

<sup>[1]</sup> Now it came about when he had finished speaking to Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved [David] as himself.

<sup>[3]</sup> Then Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved [David] as himself.

[1 Samuel 18:1, 3]

I chose to begin with 1 Samuel 18:1, 3 because it reminds us that we are to LOVE others as we LOVE ourselves. Did you see in this passage why king Saul's son Jonathan made a covenant with David? It was because Jonathan LOVED David as himself! Then in 1 Samuel 20:17, we further learn,

And Jonathan made David vow again because of his LOVE for him, because he LOVED [David] as he LOVED his own life.

In Acts 20, when Paul had called the Ephesian elders to come to him [Acts 20:17], in Acts 20:37-38,

<sup>[37]</sup> And they began to weep aloud and embraced Paul, and repeatedly kissed him, <sup>[38]</sup> grieving especially over the word which he had spoken, that they should see his face no more....

My wife Louise and I have experienced goodbyes of this nature many times during our years of ministry. It is hard to separate yourself from those whom you LOVE as you LOVE yourself and who you know LOVE themselves as they LOVE you. Let me ask you, how many people outside your family have you made a covenant with just because you LOVE them?

Listen now to what Paul said to those in 2 Corinthians concerning the taking up of a collection for the needy saints in the area of Jerusalem. Here in 2 Corinthians 8:7-8 Paul said,

<sup>[7]</sup> But just as you abound in everything, in faith and utterance and knowledge and in all earnestness and in the LOVE we inspired in you, see that you abound in this gracious work also. <sup>[8]</sup> I am not speaking this as a command, but as proving through the earnestness of others the SINCERITY of your LOVE also.

Another example of brotherly love is found in 1 Thessalonians 2:8-9, where Paul said,

<sup>[8]</sup> Having therefore a FOND AFFECTION for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel<sup>(good news)</sup> of God but also our own lives, because you had become VERY DEAR to us. <sup>[9]</sup> FOR you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, how working night and day SO AS TO NOT BE A BURDEN to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel<sup>(good news)</sup> of God.

Now consider what Paul said to Philemon then, and us Today in Philemon 12-16 concerning the slave Onesimus. Paul said,

<sup>[12]</sup> And I have sent him back to you in person, that is, sending my very heart, <sup>[13]</sup> whom I wished to keep with me, that in your behalf he might minister to me in my imprisonment for the gospel<sup>(good news)</sup>; <sup>[14]</sup> but without your consent I did not want to do anything, that your goodness should not be as it were by compulsion, but of your own free will. <sup>[15]</sup> For perhaps he was for this reason parted from you for a while, that you should have him back forever, <sup>[16]</sup> no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a BELOVED BROTHER, especially to me, but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

A last example of brotherly LOVE is found in 3 John 1-4. Hear, John the elder wrote to Gaius and said,

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<sup>[1]</sup> The elder to the **BELOVED** Gaius, whom I **LOVE** in truth. <sup>[2]</sup> **BELOVED**, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers. <sup>[3]</sup> For I was very glad when brethren came and bore witness to your truth, that is, how you are walking in truth. <sup>[4]</sup> I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.

Did you hear how John expressed his **LOVE** for Gaius? John said he **LOVED** Gaius in truth and called Gaius one he **BELOVED**. John then expresses his joy toward Gaius by saying in verse 4, that he had,  
... no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.

What about you? Do you express the joy and **LOVE** you have for brothers and sisters who are walking in God's truth and will?

Lord willing, I hope you will join me here again tomorrow, when we will consider some examples of *spiritual love*!

Please meditate and pray on these things!

Will you please now join me in prayer?

*Loving* Father, I come before You Today giving You thanksgiving and praise. I give You this for all You thanksgiving and praise for helping us to understand these examples of mutual love. I now give You thanksgiving in prayer in the Name of Christ the Lord. Amen!

Louise and I pray this will help to both enlighten and encourage you to **know in a greater way** the **One** Who promises in His Word to never leave you nor forsake you [Hebrews 13:5; Deuteronomy 31:6, 8]!

*BECAUSE HE FIRST EXPRESSED HIS LOVE FOR ME, I CHOOSE TO EXPRESS MY LOVE FOR MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS WHO ARE ALSO WALKING IN LOVE OF THE BRETHREN! – tom*