

IN LOVE WITH ME

Brenda L. Chancellor
Copyrighted 2003

Love is not what you do but what you are
Henry Brandt

1 [Thessalonians 3:12](#) = And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you

God is Love. Everything about Him speaks of Love. He created the universe with Love. He made man in His own image with Love. And, He watches over all creation with that same Love. The Christian walk is to be characterized by love so that Paul could even speak of “walking in love” (Romans 14:15 NIV). Therefore Love is not what we do. It is not the physical; intimate act so many call "love". It is what we are: what we become in Christ.

Is it possible to really “love” God when you do not love yourself? Perhaps! But from experience, I can assure you that a great deal is missing from such a relationship. Many people struggle for years with the concept of “Love”. They say that they can love others easily but really don’t like anything about themselves. In reality, Love is like a puzzle. If one piece is removed from the puzzle, it can’t be complete. In the same way, Love becomes an empty word: without meaning, when a part of the whole picture is removed, whether it involves loving others or loving oneself. Having any part of the reality of love removed from one’s heart leaves the person feeling miserable and unfulfilled in life.

Real love can never be realized until we come into contact with the matchless Love of God. Like Paul, we must strive to KNOW our God and the Power of His resurrection (Philippians 3:10). It was the greatest yearning of Old Testament men and women of God (Exodus 33:13), and it is a relationship available to all the people of the new covenant (Jeremiah 31:34). To Know Him is to fall into the arms of a Mighty God with a deep passionate desire for more of Him, loving Him with intense adoration. This means that we must go beyond ourselves and any preconceived ideas. We must forget about what we need, want or desire of the world and focus totally on Him in complete unconditional surrender to His Will. We must die to self before we can ever really learn what real love is. Our heart’s cry must be, “More of You, Abba Father (which is to say ‘Daddy’)! I want more of You.”

The 2nd part of Philippians 3:10 talks about knowing the Power of His Resurrection. God sees us the way we are going to be - not as we are right now. He sees the finished product of His Divine Grace. Resurrection Power is the Holy Spirit in us teaching us and working through us to perfect that which we will one day be; guiding us into all truth, building us up on our most holy faith (Jude 1:20), until that day when we will rise with Christ, resurrected into a new life.

We need the Holy Spirit in our lives. Jesus knew how vital the ministry of the Holy Spirit is. That is why He told His disciples that when He went back to Heaven He would send the Comforter /Holy Spirit to earth. After His resurrection, Jesus told His disciples to “wait in Jerusalem until you receive power from on high” (Luke 24:49). Without the Holy Spirit present in one’s life, a person is like a fish out of water, floundering around in the world, trying to do what’s right but often falling flat on his face. The Prophets, Patriarchs and Judges spoken of in the Old Testament knew the power and leading of the Holy Spirit. Several times in Old Testament history, the nation of Israel witnessed the glory of God in their midst. Deliverance from enemy forces was the work of the Holy Spirit. During the Six-Day War between Israel and Arabs in 1967, a miraculous intervention of the Holy Spirit that sounds as if it came straight out of the Bible, took place. The Arabs fled the

battleground, leaving their weapons, tanks, and etc. behind. When asked why they fled, they said that there was a huge army on the hills behind the Israeli army. God still fights for Israel because He still loves them. God will also do the same for you because He loves you. There are 7,700 promises in the Bible and every one of them is for you and me. But you have to do something to receive those promises. You have to ask in faith, believing that our God will do exactly what He says in His Word.

Loving oneself is not an option. Jesus said the 2nd Commandment is to love your neighbor as you do yourself (Matthew 22:3 9). The Apostle John said, “If a man says, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar: for he that loves not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?” (1 John 4:20) “Brother” also applies to self. You may say that you know God loves you. Do you really believe that? Then you must also love yourself.

Being able to love yourself has its roots in low self-esteem. This is a plague that affects thousands of men and women. It begins in early childhood. Like cancer, it eats away the beautiful truth God’s Word says about His children, until little or nothing good remains, leaving victims in a sad, miserable state. It is one of the most deadly games Satan plays against God’s people. I personally know of people who lived their entire lives without real joy or peace, taking bitterness and unforgiveness toward other people to their graves. Such people are in bondage: a spiritual prison without bars, wrapped in chains of self-loathing. It is merely an existence rather than the life that God meant for His children to have. These people often don’t understand why they feel the way they do. They have no idea when it began and are powerless to rid themselves of it. Your Heavenly Father loves you. He wants you to be free in Christ (Romans 6:22), and He has a wonderful plan for your life (Jeremiah 29:11). Learning to love yourself is part of God’s plan.

