Love in the Kingdom of God

One of the fundamental values, one of the things above that define the Kingdom of God, is love. (God is love. 1 John 4:8; Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you. 2 Corinthians 13:11)

Many of us do not understand that without "the love from above" we will not reach the goal set before us: to dwell together with God.

Scripture tells us that we will not enter the Kingdom of love unless we love God, who is love, with all our heart, and unless we long for this trait of character. (He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. 1 John 4:8)

Love is the bond that binds together all the citizens of the Kingdom of God. (And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. Colossians 3:14)

To reach this standard, we will have to make our own the law of love that governs the territory of the Kingdom. (Seeketh not her own… 1 Corinthians 13:5)

Love is unselfish; it does not seek its own good, but the good of others. The love from above does not come into our hearts by chance; it is the fruit of the Holy Spirit when we keep the teachings of Christ. (And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it. 2 John 1:6)

Whoever goes through the school of Christ's disciples will, in the end, bear the fruit of the love from above. (Now the end of the commandment is charity. 1 Timothy 1:5)

Between the love that comes from above and natural human love there is a distance as great as between heaven and earth. The love from above suffers long and is kind; it does not envy, does not boast, is not puffed up with pride, does not behave unseemly, does not seek its own, is not easily provoked, thinks no evil, does not rejoice in iniquity but rejoices in the truth, bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

So that we can learn and experience this perfect love, God places us in His family, in the Church; or, to put it another way, He places us in the Body of Christ. (But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. 1 Corinthians 12:18)

The Church is the Lord's school, and He cares for us tenderly. (For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church. Ephesians 5:29)

The Body of Christ, which is the Church, is part of God's plan for the perfecting of the saints. It is the place where the love from above is learned and practised, where babes, children and young people learn from those who are older to clothe themselves with longsuffering and kindness… to walk in holiness; where they learn to forgive and to love, or in other words, learn to walk after

the things above, after the things of the Spirit. (For the perfecting of the saints… for the edifying of the body of Christ. Ephesians 4:12)

Here we learn to live in righteousness and in peace, to seek the good of others, and no longer to live for ourselves. (But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. 1 Corinthians 12:7; For none of us liveth to himself. Romans 14:7; Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth. 1 Corinthians 10:24)

We learn to be closely joined to one another and to bear one another's burdens. (The whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body. Ephesians 4:16; Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2)

In the Church we are taught to love those outside it as well, even those who will do us harm. When we come into contact with those outside the Kingdom of love, we must follow the Lord's example: love our enemies, bless those who curse us, do good to those who hate us, because we are sons of our Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 5:44)

This love, which has never entered the mind of the natural man, can be gained only by going through the school in which the teachings of Christ are taught. Otherwise, however hard we struggle to obtain love, it will not happen.

He holds the recipe for love, and whoever follows it will come to have it. (And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it. 2 John 1:6; Now the end of the commandment is charity. 1 Timothy 1:5)

We will come to love our fellow men if we learn to keep the word of Christ. (By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. 1 John 5:2, 3; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. Matthew 28:20)

Love will be poured into our hearts to the extent that, at the prompting of the Holy Spirit, we accept and keep the teachings of the Lord Jesus. (The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. Romans 5:5)

To understand this better, let us look at a situation any one of us might face at some point. Suppose that when an inheritance is being divided, perhaps a piece of land or a house, a brother demands that we give him part of our own share as well.

If we belong to the world, we have the world's solutions close at hand for refusing him: we can resist him with words, with anger, or through the courts… But if we are citizens of the Kingdom, we will have to take a different stand; we will have to act toward him according to the solutions given by the law of the Kingdom. What is required of those who belong to the Kingdom is this: to live in peace with all men, to be longsuffering, to be full of kindness. (Follow peace with all men… Hebrews 12:14)

The first thing we must do is, as far as it depends on us, to give the other person no occasion to sin, and to do everything we can so as not to provoke him to anger or unrest. For this we have at hand the commandments that lead to peace. (Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Matthew 5:9; If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, *live peaceably with all men.* Romans 12:18)

To remain in the peace of Christ, we must not resist the one who wants to take by force what belongs to us. (That ye resist not evil. Matthew 5:39; Him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not… Luke 6:29)

Then we must do one more thing, something the man of the world considers sheer madness. To heap coals of fire on his head, we must be willing to give him our "shirt" too, not only the thing he wants to take from us. (And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. Matthew 5:40)

This teaching, which makes us give the other person even more, does not belong to human logic; it comes from above. (Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. Romans 12:20, 21)

If he wants to take part of the land that is rightfully ours, let us show him that we are willing to give him more than he wants to take. (And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Matthew 5:41)

This readiness to give more when something is taken from us by force is not human by nature; it does not come of itself, but only through keeping the laws of the Kingdom above. Keeping the commandments of Christ will lead us to the perfect love that casts out fear and gives us full confidence in the day of judgment. (And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. 2 John 1:6; Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment. 1 John 4:18)

Source: *Love in the Kingdom of God* — Unmodified Word
unmodifiedword.com/articles/love-in-the-kingdom-of-god