successful, compatible partner in life.

That would be wonderful, but your partner would pale in comparison to the King of glory!

Can you name anything on earth, dear believer, that compares to the privilege of belonging to the Bride of Christ?

I think of certain Bible characters. There was Abraham - the Friend of God. What a privilege he had! Before God destroyed Sodom, He said, “I must tell My friend, Abraham.” Then Abraham had his faith tested by Yahweh. And he was privileged, by grace, to come through triumphantly, and to become "the father of the faithful." But you and I, dear believer, have a greater privilege than Abraham, being included in the Bride of God’s glorious Son.

Then there was Job. He had the great privilege of being tested and tried so that his faith might be found unshakeable. He was permitted to be tried to the utmost. Many of us may never have such a deep experience, but we have the experience of belonging to the Bride of the Messiah.

Jacob was chosen to become the father of the chosen nation, Israel. God’s love for Jacob was so great, that His love for Esau looked like hatred. Jacob was privileged, but not as greatly as believers of the Bride!

David was greatly privileged. God loved him, chose him to be the king of the chosen people. David was God’s anointed. What a privilege. And yet, this privilege is not as wonderful as that which you and I have, who are the Bride of THE ANOINTED.

Daniel was privileged. God sent His personal messengers to close the mouths of the lions. The Three who were cast into the fiery furnace were privileged to have the Son of God join them there.

John the Baptist is called “the Friend of the Bridegroom,” but he did not have the privilege of becoming a member of the Bridegroom’s precious Bride.
Oh, none of these dear saints had the privilege that we believers have. We are the Bridegroom’s Beloved. And our relationship to Y’shua, Jesus, is a love relationship - the deep love relationship of Bride and Bridegroom. Can you see then how vital our relationship is? If God intended that all earthly marriage relationships should be based on love, how much more should this heavenly-ordained, eternal marriage of Christ and Ekkclesia, the Church, be a love relationship!

**THE MILLENNIAL PRIVILEGE**

Consider further, the privileged position of the Bride, in the coming Kingdom of Christ. Some people imagine that the members of the church will be the subjects on earth in the Millennial kingdom. I do not believe this is so. The Saviour went to prepare a place for us in Heaven. It is His palace and ours. We will be reigning with Him – from the Heavenly Jerusalem.

Y’shua will, no doubt, appear on earth at appointed times. And believers in the Bride may be sent to the earth on assignment during the 1,000 years, but they, like the King Himself, will not be earth-bound. The home of the Bride is the New Jerusalem - the heavenly city that Y’shua has prepared for His Bride. (Rev. 21)

The subjects on earth will be the believers who have come through and survived the Great Tribulation. They are the “sheep” whom the Lord places on His right hand and says to them,

> “Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” (Matthew 25:34).

These subjects will be earth-bound, for they will not have been raised from the dead, nor raptured to heaven.

The officials in the kingdom will be made up of those who are slain for their testimony to the Messiah during the Tribulation, and who are raised to life at the completion of the seven years. We are told that they will reign with Christ for a thousand years. (Rev. 20: 4). We can see them as the administrators in the reign of the Anointed.
That will be a great privilege for the martyred Tribulation believers. But what of the Bride? What is her position during the Millennium? She will be the **wife** of the King standing at His side! She will reign with the King of Glory as His glorious Queen. What a privilege! HalleluYah!

The Bride, like her Bridegroom, will have taken part in the resurrection and rapture (ascension), and her members, having their new, transformed, immortal bodies, will not be earth-bound, but will reign with Christ from the Heavenly Jerusalem. What a special privilege, we have, believer!

**THE BRIDEGROOM DESIRES A DEEP LOVE RELATIONSHIP WITH EACH BELIEVER!**

The Lord Jesus /Y’shua, is not satisfied with merely saving sinners from Hell, and getting them to Heaven. He is concerned with the fulfilment of the Father’s purpose - the perfecting of the Bride who is to share with Him, His plans for the rest of eternity.

Just as believers are ultimately to reach perfection in **holiness**, they will also come to perfection in **true love**.

In Ephesians 5:25 we read, “Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for her.”

Now friend, think! After manifesting His love by giving Himself on the cross for the Bride; after saving and winning her to Himself at such a cost, how greatly He must desire each believer’s responsive love.