What You Think About Yourself Is What You Become

Throughout my childhood, I was compared to my sister. She is 11 years older than me, so I didn't really know her very well while growing up. I love my sister. Please don't get me wrong. She is a beautiful person and fun to be with, but I'm not her twin. I'm not like her. She is unique and so am I = uniquely different. We are made in God's image, but with different characteristics that make us who we are. Parents make a drastic mistake when they compare one child with another, making comments such as: "Why can't you be more like your sister" or, "your brother does better in school than you". That isn't fair to either child. It causes a rift in the family as the child who is compared begins to believe he/she isn't good enough, smart enough or loved as much as other children. The rift becomes greater when that child decides enough is enough and moves away as soon as he/she can. For years, I refused to call the place where I grew up, "home" because I always thought that "home" was where love abounded toward every family member. I felt like a stranger in an unfamiliar place filled with emptiness. This is not God's design. Families are meant to form a strong family unit filled with love.

Words can lift us up. Words can also kill. I was often told how dumb I was and that I wouldn't amount to anything. I totally believed it. My thoughts were continually focused on all of those negative suggestions. Those words came from the pit of hell. They were a curse against me. More importantly, they were a curse against Christ in me. I was never able to think about anything that was good. Negative thoughts and emotions affected my life as an adult. Every time I made a mistake at work or did something "dumb" at home, I put myself down and many times I could hear my mother's voice telling me how stupid I was. I existed in my own personal "hell". I knew God loved me but for many years, I didn't know that life could/should be a wonderful experience instead of a miserable existence.

I thank God for Charlie. From the beginning, he loved me the way I was: never trying to change me. This is the Father's Love in action, although at the time, Charlie wasn't a Christian.

When Charlie came into my life, I was so negative about myself that he actually got mad at me and told me to stop downing myself, because I wasn't stupid. He said those words several times. One day, a friend gave me a book about inner healing. After reading the first chapter, I realized what I needed. I prayed, "Lord, me too. I hate the way I feel. I hate who I am. God, I hate everything about me but I know that is not Your design for me. Please do what You want to do to change me." I felt God's love wash over me as He took me through a healing process. Such a journey may be overnight for some but for most like myself, it takes much longer, because a lifetime of so much wrong has to give ground to a whole new style of thinking. The process is one step at a time. The Lord allowed me to think about one memory and then He changed my heart, concerning that moment. As God cleansed me with His Love, I learned to really love and forgive those who hurt me then. Only after that step was complete did the Lord allow me to remember another time and the process began all over again.

The journey to healing begins the very minute you realize that your Heavenly Father created you to live a life that glorifies Him. Low self-esteem can never glorify God because it is the condition of a carnal nature, placed on you by factors that are outside of the will of God. The Lord desires to give you His very best gifts and blessings. This includes becoming truly happy with who you are. The Bible says you can do all things through Christ (Philippians 4:13) and that includes a change in the way you look at your life = a life worth living. Do you want that? Reach up, take God's hand and ask Him to take you on your own personal journey where incredible blessings await you. Go ahead! Don't be afraid. Open up your total being to the One who loves you unconditionally. God longs for you to ask for His help. He won't disappoint you.

By the way, another thing happened after I began my journey! I remembered the day when my dad actually prophesied over me. He was not a prophet and would not have realized what he did then, but looking over my shoulder as I typed a story that was in my thoughts, he said, "My, Brenda, you could be a writer some day!" I also remembered one day at my first job in a furniture store office. I heard my dad tell a salesman that he was "just watching my daughter." I looked up and saw a smile on his face. Freed from the negative thoughts and emotions that plagued my life, I am aware of many great moments from my childhood. I am especially thankful for a mother who did instill in me that faith without works is dead as we did our parts together in church activities.

Are you beginning to see what I'm talking about? Satan uses unsuspecting people to plant negative ideas in our minds. They are **NOTHING BUT LIES**. But if they take root in our hearts they will be just like the weeds in your garden. They will choke out everything that is good.

It's Time To Look In The Mirror!

