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Daily Devotional, Wednesday, February 14, 2018 - The Power of Love

FEBRUARY 14TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Luke 15:11-24

The limitations of the English language at times diminish our understanding of scriptural concepts. For instance, there is only one word for *love* in English, but the New Testament uses two different Greek words. One of them, *phileo*, refers to brotherly concern and affection, but the more powerful term *agape* signifies a sacrificial commitment to another's satisfaction, security, and development. This is the kind of love that God has for us—and that the Holy Spirit produces in and through believers.

Perhaps the best way to understand *agape* is to see what it looks like. In His parable of the prodigal son, Jesus describes a father's sacrificial love for his wayward son. When the young man demanded an early inheritance, the father didn't deny his request, though he knew it would lead only to bitterness. So despite personal and financial sacrifice, he gave the son his share. Then the father waited patiently while the prodigal learned a difficult lesson.

No doubt that was a trying time for the father because a good dad wants to protect his children from mistakes and the resulting consequences. But a wise man also knows that some hard truths must be learned through painful experience. At times the best thing we can do is trust the Lord to reach defiant hearts.

But *agape* love doesn't just let go; it also forgives and restores. When the prodigal son returned home humbled and contrite, his father reached out to receive him and restore him to the family—just our heavenly Father does for us.

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Daily Devotional - Monday, February 12, 2018 - Encouragement in Every Season

FEBRUARY 12TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Daily Devotional - Monday, February 12, 2018 - Encouragement in Every Season](#)

Psalm 62:5-8

Maybe there's not enough money in the bank to cover that bill. Or a loved one died. Or your family is facing hard times. In difficult or painful circumstances, many believers turn to the Bible in search of comfort and guidance. Within its pages, we find assurance that encourages us through every season of life: "The Lord's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness" (Lam. 3:22-23).

God truly is faithful. In other words, we can count on Him to be and do exactly what He says. For instance, the Bible assures us that the Lord is trustworthy, loving, and incapable of failure (Psalm 37:5; Rom. 5:8; Josh. 1:5). Out of deep love for us, He'll use any aspect of His multifaceted nature to provide exactly what He knows we need. He's our Savior, Comforter, and Discipliner, who safely guides us through life's changes and challenges.

No matter what hardships we face, we can trust God because He knows all things. He's aware of the duration and intensity of our current season and uses His knowledge to offer us the best possible help and support. What's more, the Lord is all-powerful, which means He is more than adequate to meet needs and change circumstances according to His plan. And our Father is everywhere, including right beside us in whatever we face. He promises, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you" (Heb. 13:5).

Difficulties may cause us to question God's dependability. But if we'll place our trust in our omniscient, omnipotent Father, we can begin each morning with a fresh sense of His faithfulness, which will carry us through the day.

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Daily Devotional, Thursday, February 8, 2018 - The Love of God

FEBRUARY 08TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Thursday, February 8, 2018 - The Love of God

Genesis 3:1-6

Signs on the highway show us many different sorts of things. Speed limits. Animal crossings. How to find a rest stop or avoid a construction site. Similarly, all of creation is a sign communicating God's message to us. He speaks to us through a full moon, waves crashing against rocks, or a vividly colored aspen tree. As we look upon the wonders of nature, something inside us resonates with the glory, power, love, and beauty of the Creator.

The Lord expresses His message in still another way that may initially be hard for us to comprehend as love: through the fall of man. You might wonder, *If God loves us, then why would He let the first couple sin, spoiling the perfection they enjoyed in the garden and breaking the fellowship they had with Him?*

The connection between God's love and man's sin is freedom. In giving Adam and Eve the option to obey or disobey, God demonstrated that He has not created us as robots, incapable of making choices. His love does not restrict our freedom to do right or wrong—even if that involves our saying “no” to the God who created us. However, having the freedom to choose means we will make mistakes and disobey the God who loves us.