We sing the chorus . . .

**How greatly Jesus must have loved me, to bear my sins, in His body, on the tree.**

Yes, He loved us greatly; not just because we were perishing souls, but because we were **His chosen Bride**.

And He loves each one of us equally, for we are all part of the complete Bride. We will all have varying ministries, and gifts, and rewards, no doubt, but there is no indication that the Master loves one member less than the others.
John is called the Beloved Apostle. He seemed to be the Master’s favourite, but Y’shua was open to all His disciples. He was longing for the love of each of them as much as He did from John. Was it that John wanted to be loved more than the others? Was it that he was the most responsive, the most loving of them all, and so Y’shua could express more love to him?

He wanted the love and companionship of every one of them. If we go back to the beginning, when Y’shua chose the apostles, we see that He wanted them to be with Him. He wanted their fellowship and affection.

“He went up to the mountain, and summoned those whom He Himself wanted, and they came to Him. And He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him, and that He might send them out to preach, and to have authority to cast out the demons.” (Mark 3:13-15)

We usually think the Lord wanted the disciples to be, first and foremost, witnesses to Him. But no! First, He wanted them to be with Him. They would witness later. They would cast out demons later. They would evangelise the world later. But first, He wanted their company and love.

Here is a marvellous thing! The eternal Son of God, the Beloved of the Father, the Source of love itself, was seeking, and still is, the love and companionship of sinful men, women and children. HalleluYah!

TO BE "WITH HIM" IN THE WORD!

Love is a two-way expression. Don't think that you have to do all the talking. Listen to what the Master is saying! But don't expect to hear a voice in your head! Take the Bible, study and meditate on its truths, and then “talk over” the Scriptures with your Master.

“Let the Word of the Messiah (Christ) richly dwell within you.”
(Colossians 3:16)

“So then faith comes from hearing, and the hearing and understanding comes through the Word of God.” (Colossians 3:16. Romans 10:17)

We can say that true love also comes from and by the Word of Christ, for true love cannot be separated from truth.

And "Your Word is truth!" (Psalm 119:160).

So believer, be often with your Master in His Word, and then your love relationship will deepen day by day.

The Bible book, the Song of Songs, is a book of love on which we may meditate. It gives us a glimpse of the love of the Heavenly
Bridegroom for His Beloved. It gives us some idea of how much the Bride means to Him. He sings softly to us;

“How beautiful you are, my darling.
How beautiful you are!
Your eyes are like doves behind your veil;
You are altogether beautiful, my darling,
And there is no blemish in you ... 
You have made my heart beat faster, my bride;
You have made my heart beat faster with a single glance of your eyes ...
How beautiful is your love, my sister, my bride!
How much better is your love, than wine.
And the fragrance of your oils better than all kinds of spices!” (Song of Songs 4:7-10)

Here is the praise of the Bridegroom for the Bride. Here the Lover of our souls is speaking about us, dear believer. He is speaking about you and me.

How wonderful!

He calls me His beloved, His darling. He says I am beautiful. Oh how can it be that I should be beautiful in His eyes?

Is it because I am clothed in His righteousness. Yes, I have been cleansed by His blood, and He has made me spotless; He has made me beautiful.

But look at the effect I have upon Him. I make His heart beat faster and faster. Oh He loves me. He loves the thought of me. He loves the upward glance of my eyes. Oh I never realized that I meant so much to Him.

He calls me His sister, His Bride. Yes, I am His sister, or His brother, for His Father is my Father. I am His Bride, His eternal companion, for the Father has so chosen me before the world began, to be part of His Bride. What a privilege! Yes, I must respond to this amazing love. Yes, I must love Him with all my heart. He loved me; He bought me; He won me; He draws me to Him; He captivates me with His love.

Oh love that will not let me go, I cannot close my heart to Thee, I give Thee back the life I owe, That in Thine ocean depths its flow, may richer, fuller be.
This is the love experience that could be the sublime joy of all believers if they but yielded their all to the Saviour and dwelt in His presence and became enamoured, captivated, by His divine love. Alas, so often it seems the Beloved must wait silently, disappointedly, for believers to respond to His call of love. He calls, but there is little response of hearts beating faster at His initiatives.