Look at yourself in a mirror. Go ahead! What do you see? Everyone I've ever met, including myself, who have/or is dealing with low self-esteem, does not care to look in any mirror. They don't like what they see. Why? There's ugliness in that mirror. Low self-esteem cannot see something wonderful such as a precious child for whom Christ died. It is as if a veil was placed over their face. All they can see is the affects of sin, in a curse of rejection. It is a sin that began when Satan, (**Your enemy IS NOT your parents, siblings or any other human** {Ephesians 6:12; 2 Corinthians 10:4-5}) built a stronghold within his intended victim. The Apostle Paul defines the stronghold as a spiritual fortress where Satan and his demons hide and are protected. It is a "*House made of Thoughts*", where demonic or sinful activity is actually defended within us by our sympathetic thoughts toward evil. I am not saying that that person is demon possessed. What I am saying is that people allow Satan to feed on their carnal natures, through wrong attitudes that protect and defend the "old self-life, and are fortified with the unkind comments of other people who received such words in their thoughts from Satan and spoke them forth instead of casting them down (2 Corinthians 10:3-5). This gives Satan access to their minds and even their hearts.

For example: a parent may say to the child, "Nobody wants to listen to your silly stuff".

The child begins to think that he/she really doesn't know how to communicate with others and develops a stigma of low self-esteem. Through the years, Satan uses other people to enforce that belief. Someone will turn and talk to another person right in the middle of the child's conversation or perhaps, they will just merely walk away. Perhaps the parent didn't realize how devastating their remark was. They may have grown up in a culture where children were seen and not heard, so they viewed their child's comments as being bothersome to other adults. Unintentionally, the damage was done. The child is left with an experience that may take a lifetime to overcome.

When a person prays to become a Christian, we tell them to ask Jesus to "come into my heart", so let's think of the heart as His "dwelling place". It has rooms the same as Solomon's temple did. Jesus said that if we open the door to Him, He will come in and sup with us (Revelation 3:20). Jesus also talked to The Father about "being one with us", and being "in us" (John 17:21). Our hearts belong to Christ. But when we listen to Satan, we are actually giving him free access to one of those rooms. As he takes control of that place, he greedily seeks more. Every time we give in to another negative hurt or experience, we relinquish more rooms to Satan.

Using the unkind words of other people is probably Satan's most popular method in making you feel bad about yourself. He takes great delight in doing this. He has a lot of experience in this field. It is easy for him to plant unkind thoughts in your mind. He knows just what to say to set you off on another whirlwind of self-loathing and doubt. But listening to what Satan suggests, allowing them to take root

in your thoughts is sin. It is sin because you chose to believe a lie instead of the truth of God's Word. You are focusing on what you were taught to think about yourself, which is an attitude of the flesh. When you look at yourself with the eyes of flesh or think about yourself with your carnal nature, you *WILL NOT SEE YOURSELF THE WAY CHRIST DOES*. This is 'sin' because you are not seeing yourself with the mind of Christ (Jeremiah 29:11; Philippians 2:5).

One thing that you really must understand is that Satan will harass you again and again until you stand your ground (Ephesians 6:13) and speak with the authority that Christ gave you (Luke 10:19) saying, "That's Enough!" I mentioned earlier that I often heard my mother's voice when I did something wrong. What I meant is that Satan used her voice against me. He did it until I finally told him, "I recognize what's going on. In Jesus' name, I forbid you to use mom's voice against me." I never heard her voice in a negative response again. You see, I understood that the voice I heard came from the adversary. I also realized my rights as a child of God. I don't have to listen to Satan's lies and neither do you.

In our church, we sing, "I went to the enemy's camp and I took back what he stole from me. I took back what he stole from me. I took back what he stole from me. I went to the enemy's camp and I took back what he stole from me. He's under my feet. He's under my feet. He's under my feet. He's under my feet. The devil is under my feet." The only weapons the devil has are those that you give him. These weapons are your attitudes of the flesh. They include your thoughts, emotions, feelings, and past hurts. Without them, Satan can only use lies, because he is the "Father of Lies" (John 8: 14b). Satan steals your joy, peace, health, wealth, and above all, your blessings. The only way the enemy can get anything from you is when you allow him into your mind where he plays "head games". It's time to beat the devil at his own game! The Bible says to gird up the loins of your mind (1 Peter 1:13). That means, whatsoever is true, honest, just and of good report (Philippians 4:7-9) are those things you should be thinking. You must get bold in the Spirit, go into the enemy's camp and take those things back. Under your feet is where that stinker belongs.

The Bible says the "Kingdom of God suffers violence and the violent take it by force" (Matthew 11:12). The violent ones are religious people who have a form of godliness but deny the power of God (2 Timothy 3:5). They usually don't have a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and believe it is their duty to hinder those who do have such a relationship. They are often members of one's own family. Most of the time, they don't even realize the harm they are doing with their tongues. But you, Child of God, do not have to listen to what they tell you. Say "NO" and take back the life God gave you.

