



~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

“come just as you are”

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing



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Prayer

Lord, I ask You to please forgive me for the times I've been an unfaithful friend. I know there have been times in my life when I gossiped and talked about people who were supposed to be my close friends. And I didn't stop there. Rather than confess what I did and ask for forgiveness, I tried to cover it up by acting like I hadn't done anything wrong. I am so sorry for what I have done. Please forgive me for lying. Please forgive me for being a phony in my relationships. I don't ever want to do this again, so I ask You to help me walk in truthfulness, integrity, and in genuine agape love, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

Scripture

Genesis 32:1-32 (AMP)

1 THEN JACOB went on his way, and God's angels met him. 2 When Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's army! So he named that place Mahanaim [two armies]. 3 And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother in the land of Seir, the country of Edom. 4 And he commanded them, Say this to my lord Esau: Your servant Jacob says this: I have been living temporarily with Laban and have stayed there till now. 5 And I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, menservants, and women servants; and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find mercy and kindness in your sight. 6 And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to your brother Esau; and now he is [on the way] to meet you, and four hundred men are with him. 7 Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he divided the people who were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two groups, 8 Thinking, If Esau comes to the one group and smites it, then the other group which is left will escape. 9 Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, the Lord Who said to me, Return to your country and to your people and I will do you good, 10 I am not worthy of the least of all the mercy and loving-kindness and all the faithfulness which You have shown to Your servant, for with [only] my staff I passed over this Jordan [long ago], and now I have become two companies. 11 Deliver me, I pray You, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and smite [us all], the mothers with the children. 12 And You said, I will surely do you good and make your descendants as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude. 13 And Jacob lodged there that night and took from what he had with him as a present for his brother Esau: 14 Two hundred she-goats, 20 he-goats, 200 ewes, 20 rams, 15 Thirty milk camels with their colts, 40 cows, 10 bulls, 20 she-donkeys, and 10 [donkey] colts. 16 And he put them into the charge of his servants, every drove by itself, and said to his servants, Pass over before me and put a space between drove and drove. 17 And he commanded the first, When Esau my brother meets you and asks to whom you belong, where you are going, and whose are the animals before you, 18 Then you shall say, They are your servant Jacob's; it is a present sent to my lord Esau; and moreover, he is behind us. 19 And so he commanded the second and the third and all that followed the drives, saying, This is what you are to say to Esau when you meet him. 20 And say, Moreover, your servant Jacob is behind us. For he said, I will appease him with the present that goes before me, and afterward I will see his face; perhaps he will accept me. 21 So the present went on before him, and he himself lodged that night in the camp. 22 But he rose up that [same] night and took his two wives, his two women servants, and his eleven sons and passed over the ford [of the] Jabbok. 23 And he took them and sent them across the brook; also he sent over all that he had. 24 And Jacob was left alone, and a Man wrestled with him until daybreak. 25 And when [the Man] saw that He did not prevail against [Jacob], He touched the hollow of his thigh; and Jacob's thigh was put out of joint as he wrestled with Him. 26 Then He said, Let Me go, for day is breaking. But [Jacob] said, I will not let You go unless You declare a blessing upon me. 27 [The Man] asked him, What is your name? And [in shock of realization, whispering] he said, Jacob [supplanter, schemer, trickster, swindler]! 28 And He said, Your name shall be called no more Jacob [supplanter], but Israel [contender with God]; for you have contended and have power with God and with men and have prevailed. 29 Then Jacob asked Him, Tell me, I pray You, what [in contrast] is Your name? But He said, Why is it that you ask My name? And [the Angel of God declared] a blessing on [Jacob] there. 30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel [the face of God], saying, For I have seen God face to face, and my life is spared and not snatched away. 31 And as he passed Peniel [Peniel], the sun rose upon him, and he was limping because of his thigh. 32 That is why to this day the Israelites do not eat the sinew of the hip which is on the hollow of the thigh, because [the Angel of the Lord] touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh on the sinew of the hip.

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Jacob was a man with many weaknesses, yet he pressed on with God and was determined to receive God's blessing. God likes that kind of determination. He actually told Jacob in Genesis 32:28 that he (Jacob) had contended with God and man, and that God would be glorified in him. God can always be glorified through people who will not allow their personal weaknesses to stop Him from flowing through them.

In order for God to flow through us, we must first come face-to-face with the fact that we have weaknesses—and then we must determine not to let them bother us. Our imperfections will not stop God from working through us unless we let them. We need to accept ourselves completely—weaknesses and all—because God does.

