

Learning To Love

The Road To Victory

Our wonderful Lord has planned an endless and magnificent honeymoon for His Bride that will outshine even the wildest dreams of man. Yes, the Word says that *"eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him."*

No wonder He is so insistent on the perfecting process that must take place in us, to make us ready for so great a destiny. It is unthinkable that the Altogether Lovely One, the Spotless Lamb of God should be expected to take a Bride whose habits and attitudes still contain the poison that turned God's beautiful earth into a vale of tears.

It is only to be expected that God would demand a Bride worthy of His beloved Son.

First, He deals with our sins, and washes them all away with His precious Blood, never to remember them against us again forever. Hallelujah, what a Saviour!

But still He has the problem of the sinful nature in us. This He is working out now, and with many of us the process seems painful and slow. Yet (oh, the wonder of it) He is in love with His redeemed ones, and is determined to see that we are well prepared for that matchless honeymoon for which His great heart longs, and for which He has paid such an awful price to make possible.

We are slow to learn, and quick to settle for just partial success on the "Road to Victory."

All this time, our precious Lord keeps firmly working out His purpose of developing in us a spiritual character and personality that He can enjoy (and with which we can more fully enjoy and appreciate Him) throughout eternity. His disciplines are wonderful, even though they are much better appreciated as we look back on them than when we are going through them. We are His own, His beloved. We are born of Him, yet we are still babes, and have so very much to learn.

Take, for instance, this matter of real Christian love. Jesus made it clear that the most important of all God's admonitions to us is to love Him with all our heart and soul and might, and to love our neighbors as we love ourselves (as we love our own loved ones). Actions speak louder than words, and a little quiet reflection on our living this thing will show most of us quickly, how far short we fall of God's ideal in this most important of all His commandments. Yet many of us long for victory in the matter of loving God and gaining true Christian love toward our neighbors, (especially those hard-to-love people who cross our path). What is the secret of success in this vital matter?

As far as loving God with the fervor He desires of us, we must be willing to take time to get well acquainted with Him through His Word, and by spending time in His presence in quiet communion. He is altogether lovely, and it is a delightful experience to find how love grows spontaneously as you spend wonderful hours at His feet, searching the Scriptures prayerfully for the descriptions of Himself that He has planted there especially for this purpose, that we may know Him and thereby truly learn to love Him.

After learning to know Him, it is much easier to learn to fully surrender our whole being to Him so that His love can flow through us to our unloveliest neighbors. This is the real secret of mastering this impossible task. What God demands of us, He stands ready to supply. But first we

must know and confess our own failures, for falling short of His requirements of us is sin, and we must get away from the natural human tendency to excuse our shortcomings. We must call them by their right name, for the Blood of Jesus will not cleanse excuses. It will cleanse only that which is humbly confessed as SIN. Then we are ready for victory! With our own sin of failure to love as He commanded firmly dealt with, and under the Blood, we cast ourselves helplessly on Him for Him to impart HIS love through us. It must be all His, not some of ours patched up with some of His!

In my own life I have seen God perform a literal miracle of love in me for those who had been impossible to love in the natural, after I had confessed my sin of failure to keep this commandment in my relations to such folk, and turned the job over to Him.

Try it. Take your own case to Him; humbly confess to Him your failure to love others as SIN, and turn the job of loving that person through you over to Him, IN FAITH, that He will keep His promise. He will.— *Book Fellowship*