It may be that many believers have not realized their privileged Bride-Bridegroom relationship. It may be that many do not realize they may experience such a close relationship with their Heavenly Bridegroom.

Some of us believers, maybe, have not learned to express spiritual love! Some of us may feel shy at expressing love, having been conditioned by a none motional environment. Some of us feel that emotion in worship is not appropriate. Maybe we have become so bound by our church tradition and practices that we rarely communicate with the Lord Jesus.

We may feel that speaking to the Lord should be so formal that it allows no place for intimacy. And some of us just cannot understand how we human beings can have such a love relationship with the Lord in glory. But Y'shua quotes from the Gospel of Luke:

“YOU SHALL LOVE YAHWEH THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.” (Luke 10:27)

This is a spiritual experience. It’s real, and it involves our soul (emotions), our mind, and our spirit. “With all our strength” means enthusiastically, or wholeheartedly.

Let us not think that the soul is irrelevant, or evil. The soul is simply a vessel or instrument, to express the desires of the spirit, and the mind. If the spirit communes with the Lord, it will do so through the medium of the mind and soul. Let us not be afraid of expressing our love. The Lord Jesus was an emotional man. (He would not be truly man if He were not). Look at the times the Master wept. Look at the times when His heart leapt for souls ... the rich young ruler, for instance.
“A man came running, and knelt before Him, and asked Him, ‘Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?’ ... Then Y’shua, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, ‘One thing you lack; go and sell all you possess, and give it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow Me, taking up the cross.’

“But at these words the man’s his face fell and he became gloomy, and he went away grieved, for he had many possessions. Then Y’shua, looking around, said to His disciples, ‘How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!’” (Mark 10:17, 21-23)

Another reason why we do not experience a deeper love relationship, is because we fail to take time to cultivate it. We fail to give our prime time to the Presence of the Bridegroom.

“Give me your heart, my son.” (Proverbs 23:26)

Whatever the reasons, our failure to respond to the persistent love of Jesus, brings disappointment to Him, as we see in Malachi 1:2: “I have loved you,’ says YHWH. But you said, ‘How have you loved us?’”

LOVE MUST BE CULTIVATED

If you have a garden, you know you must cultivate it. Failure to cultivate will mean it is soon overrun by weeds. The ground will become hard, and the plants dwarfed or stilted. So it is with love.

Love between man and wife must be cultivated. If it isn’t, the relationship becomes stale, and withers. A wife expects some signs of endearment, and so does the husband. These signs may be small intimacies, but they assure, and keep love growing.

So it is with our love for the Heavenly Bridegroom. We must cultivate that love. Our hearts need to be taken up with the Person of the Lord ... His glory, His worth, His work, His words, His Person, His greatness, His mightiness, His eternity.

When you walk in your garden and see weeds and plants needing pruning, let it be as reminder to cultivate your spiritual garden with your Heavenly Beloved.

Our hearts need to develop the capacity to adore Him. And as our hearts adore Him, they will express love to Him ... with or without words. Sometimes love cannot be expressed in words.

It is very possible to dwell in the Presence of the Bridegroom, loving and adoring Him, without expressing words. Words though, usually help to express love. Praise is an expression of our love, and it is hard to praise the Lord without words. Our love tells Him how
wonderful He is, and how much He means to us. Love is expressed in worship, and in a yielding of oneself to the Master and His will.

Yes, **words do help!** The Bridegroom longs to hear words from a truly adoring heart: Our response:

“Y’shua, Master. I love You.”

Or in Hebrew: “Adonai Y’shua, ani ohev et ot-kha!”

**SPEAKING TO OUR BRIDEGROOM**

Some believers are reluctant to speak directly to the Lord Jesus. Yes, I know that we “come to the Father through the Son.” But that doesn’t say, “But don’t talk to the Son!”

Yes, the Saviour taught us to pray, "Our Father." And so we bring our requests to the Father at the Throne of Grace. But did Y’shua mean, “I will be your ever-present Companion, but don’t you talk to me”?

**No!** How can you love a person if you do not speak to him, or her?

There is no reason at all, for a believer not to talk to the Lord Jesus/Y’shua. Ananias spoke directly to Y’shua who appeared to him in a vision. (Acts 9:10-16).

