The Pilgrim's Quest

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and ***confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims*** *on the earth. For they that say such things* ***declare plainly that they seek a country.***" (Heb. 11:13,14)

Pilgrim's Quest Bible Church
Pastor Garry E. Huff

The Call to a Christ-Like Love

"God's Gift of Love"

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."
(John 3:16)

The Lord Jesus in His prayer to the Father stated, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." *(Jn. 17:5)* There was a "glory" between the Father and the Son with such love that excels all human expression. The communion between the Father and the Son was fully enveloped with love. A love of choice for each other as the selected object of that love. It was an infinite love, an eternal love, an immeasurable love - a love that excels all superlatives of depth, richness, and splendor. To the Father, "The Son was His most beloved object, His most precious jewel, His priceless treasure, the subject of His fathomless love. He was the sum of all the Father's delight, reciprocating His love, reflecting His glory, and revealing His perfections." To the Son, the Father was not only the master designer, architect, and planner of the vast magnificent universe, but more so, the great planner of ***"so great salvation"*** that out of the reservoir of the redeemed a holy, chaste, loving, and perfect Bride would be provided - *bone of His bones, and flesh of His flesh.*

God turned His eye to a race created in His image, but fallen

and depraved. Here are the least, the lost, the helpless, and the hopeless. They are bound by Satan's captive chains, slaves to sin, and destined for destruction. God so loved the world that the object of the Father's love in heaven, His Son, must be given. Heaven's delight must be offered upon the altar of sacrifice for the world's redemption.

The Son in loving obedience to his Father's desire, fully consented, gladly surrendered, and revealed a love that yielded in self sacrifice for others. "Here is a measureless love that reveals a measureless gift" that surpasses all of earth's treasures whether gold or silver, houses or lands, earthly honors or prestige. All of the world's glory melts into nothingness in light of this precious gift of God's love.

At the proper time in space and history, God's gift of his Son took on flesh and dwelt among mankind. He "emptied" himself in humiliation from the glory of a heavenly spiritual life that He was so accustomed, and reduced Himself to the proportion of the sphere of man. He would suffer fatigue, get hungry and thirsty. He would travel on foot for most of His earthly life. He would be acquainted with sorrows, and "touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like was we are, yet without sin." *(Heb. 4:15)* Yet, the Lord continued to be the delight of his Father's eye. At the water baptism of the Lord, the Father's voice was heard, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The Father was very pleased with the life of his Son from His birth, as a youth, in the carpenter's shop, and now at the water baptism. His "beloved" was the "dearly *agape* one."

The Lord Jesus throughout His earthly ministry was always pointing to His heavenly Father. While instructing His disciples to pray, Jesus told them to say, "Our Father which art in heaven." When speaking to the Jews He said, "I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." In referring to the words that He spoke and the works that He did, Jesus said, "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake."

The world witnessed a love exemplified in the life of the Son of God with His heavenly Father. It was the Lord's prayer for His disciples "that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in

them." This love took its highest form when Jesus became the sacrifice for man's sin. It was here that it was witnessed, "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." *(Rom. 5:8)*

There was a day unlike any ever before in the history of the world in which the love of the Father, the love of the Son, and the love of the Holy Spirit converged upon one object - wretched humanity! A love so deep that the Father will give up his Son to the humiliation of death by means of the cross. A love so deep that the Son would completely submit to the brutality of the Jewish leadership, the mockery of Herod's court, and finally the cruel death that was only reserved for criminals in execution. A love so deep that the Holy Spirit would provide a body for Jesus that would not see corruption but bear the agony of six hours on the cross and yes, even death. There has been no creature in all of the universe that has been so deeply loved like sinful man!

The heavenly host watched with anticipation of intervention, but none was summoned. The fallen host of Satan's company rejoiced with glee in their momentary false triumph. The witnesses of earth were mixed with mockery, disbelief, and wonderment. And yet a criminal crucified at Jesus' side found that love of God for him said, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." And the suffering Lord replied, "Today thou shalt be with me in paradise."

Myriads have followed in the train of the thief by embracing the deep, deep love of God and have gladly thrown off the old sinful life of the past. How uncomplicated it is to repent, confess, believe, and cleave to the provision of God's gift of love by means of the substitutionary atonement of his Son! How marvelous is His grace that is greater than all our sin! How wonderful to enter into a life everlasting that He has imparted to a dead soul!

God has concentrated His love for "whosoever will" through the shedding of blood of His dear Son on the cross. He is calling that heart, that soul, that has by faith seen this deep, deep love, then lay hold of it as one's own personal ownership - possessing that love that was so freely given!

O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus

O the deep, deep love of Jesus,
Vast, unmeasured, boundless free;
Rolling as a mighty ocean
In its fullness over me.
Underneath me, all around me,
Is the current of Thy love;
Leading onward, leading homeward
To my glorious rest above.

O the deep, deep love of Jesus,
Spread His praise from shore to shore;
How He loveth, ever loveth,
Changeth never, never more;
How He watches o'er His loved ones,
Died to call them all His own;
How for them He intercedeth,
Watcheth o'er them from the throne.

O the deep, deep love of Jesus,
Love of ev'ry love the best;
'Tis an ocean vast of blessing,
"Tis a haven sweet of rest,
O the deep, deep love of Jesus,
"Tis a Heav'n of Heav'ns to me;
And it lifts me up to glory,
For it lifts me up to Thee.

S. *Trevor Francis*

Verses for Thought of Heart:

"For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." *(Rom. 5:7, 8)*

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." *(1 Jn. 3:1)*

"Hereby perceive we the love *of God,* because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren." *(1 Jn. 3:16)*