I am going to ask you to do something very important. Right now, stop and wrap your arms around yourself. Give yourself a great big hug and say aloud: "I accept myself. I love myself. I know I have weaknesses and imperfections, but I will not let them stop me, and I will not allow them to stop God from working through me." See it from Jesus' point of view, He loves you so much.....that.....you were worth dying for.....

Jacob wrestled with the Angel of the Lord, who touched the hollow of his thigh. As a result of that encounter, he lived the remainder of his life with a limp (see Genesis 32:24-32). I like to say that Jacob limped away from the fight, but he took his blessing with him! God will bless all of us even though we limp, even though we are not perfect. Remember, God looks at our hearts. If we have faith in Him and hearts that long to obey Him and bring Him glory, then He will work wonders through us in spite of our weaknesses.

Jacob Becomes Israel: V 2 "Mahanaim" means two hosts. V 12 Jacob reminded God of His promise. VV 13-21 After his prayer, Jacob started planning ways to win his brother's forgiveness. VV 24-26 Though he was 90, Jacob wrestled with the Angel all night and would not submit until he was crippled. Why did God cripple Jacob? Jacob was a man of faith. He trusted God and believed in His purposes. However, Jacob thought that God needed his help to get things done, and God knew that Jacob had to be defeated so that he would rely on God instead of his own resourcefulness. God crippled Jacob in order to crown him with His glory. When Jacob surrendered, God's power could begin to be manifested to him. V 26 Hosea 12:4 tells us that Jacob was pleading with tears when he cried, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." V 28 "Israel means governed by God. V 30 "Peniel" means the face of God. (Old Testament Study Guide, The Word For Today; Chuck Smith; 2005; Commentaries; pages 16-17)

Love Without Hypocrisy

Romans 12:9

Have you ever heard the words "I love you" from someone you really believed to be your friend, only to find out later that this same person talked behind your back, gossiped about you, and didn't treat you the way a real friend would? If you confronted that person about his actions, did he admit what he did and apologize for it? Or did he lie and try to cover up his deeds, even though you already knew the facts? Did it deeply disturb you to see him put on a fake face and pretend that he was your best friend and that none of the allegations were true, even though you knew he was lying?

If you have ever experienced a situation like this, you know how very hurtful it is when a "so-called" friend behaves this way. It shows a level of hypocrisy that is deeply disturbing. This type of behavior should never occur among believers, but unfortunately it does from time to time. To make sure you never fall into this kind of hypocrisy, the apostle Paul wrote and told you, "Let love be without dissimulation...."

Before we get to the word "dissimulation," which is our primary theme today, we must first look at the word "love." It is the Greek word *agape*, a word that describes the highest, finest, and most noble kind of love. In the New Testament, it is the single word that is used to describe the love of God. As noted earlier (see July 23), the word *agape* is so filled with deep emotion and meaning that it is one of the most difficult words to translate in the New Testament.

Agape occurs when an individual sees, recognizes, understands, or appreciates the value of an a person, causing the viewer to behold this person in great esteem, awe, admiration, wonder, and sincere appreciation. Such great respect is awakened in the heart of the observer for the person he is beholding that he is compelled to love them whether; spouse, friend, family or stranger. In fact, his love for that person is so strong that it is irresistible. (we do not love objects or things, they are tools, to love them is to create a idol, or false God, we enjoy them but see them as a tool...)

In the New Testament, perhaps the best example of *agape* is found in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." In the phrase, "For God so loved the world," the word "love" is the word *agape*.

The human race was so precious to God and He loved man so deeply that His heart was stirred to reach out and do something to save him. In other words, God's love drove Him to action. You see, *agape* loves so profoundly that it knows no limits or boundaries in how far, wide, high, and deep it will go to show that love to its recipient. If necessary, *agape* love will even sacrifice itself for the sake of that person it so deeply cherishes. You can see from this description why *agape* is the highest, finest, and most noble form of love.

This is precisely the kind of love that should exist between believers. For instance, the apostle John wrote, "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:18). The word "love" in this verse is the word *agape*.

The apostle John makes it very clear that real agape love is not merely a matter of speaking easy and empty words; rather, agape is accompanied by actions that are truthful. It is simply hypocritical to claim to possess such love while at the same time engaging in unfaithful behavior such as backbiting and gossiping. Agape would never behave in such a manner; rather, it is forgiving and helpful, willing even to sacrifice itself for the sake of someone else. This is why Paul wrote, "Let love be without dissimulation...." The King James Version uses the old word "dissimulation," but the Greek word is *anupokritos*, and it describes something that is pretended, simulated, faked, feigned, or phony. It pictures a person who deliberately gives a certain impression, even though he knows the impression he is giving is untrue. In other words, this person is a phony.

