

Dear Friend,

Pastor Dave Roberson would often tell us that the final room to be occupied by believers in order for Christ to be manifested to the world through us was the room of love. God is love. He doesn't just have love. He is love. The critical question that must be answered is, "How does a person walk in more of the love of God?"

I don't pretend to know the complete answer to that question, but God has given us some very good clues in His Word. One of them is in the story that we often call The Prodigal Son. Everyone is familiar with the main story, how the father had two sons and one of them demanded his inheritance and squandered it on the world through sin. Thank God he eventually "came to himself," repented and returned to his father's house. The father was overjoyed at his son's return and threw a big party because, "This my son was dead, and is alive again: He was lost, and is found."

We are not nearly so familiar with the reaction of the elder son. The one who did not live a life of sin. The one that remained to labor in his father's fields, rather than spend his life on sin in the world. Was he full of joy when he heard about his brother's welcome home party? Not at all. He was angry. He was angry with his brother, and he was angry with his father for receiving his brother and throwing the party for him.

There is so much to teach from that story, but let us focus on the aspect of the father's love in this letter. It is obvious that the father loved the prodigal son the whole time, even when that son was lost in sin and the world. When the prodigal was walking home, the father saw him coming "from a great way off, and ran, and fell on his neck and kissed him." What caused the father to see him from such a distance? It was because the father had been looking down that dusty road every single day, hoping today is the day my son will return home.

That father loved the lost son the whole time. We can easily see that. But we can also see that the same love for the lost son was not in the elder son. He didn't have the same love in him that was in the father. Let me say it another way. He didn't know the heart of his father at all. Yet he had been "the good son," the son who had not gone into deep sin, or spent his life in worldly pleasures.

What caused the elder son's heart to be so different from his father's heart? The answer is simple. He spent all of his time laboring in his father's fields, but he never spent any time with the father "one on one" or you could say, "face to face."

I've imagined how things would have turned out differently if the elder son decided one day, "I am tired of never spending any time with dad." What if he had shown up at his father's house with a thermos of hot coffee and a dozen donuts under his arm and said, "Dad, could we spend some time together?"

See, the truth is ... in one respect, the father had lost both sons. One he had lost to sin. The other he had lost to religion. For a long, long time, he had no fellowship with either of them. He would have been overjoyed if the elder son had come in just wanting to spend some quality time with him.

I can imagine that as they were enjoying each other's company, munching on donuts, and sipping the hot coffee, the elder son would have noticed that every now and then, the father's gaze would shift over to the picture window that looked out on the dusty road that led up to the house. Eventually the elder son would have asked, "Dad, what are you looking for when you gaze down that dusty road?" He would have been totally surprised when the father answered, "I'm looking for your brother. I'm hoping today is the day he will come home."

At first the elder son would have been shocked. He supposed the father should have been angry with the prodigal son because of his rebellion. He would have thought the father should have disowned that wicked sinner once and for all. But instead, he found out the father loved the prodigal son, even while he was a sinner, and wanted him to repent and come home.

On that first day of fellowship, the love that was in the father for the sinner was definitely not in the elder son. But what if that fellowship continued the next day, and the next day? As they spent more and more time together, face to face, little by little, the love for the sinner that was in the father, would eventually be transferred to the heart of the elder son also. As fellowship continued, it would grow to maturity in the elder son as well.

God is love. His love is like no other love on planet earth. There is no source for His love except from God Himself. No amount of time laboring in the fields, being busy with life, or even living a clean and holy life ... will ever produce that kind of love. The love of God has to be received from God Himself. There is no other source. There is no other way than face to face time with Him.

Luke 11:9-10 And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. (10) For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

How long has it been since you've knocked on the door, and asked for some face to face fellowship time with the Father? He is waiting for you. Go ahead. Knock on the door. It will open wide. He has been waiting for you.

Your fellow servant for Christ,

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