

Welcome friends to another broadcast of “Morsels for Zion’s Poor”

The scriptures are very plain concerning the love with which the LORD has loved HIS people which were given to HIM before the foundation of the world and chosen in CHRIST. This is a perfect love because it has its origins in HIM who is perfect, and whom John says is the very epitome of love. *“For love is of God; ----- for God is love.”* This is a specific love which is bestowed upon them, to the exclusion of others. *“having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.”* They were the ones for whom HE prayed in the garden of Gethsemane saying, *“I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.”*

This is an unmerited love since it is bestowed on them, not in light of their worthiness nor because of any form of obedience which was seen in them. In fact quite the opposite is true as we read, *“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”*

This is a demonstrated love, because, not only were the sons of GOD transgressors of HIS commandments but they were in a state of actual animosity towards HIM when HE was pleased to demonstrate HIS everlasting love of them, and to call them by HIS grace to a knowledge of HIS redemption. *“When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son”*

This is a manifested love because it has pleased HIM, to cause it to abide in those HE has called by HIS grace and indwelt by HIS SPIRIT. John repeats the declaration which the LORD JESUS made in John 13:35 when he says; *“If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.”*

One cannot begin to discuss the love of the brethren one towards another, until first, the basis and example of the nature of this love is set forth. *“This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.”* This is not an “external commandment” which is written in tables of stone and enacted as a requirement in order to gain eternal life or some reward, rather this is a “commandment” which is written in the “fleshy tables” of the heart and is an evidence of HIS SPIRIT in HIS children. This is the outworking of that which HE is pleased to work in HIS people according to the good pleasure of HIS will. *“He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.”* If a man does not love his brethren, then that man has no reason to believe that he has been born again.

This “love of the brethren” both exceeds and transcends the natural love which a man has for those who are his flesh and blood. The LORD JESUS demonstrated this by HIS own action. This “love of the brethren” causes a man to be concerned with the needs and welfare of them, even as Paul said, *“Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”* While a concern and compassion for the needs of men in general is quite commendable, those in whom the SPIRIT of CHRIST dwells have as their primary concern the needs of their brethren in CHRIST. This “love of the brethren” is that which would have them esteem one another above themselves This is especially true in regards to what a man may have liberty of conscience to do. Regardless of how much liberty a man may have in CHRIST, he must first consider his brethren before exercising that liberty. *“We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.”*

The “love of the brethren” causes them to delight in the fellowship of the saints one with the other. John speaks of this common bond which the saints have with one another in CHRIST, *“That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.”* The saints of GOD are joined together in CHRIST. *“So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.”* Now this is surely true in a mystical sense wherein all of GOD’s children share in their common ANCESTRY. Yet there is a very practical manifestation of this bond which is demonstrated in the gathering together of the saints in local assemblies. It is these “gatherings” or “assemblies” that the saints are exhorted not to neglect. Due to the “institutionalization” of “churches” over time, the true purpose and benefit of this “assembling” has been hidden from the minds of many. The purpose of these assemblies is not primarily to hear men preach, but rather that the saints might be edified by that which every part of the body supplies. Each part of the body is vital to the health of the whole. We assemble because we love the brethren and desire their benefit, not primarily in order to have our own needs met. This is the love of CHRIST. *“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. --- My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.”*

“Thy free grace alone,” #11 **If you would like a free transcript of this broadcast email us at forthepoor@windstream.net**