

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. **2Timothy 2:15**

Store In My Heart

Mark 1:9-11

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. Immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him; and a voice came out of the heavens: "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."

Generally considered as written by John Mark, the shortest of the Gospels tells the story of Jesus as he gathers disciples and prepares them for the work ahead. The record includes the rejection of Jesus as the Messiah by the rulers of the Jews as well as those who accepted Him as one sent from God. None seemed to fully understand Him until His death on the cross.

Mark tells the ministry of Jesus in a concise and orderly manner, possibly using Peter as his source. Read and study it diligently.



God Will Always Love Us More

Gary Henry

"We love Him because He first loved us" (1John 4:19).

It should be strengthening to us to know that we are surrounded by the limitless love of God. As our Creator, He is able to love us with a love that is infinite. We cannot understand it completely or respond to it fully. Even if, like our antediluvian ancestors, we were to live hundreds of years upon the earth and love God as Enoch and Noah did, we could not learn to love God with the same love that He has for us. But this fact should not discourage us. It should "challenge" us in a most delightful way. Although we can't love God as He loves us, we can learn to love Him more and more as time goes by. No matter how much of God's love we learn to enjoy, there will always be much more waiting for us up ahead. His love is boundless and inexhaustible.

One thing that we should try to keep clear is that whatever love we show toward God is always a RESPONSE. It is God who has taken the initiative. As John wrote, *"We love Him because He first loved us."* This means that our love for God must always be offered in profound HUMILITY. If He had not first reached across the chasm and extended love to us, it would be futile for us to love Him. As Paul said, Christ died for us *"when we were still without strength" (Romans 5:6)*. And so John could say, *"In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1John 4:10)*.

The surest way for us to grow in our love for God is to meditate on the depth of His love for us. The knowledge of God's love is a "compelling" force: *"For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again" (2Corinthians 5:14-15)*. In the end, faithful service must always spring from fervent love. If we have even the smallest fraction of the love for our Lord that He has shown toward us, we will not be content to love Him with anything less than all of our hearts.

"Our soul is Christ's bride and loves him ardently. But even when she thinks she is completely in love, she feels that her love is inadequate because she is loved so much. And that is true. How could she love as much in return? God loves with all his being" (Bernard of Clairvaux).

Contact Us

We want opportunities to speak with others about the Lord's Kingdom.

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For Our Information

The Simpson family is out of town this weekend.

Dottie Henderson is doing well. She did learn last week that she will be a Great Grandmother again in September. Ruth and Reuben are expecting a second child.

Keep praying for health and peace.

Tonight we start in 2Samuel 19:40.

Wednesday we will start Colossians 4:14 and may begin the book of Philemon.

Pray for safety, courage & healing.



Aimless Conduct

Gary Henry

"... knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers" (1Peter 1:18).

Deciding to "reach forward" requires a good bit more than just getting busy. Our actions have to be motivated by a love for God, and they have to be within the limits of His will and His purposes. Having been redeemed from the "aimless conduct" in which we used to engage, we must now devote ourselves to deeds that are purposeful and fruitful with regard to God.

One of the main things that distinguishes the Christian's life is that it is going somewhere that really matters. If there were no God, nothing that happens would have any meaning. From birth to death, our lives would be no more than the "busy-ness" of spinning our wheels. But God does exist, and what that means is that history is not just history -- it is His-story. The plot is moving toward a climax that will redound to His eternal glory, and if we allow ourselves to be reconciled to Him through His Son, then every deed we do can help move the plot toward its great end.

We need to live, work, and serve in the confidence that what we do in the Lord is eternally worthwhile whether we can see that right now or not. Paul wrote, *"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1Corinthians 15:58).* Your labor is not in vain in the Lord. What glorious, life-changing words! What a difference they ought to make for us on days when we can't see that it does any good to try to do what's right.

But we need to take the time to "take stock" of the way we're living our lives. If we've become Christians, then we have the opportunity to be busy about the most important things in the world -- but really, are those the things that we're busy about most of the time? Is our day-to-day activity connected to our principles in a harmonious way? Are we walking our talk? Is it really God that we're reaching forward to or must we admit that we're preoccupied with lesser things? These questions aren't just important; they ought to be urgent as well. If we're not busy about the Father's business, then our conduct is not going anywhere -- it's aimless.

"It is not enough to be busy; so are the ants. The question is: what are we busy about?" (Henry David Thoreau).

(Brother Henry has been writing a series of devotional books for several years now. These two articles are from some of those books. If you, or someone you know, are looking for some Bible based daily studies I am confident that you will find these books helpful. There are many such resources available. DLH)

We seek only to serve God according to His Will!