So when the apostle Paul tells us to walk in love that is without dissimulation, he means this: "If you are going to say you love someone, then make sure you really love them. Don't give an impression that isn't true. Don't say one thing and then do another. Your love should be without hypocrisy, so don't be phony when it comes to the subject of love." Now let me ask you this question: Have you ever been two-faced with people who thought you were their friend? Did you say one thing to them but later talk behind their backs? Did you do exactly the same thing that someone else is doing to you right now? Is it possible that you are reaping what you have sown?

Instead of getting bitter and hardhearted toward someone who has acted hypocritically in his friendship with you, learn from this experience. Make a decision that you will not be phony or hypocritical in your relationships the way this person was to you. Meanwhile, make sure you forgive those who have wronged you. Let it go, and do your best to overlook their inconsistencies. The Lord will probably deal with them about their actions, so if they come to you in repentance, let them know they are forgiven. But most importantly, let this be a time when you decide that you will not be guilty of giving a false impression to a friend. Let your love be real. Don't be a phony.

QUESTIONS FOR YOU TO CONSIDER

Can you recall a time in your life when a friend was dishonest with you? How did it affect you when you discovered that this person had been two-faced?

Have you ever violated a relationship by being untruthful or by talking behind the back of another person? Who is that person? What do you think the Lord would have you to do to make things right in that relationship?

What has Jesus taught you through that past experience of violating a friendship? Why don't you get a notepad and write down the things you have learned from this experience that might later help a friend who is facing the same situation? Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

1 Corinthians 13:1-13 (AMP)

1 IF I [can] speak in the tongues of men and [even] of angels, but have not love (that reasoning, intentional, spiritual devotion such as is inspired by God's love for and in us), I am only a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 And if I have prophetic powers (the gift of interpreting the divine will and purpose), and understand all the secret truths and mysteries and possess all knowledge, and if I have [sufficient] faith so that I can remove mountains, but have not love (God's love in me) I am nothing (a useless nobody). 3 Even if I dole out all that I have [to the poor in providing] food, and if I surrender my body to be burned or in order that I may glory, but have not love (God's love in me), I gain nothing. 4 Love endures long and is patient and kind; love never is envious nor boils over with jealousy, is not boastful or vainglorious, does not display itself haughtily. 5 It is not conceited (arrogant and inflated with pride); it is not rude (unmannerly) and does not act unbecomingly. Love (God's love in us) does not insist on its own rights or its own way, for it is not self-seeking; it is not touchy or fretful or resentful; it takes no account of the evil done to it [it pays no attention to a suffered wrong]. 6 It does not rejoice at injustice and unrighteousness, but rejoices when right and truth prevail. 7 Love bears up under anything and everything that comes, is ever ready to believe the best of every person, its hopes are fadeless under all circumstances, and it endures everything [without weakening]. 8 Love never fails [never fades out or becomes obsolete or comes to an end]. As for prophecy (the gift of interpreting the divine will and purpose), it will be fulfilled and pass away; as for tongues, they will be destroyed and cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away [it will lose its value and be superseded by truth]. 9 For our knowledge is fragmentary (incomplete and imperfect), and our prophecy (our teaching) is fragmentary (incomplete and imperfect). 10 But when the complete and perfect (total) comes, the incomplete and imperfect will vanish away (become antiquated, void, and superseded). 11 When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; now that I have become a man, I am done with childish ways and have put them aside. 12 For now we are looking in a mirror that gives only a dim (blurred) reflection [of reality as in a riddle or enigma], but then [when perfection comes] we shall see in reality and face to face! Now I know in part (imperfectly), but then I shall know and understand fully and clearly, even in the same manner as I have been fully and clearly known and understood [by God]. 13 And so faith, hope, love abide [faith—conviction and belief respecting man's relation to God and divine things; hope—joyful and confident expectation of eternal salvation; love—true affection for God and man, growing out of God's love for and in us], these three; but the greatest of these is love. (in the older translations Love is charity....read the Scripture do you see yourself all through it ..if not than, pray ask God to change your heart.)

(Word 9 Bible Software: Bible Software, multiple translations, dictionary, atlas, sermons of the past saints, concordance, 2005) (The Everyday Life Bible; Amplified, 2005, Joyce Meyers, Scripture, Commentaries, page 56-57)