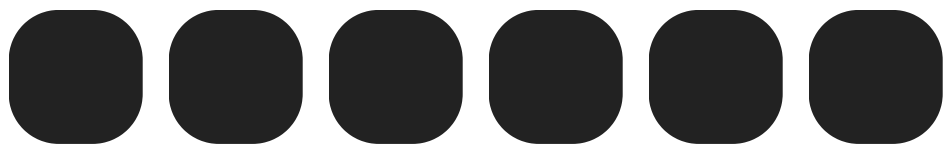
But the wonderful news is that God expresses His love toward those who have rebelled against Him, through His gracious offer of salvation and forgiveness. Jesus Christ, who paid our sin

debt on the cross, is the ultimate expression of divine love. Have you responded to His love by believing in Christ and receiving Him as your personal Savior?

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Daily Devotional, Wednesday, February 7, 2018 - God, The Greatest Lover of All

FEBRUARY 07TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Wednesday, February 7, 2018 - God, The Greatest Lover of All

Jeremiah 31:3

God's love is totally different from ours. For one thing, His love is everlasting. He bestows it on us continuously, and there is absolutely nothing that can interrupt or interfere with it. This is

because His love is not based on a feeling but flows from His very nature. Therefore, it is perfect, unchangeable, and trustworthy (1 John 4:8). In contrast, disagreements and other circumstances can cause human love to fluctuate or fail.

What's more, God's love is unconditional—there's nothing we can say or do to either deserve or deter it. We never have to wonder if the Lord still loves us. Every day you and I walk under the canopy of His love, which remains unaffected by our behavior, whether good or bad. Even if we wander from His will or fall into disobedience, we don't have to worry that the canopy will be removed. We did not build it, so we can't dismantle it. The source of God's love is God Himself, and His love is eternal, perfect, and without any conditions whatsoever.

Notice I did not say you would necessarily enjoy life because He loves you; nor did I say that God would overlook transgressions. Disobedience is a matter of grave consequence for the Christian. Yet even in our foolishness and sin, the Lord is our loving Father, who faithfully disciplines His children. We must always remember that sin does not affect God's boundless love for us.

The heavenly Father has always loved you, and He always will. As you release any misconceptions about His everlasting love, you'll be able to rejoice under His canopy.

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Daily Devotional, Tuesday, February 6, 2018 - Faithful Messenger

FEBRUARY 06TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

Daily Devotional, Tuesday, February 6, 2018 - Faithful Messenger

Ephesians 6:21-24

What's the most valuable item you've ever transported? We usually associate value with an expensive physical possession, but Tychicus brought something far more precious than gold from a Roman prison to the church in Ephesus. He carried God's Word, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit by the apostle Paul while he was imprisoned.

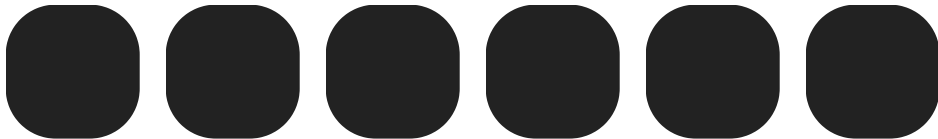
Tychicus is one of those behind-the-scenes people who worked with Paul. His home was originally in Asia Minor (Acts 20:4), and he is mentioned five times in the New Testament. In all but one of these passages, he is sent somewhere by Paul. Running errands may not seem like a glorious job, but his service for Christ was essential: He delivered Paul's letters to the Ephesian and Colossian churches along with encouragement and information about the apostle's circumstances (Col. 4:7-8).

These letters have been instructing, challenging, and encouraging Christians throughout the world ever since. And the job Tychicus had—to deliver Scripture—is a task still entrusted to believers today. God has given us His Word for our benefit but also so we can share it with others. It's the only sure source of absolute truth because it came directly from God through men who were inspired by His Spirit.

The Bible is our most precious possession. We should treat it with care and share it with fellow believers as well as those who need to know our great God and Savior. The next time you open the Scriptures, ask the Lord to make you like Tychicus, a faithful messenger of His Word.

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