Another song says, “Satan, you’re a liar, destined for the fire. The Word has set me free and you don’t have a hold on me.” *This is truth from God’s Holy Word!* Learn to say that to the devil.

Look in the mirror again. Are you beginning to see “Christ in you, the hope of glory”, (Colossians 1:27)? Do you know that His spirit dwells within you (John 14:17); you are His temple (1 Corinthians 3:16), and his workmanship (Ephesians 2:10), and a member of God’s royal priesthood (1 Peter 2:9)? Once, while struggling to forgive someone I believed had wronged me, I was asked to pick her up for a meeting. After she settled down in the back seat, she began to talk to me. I looked at her in my rear view mirror. When I did, I saw JESUS instead. No matter what the situation, our focus must be *where it belongs* - on Jesus Christ. Jesus was also tempted as you are (Hebrews 4:15). The Hymn, “No One Understands Like Jesus” is very true. He understands what people go through and He alone, has the answer to every question, problem or need. The Bible says to cast all your burdens on Him (1 Peter 5:7; Matthew 11:29-30; Hebrews 4:16). You will find peace if you do. You will also find that your whole outlook on life has gloriously changed to a beautiful, joyful experience.

J. S. Baxter tells of an incident that occurred in his home. It so happened that directly in line with a picture of Christ was a mirror. If one were to stand a certain way, the person’s image would blot out the picture. Dr. Baxter’s little daughter was one day standing before the mirror and happened to stand directly in line with the picture. When she moved, the picture again appeared. She ran excitedly to her Daddy and said, “Daddy, I can see Jesus when I am looking at myself.”

It is time to make a choice. It is time to step out in faith. The Bible says, to “Choose this day whom you will serve” (Joshua 24:15; Luke 16:13). Will you serve your loving Heavenly Father in every area of your being, which does include your attitude about yourself, or are you going to continue to give that area of your life to the one who hates you and wants you to feel miserable and unhappy, while causing you to see yourself in the lies that he tells you about who and what you are?

If you decide to follow Joshua’s lead and finish your choice with “as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord”, then you must also say, just as boldly, “I am a child of the Most High God, joint heir with Christ, bought by His blood. I am His workmanship, holy and acceptable to Him and precious in His sight. Perhaps you are still saying “yes but”. You believe what the Bible says and you really do love God, but you are still not willing to look at yourself in the same light. Then, it’s time to take another look in that mirror and say, with conviction, “I CHOOSE this day to see myself as God sees me. I CHOOSE to love myself as God loves me. All that I was, all that I am, and all that I hope to be are forever placed in God’s gracious,

loving hands and I will, from this day forward, stand firmly on what God says about me instead of listening to Satan’s lies.”

The Next Step

Satan never gives up without a fight. He knows your carnal nature better than you do yourself. He knows just what to do to get you thinking those old nasty thoughts that will pull you down hard, if you give in to them. Remember, as a Christian, you are a soldier in God’s army and like it or not, you are engaged in spiritual war every day of your life. But our God is faithful. He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able to bear but with the temptation, He will make a way out (1 Corinthians 10:13). However, God will allow you to go around that mountain as many times as you have to in order to learn what He wants you to learn, which is always for your good.

What is the way out? First, you must understand that Christianity is **NOT** a religion. It is a Walk of Faith, in the Living God who loves you and wants the very best for you. This Faith Walk is not empty religious ritualism and it is not a ‘once a week’ experience. It is a **LIFESTYLE CHANGE** that will take you from glory to glory, or in today’s terms, from one awesome experience to another (2 Corinthians 3:18).

Because you are in a spiritual war, you must:

- 1) Put on the Armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-18).
- 2) Pray, standing on the promises of God (believing prayer) (1 John 5:14-15)
- 3) Study God’s Holy Word - don’t wait for the preacher to tell you what the

Bible says.

God wants you to **KNOW HIS WORD** (2 Timothy 2:5).

- 4) Learn to Praise the Lord (Psalm 49, 50).

Have you ever fallen asleep or found your mind drifting when you tried to read your Bible or begun to pray? Satan doesn't want God's people to become strong in faith through prayer and Bible study. He knows he was defeated at Calvary but he doesn't want Christians to understand that fact. And the devil can’t stand it when Christians praise God. He leaves. That’s why he fights ruthlessly in that area, trying to keep Christians from doing the one thing that will stop him in his tracks.

