

SHOWING GOD WE LOVE HIM

1Jhn 4:19

INTRODUCTION:

- A. The term "soul mate" has become so overused, it's a cliché, yet in romance everyone seems to be looking for one
- B. In "dictionary terms" it has come to mean a man & woman who are "compatible with each other in disposition, point of view, or sensitivity"
- C. It seems to also imply someone who knows you intimately, who will watch out for you, watch over you, and do everything for your benefit
- D. Can we think of God as our greatest possible soul mate?
 - 1. He knows us to the core of our being (& loves us anyway!), He wants to help us, protect us, and give us eternal life
 - 2. Sometimes when His love for us breaks into our awareness, we love Him back with an intensity that can hardly be put into words.
- E. John says simply, "We love Him because He first loved us." 1Jhn 4:19
 - 1. Such seems to be the concept behind Psalm 139 though David doesn't once mention the word "love"
 - 2. Instead of being threatened by God's deep knowledge of him, David is reassured that God is with him and will protect him and David has absolute trust in Him
- F. Love for God can be expressed in real yet personal ways Mk 12:30

DISCUSSION:

I. SHOWING GOD WE LOVE HIM THROUGH COMMUNICATION

- A. Through Prayer Psa 34:15-17; 1Thess 5:17
 - 1. Those who love Him and believe He helps them long to talk to Him
 - 2. Song: "Prayer Is The Soul's Sincere Desire"
- B. Through Singing
 - 1. Songs are "horizontal" (teaching & admonishing one another Col 3:16) to be sure, yet all spiritual songs are expressions of faith and praise to God Heb 2:12
 - 2. Singing makes "melody in our heart" Eph 5:19
- C. Through Teaching
 - 1. Prison would not stop early disciples teaching Acts 5:25
 - 2. Paul stayed a year and a half in Corinth teaching Acts 18:11

II. SHOWING GOD WE LOVE HIM BY LOVING OTHERS

- A. Our Brethren
 - 1. Jesus says it is the hallmark of our identification with Him John 13:34-35
 - 2. Love for one another helps keep our love to God honest 1Jhn 4:20, 3:14-17
- B. Our Fellowman Matt 25:31-46
 - 1. Loving those who love you back is easy, but Jesus challenges us to a higher level Matt 5:43-48, Lk 6:31-36

- 2. Our every action should be to show real love toward everyone we meet Gal 6:10

III. SHOWING GOD WE LOVE HIM BY OBEDIENCE

- A. Those who love God want to please Him and that is unthinkable without obedience Jhn 14:15
- B. Consider the blessings of obedience
 - 1. Protection Psa 31:23-24
 - 2. Assurance and peace Rom 8:28
- C. How do we know if something is a blessing or not? Story of man who raised horses for a living. When a prized stallions ran away, friends came to mourn his great loss. After they expressed their concern, the man raised question: "How do I know whether what happened is bad or good?" Later the horse returned with several strays following. Same friends came to celebrate his good fortune. The man asked again: "But how do I know whether it's good or bad?" That afternoon, one of horses kicked owner's son and broke his leg. Again, his friends came - now to express their sorrow. And again, the man asked: "But how do I know if this is bad or good?" A few days later, war broke out. The man's son was exempted from service because of his broken leg. Yes, you guessed it, the friends gathered again -- the story stops. But We can easily see how it could go on and on. This tale points out that from our limited human perspective, it's impossible to know with certainty how to interpret the experiences of life but the child of God can know that by his submission to God, everything will be alright Eccl 8:12; Rom 8:28

- D. The hard part is keeping ourselves in submission to God 1Cor 9:27

IV. SHOWING GOD WE LOVE HIM BY IDENTIFYING WITH HIM

- A. The greatest show of affection for anyone is to let others know you're "with" them
- B. It is no less with God - Consider these ways
- C. Confession Mk 8:38 In word and works, by mouth and deed, we show that our association with Him is real and absolute
- D. Baptism Gal 3:26,27
 - 1. It is the beginning of our showing love to God and our desire to be connected with Him in the deepest ways
 - 2. He's given a wonderfully vivid way in which to "touch" the sacrifice of His Son. How can one who loves Him refuse
- E. Communion - 1Cor 10:16, 11:26 This is real fellowship. A participation, a partnership, a sharing

CONCLUSION:

- A. These are but some ways in which we can show authentic, tangible love to God
- B. In whatever ways you show your love for Him, know your love will not be forgotten by Him Heb 6:10
- C. Do you love God? Show it in your response to the gospel