Worship is directed to the Lamb in Revelation 5:9. And the last prayer in the Bible is spoken to the Lord Jesus. (Rev. 22:20)

There are numerous hymns which are written as prayers addressed to the Lord Jesus, which we sing without any hesitation.

The Lord Jesus promised that He will always be with us ... so how can we ignore our ever-present Companion?

Do not be afraid, dear believer - do not be hesitant to commune with Jesus. He is your Beloved. Speaking reverently, I say, express your love to Him. Let His love overwhelm you. And don’t be embarrassed if you find yourself telling Him a thousand times, that you love Him. Revel in His love, and let your heart and emotions overflow with love to Him.

Use the words of hymns and choruses, if they will help you express your love.

*My Jesus, I love You, I know You are mine;*
*For You all the follies of sin I resign;*
*My gracious Redeemer, my Saviour You are!*
*If ever I loved You, My Jesus, 'tis now!*
*I love You because You first loved me,*
*And purchased my pardon on Calvary's tree:*
*I love You for wearing the thorns on Your brow;*
If ever I loved You, my Jesus, it’s now!
1’11 love You in life, I will love You in death,
And praise You as long as You lend me breath,
And say, when the deathdew lies cold on my brow,
If ever I loved You, My Jesus, it’s now!

Yes, sing unto the Lord. Sing love to your Beloved. This is between you and Him. You have this wonderful privilege to be LOVED by our wonderful Saviour.

Y’shua, Lord Jesus, what a wonder You are!
You are brighter than the morning star,
You are fairer than the lilies
Your worth has never been told,
You are precious, more precious than gold.
You are like the Rose of Sharon,
You’re the fairest of the fair,
You are all my longing heart desires,
Lord Jesus, Y’shua,
Your worth has never been told.
You are precious, more precious than gold.

Jesus the very thought of You,
with sweetness fills my breast;
But sweeter far Your face to see,
and in Your Presence rest. Wonderful, wonderful Jesus,
who can compare with You?
Wonderful, wonderful Jesus,
fairer than all You are to me.
Wonderful, wonderful Jesus,
O how my soul loves You.
Fairer than all the fairest, Jesus,
You are to me!

Go through your hymn book. Sing or speak those stanzas that increase your thoughts of Jesus. Cultivate this love relationship with your heavenly Bridegroom?

Do you know that lovely hymn in Alexander’s hymn book (# 432)? It expresses something of this sweet communion with Jesus.

I come to the garden alone,
while the dew is still on the roses;
And the voice I hear, falling on my ear,
the Son of God discloses.

And He walks with me, and He talks with me,
And He tells me I am His own,
And the joy we share, as we tarry there,
None other has ever known.
He speaks, and the sound of His voice,  
Is so sweet the birds hush their singing,  
And the melody that He gave to me,  
within my heart is ringing.  
I’d stay in the garden with Him,  
Though the night around me be falling;  
but He bids me go.  
Through the voice of woe,  
His voice to me is calling.

Yes, it can be so uplifting to go out into your own garden, or under the trees, early in the morning, or in the cool of the evening, to spend time with the Bridegroom, and to share your love with Him.

You may have your own personal meeting place with Him. Cultivate your love relationship, and you'll find a new fragrance in your life.

Spend time with Jesus, and His glory will radiate from your life. Learn to love your Beloved, and a new love will emanate from your personality - your Christ-filled personality.

THE MASTER’S COMMANDS

We all know that love requires obedience. And these are some of the Master’s commands.
1 Love one another, as I have loved you.  
2 Go into all the world and preach the gospel.  
3 Do not lay up treasure on earth, but lay up treasure in heaven.  
4 Love your enemies. Pray for them that despitefully use you.

Sometimes, the commands of the Master seem so difficult, don’t they? We feel we come so short of what He expects of us, and we ask, ‘How can I be faithful?’ Friend, love is the answer. Love Jesus, Y’shua, and you will not find it tedious, or difficult to keep His commands!

The Master says, “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.”
A person in love will do anything for his beloved. Yes, so much rests upon our love relationship to our Master. Do you find yourself reluctant, or heavy-footed in obeying the Lord? Then look to your love relationship to Him!

SPIRITUAL LOVE IN DECLINE?

I have said that our love relationship to the Lord must be cultivated. It must grow, for there are such depths and heights to this relationship which have hardly entered into our minds as possible.