Go ahead and try it! Praise the Lord! You will find that the more you pray, sing, and praise, the less you will have to hear Satan’s lies. This is **Praise Warfare**, the highest form of Prayer. You don’t want to? Do it as a sacrifice (Hebrews 13:15). The Old Testament talks about the many sacrifices that were done daily in the Temple in Israel. These are things done in the physical or flesh as acts of worship. The Apostle Paul says that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit

(1 Corinthians 6:19). Therefore, the sacrifices we should offer up must be spiritual sacrifices just as the Old Testament Saints offered up physical sacrifices. Both are considered as odors of a sweet smell, well pleasing unto the Lord (Leviticus 8:21; Numbers 15:3; Philippians 4:18). In the Old Testament, the priests gave a “wave offering” (Exodus 29:24) with which they lifted up their offerings and waved them back and forth, first pointing to the altar and then to themselves. One of the postures of offering up a sacrifice in the Church, today, is to lift up holy hands unto the Lord while praying or singing, often “waving” them (1 Timothy 2:8).

Isaiah 61:3 says that God gave us beauty for ashes and a “*garment of praise*” for the spirit of heaviness. I asked the Lord what the garment of praise looked like. He showed me a vision of myself dressed in this garment, covering me from my neck to my ankles, in beautiful, soft, shimmering gold unlike anything we have on this planet. He told me to praise Him. As I did, the gold became brighter. The Lord showed me that the gold becomes brighter and brighter the more we praise - bright with the glory of His Son. Satan hates it because he can’t stand in the glorious presence of our Holy God. He also can’t see the worshipper through such brightness. This is Praise Warfare in action!

Victory Ahead

Victory comes and it remains in those who refuse to look back. Jesus said that once you put your hand to the plow, if you look back, you’re not fit for the Kingdom of God (**Luke 9:62**). That means we must never think about our negative past experiences - never allow those thoughts to take root again. Charlie says that when we give things up to the Lord, they are thrown in the Sea of Forgetfulness (Micah 7:19). There is a sign on the shore that reads, “*No Fishing Allowed.*” Don’t go there, anyway. There is a penalty to pay if you do. It’s in the form of chaos and misery that is not easy to cast back down without a real struggle. Satan goes fishing there a lot in the attempt to accuse you of things from your past that were dealt with. Don’t give in to him! The only thing you should tell him is, “You’re right. Those things did happen. However, I repented and asked God to forgive me, and my Bible says that I am forgiven. Those things were nailed to the cross and covered under the precious blood of Jesus. Therefore, Satan, you have no right to bring them back up. And by the way, Satan, I know my future is with my Lord and your future is in the Lake of Fire so BACK OFF!” (1 John 1:7-9; Revelation 19:20). Beat him at his own game by answering with God’s Word just like Jesus did (Matthew 4:4, 6).

Child of God, the Bible calls you an overcomer when you walk in faith. *Our faith* is the victory that overcometh the world (1 John 5:4-5). Revelation 12:11,17 = they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony. Our testimony is Jesus Christ. Nothing else matters! Keeping your focus on Jesus Christ and what he has done for you makes you an overcomer.

There is another song that says, “ I’ve got my foot on the Rock and my mind’s made up; though I walk through a lonely valley; though I drink from a bitter cup. When the devil comes a knocking, showing me an easier way, I stand right square on my feet. I throw my head in the air. I look him straight in the eye. I say my foot’s on the Rock and my mind’s made up.” What about you? Is your mind made up? Are you learning to see yourself through Jesus’ eyes - to love yourself as He does?

Are you ready to pray? “Lord Jesus, thank you for loving me so much that You gave Your life for me. Thank you for nailing my sins on the cross. Lord, forgive me for listening to all of those terrible things that were said to me in the past and help me to focus my thoughts on You, instead. I choose to forgive all who wronged me. I also choose to love myself as You love me. I ask, Lord that You will cleanse my heart and my mind so that if I do think about my past, only the good memories will surface. In Jesus’ Name, I put Satan on notice right now. I asked my Heavenly Father to forgive me and my Bible says He has done that. Therefore, Satan, I forbid you to ever again use negative memories against me. I command you to get out of that part of my heart that was opened to you. Only the Holy Spirit belongs there now. I am covered and cleansed by the blood of Jesus that was shed for me. Come Holy Spirit and take over every area of my life to the glory of God my Father. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

Be Good To Yourself
Be yourself-truthfully.
Accept yourself-gratefully.
Value yourself-joyfully.
Forgive yourself-completely.
Treat yourself-generously.
Balance yourself-harmoniously.
Bless yourself-abundantly.
Trust yourself-confidently.
Love yourself-wholeheartedly.
Empower yourself-prayerfully.
Give yourself-enthusiastically.
Express yourself-radiantly.

-Source Unknown