But it’s quite possible that love may decline. Love for the Lord may easily decline. All you have to do for love to decline, is nothing! Just
ignore the *need* to spend time with the Lord and to cultivate your relationship, and you will find it declining.

Certainly the failure is never on the Saviour's part. His love is constant, and He waits always to manifest His love.

The early Ephesian church was a live, evangelistic, active, zealous church. They had known great love for Christ, but when the Master sent a message to them by John, He rebuked them because they had left their first love.

"He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, *and* who walks among the seven golden lampstands, declares these matters: 'I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate those who are evil. And you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them *to be* false; and you have been bearing up *and* have endurance, and because of My Name you have laboured and have not grown weary.

'But I have *this* against you, that you have *left* your first love. Remember then from where you have fallen, and repent and do the works you *did* at first; or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand out of its place - unless you repent'." (Revelation 2: 1-5)

The love that these believers had left was their love for their Master - their Beloved. Their love had declined, and their relationship was declining. O how disappointed the Lord was. And yet, more than disappointment; He regarded it as a grievous sin - something that needed to be repented of.

Before their *service*, the Lord wanted their *love*. Before their *exploits*, before their exercise of *spiritual gifts*, before their *miracles*, and casting out of demons, He wanted their *love*.

They had known deep love; it was their FIRST love; and now the Lord calls them to remember - to remember their former love for Him. Do you remember the earlier times when you longed for the Presence of the Lord and to linger in the garden with Him? Remember the former fragrance you emanated, and the radiance of the Lord you possessed? Remember how your love overflowed, and expressed itself in zeal for winning souls to the Lord? You longed to tell everyone of your wonderful Lord. You were willing to go anywhere for Him. You were willing to die for your Lord. You would gladly embrace the fiery faggots if it would bring honour and souls to Him!

But now? O look from where you have fallen. No longer is there the same zeal. Prayer has become tiresome. Bible study tedious. Soul winning, a thing of the past. O yes, you are still active, but the fragrance is no longer there. You have become indifferent to the plight of perishing souls, and to the Lord’s passion to save them!
Other things have crept in. Other loves have successfully bidden for your time and attention.

O Ephesians! **Why have you left your First Love?** Has He been a disappointment to you? Has He ever been unfaithful? Has one word of His good promise ever failed? How have you tired of His love so soon?

O how you have drifted! Your love has declined. You have failed to cultivate this most vital of all relationships. Repent! Confess your sin, your failure to Him. Turn again to your Beloved. Come to the garden alone. Gaze again into the eyes of your Saviour. Remember His sufferings on your behalf. Listen to His sweet, loving voice, speaking to you. Let Him overwhelm you once more with His love.

**Satan will attempt to hinder**

Be sure of one thing:- Satan will do whatever He can, to prevent the believer from enjoying, and cultivating his love relationship to the Lord. He will fill you with all types of feelings to make you think that you don't have enough time to spend in loving your Lord. Satan will do everything to disrupt the time you have set aside for the Lord. He will bring up all types of arguments to get you to say, "It is impossible!" "It doesn't last!"; "I am not the type of person to experience this type of relationship"; "I'm not good enough," and so on.

If Satan can prevent the development of our love relationship, he will succeed in hindering our spiritual progress, and in making our lives ineffective. Satan will attempt to influence you to think and talk mostly about yourself and your failures. Remember, **Y’shua is our Helmet of salvation** to protect our minds.

Even as I have been writing this message, the deceiver has been at work, whispering his arguments in my ears. But I have resisted him in the mighty Name of the mighty Y’shua.

Now, my reader, you do the same! Let Satan not rob you of the blessed, thrilling love relationship which you may have with our Heavenly Bridegroom. Yield to your Beloved. Learn of Him. Let your love reach into the depths and heights of the Son of God. Rest your head on His chest and hear His heart beat.

If your love has declined, let Him revive it this very day. He is longing to refresh you again.

> Jesus, Thy boundless love to me,  
> No thought can reach, no tongue declare;  
> Oh, knit my thankful heart to Thee,  
> And reign without a rival there;  
> Thine wholly thine alone I am;  
> Lord, with Thy love my heart inflame.  
> **AMEN**