

# ***Foundation to Holy Passion: Confidence in Love***

## **I. CONFIDENCE IN LOVE BEFORE GOD**

***Confidence in love before God*** - enjoying intimacy requires living in the reality of our “belovedness” before God and the fact that we are genuinely authentic lovers of God. A believer confident in love before God will be significantly more committed, resilient and persistent than others who constantly live under the threats and fears of punishment. Spiritual immaturity is not rebellion.

## **II. THE CORE IDENTITY OF GOD’S PEOPLE**

***“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Matt. 3:17)***

A. ***“My beloved Son”*** – being ones beloved of God – God’s favorite

B. ***“In whom I am well pleased”*** – being authentic lovers of God.

## **III. THE BELOVED OF GOD – GOD’S FAVORITE**

A. As Jesus is the Father’s beloved so the Church is beloved of God.

***“As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you... (John 15:9)***

***“...that the world may know that You...have loved them as You have loved Me. (Jn.17:23)***

B. The redeemed are Beloved of God.

***“Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? Yet among many nations there was no king like him, who was BELOVED OF HIS GOD; and God made him king over all Israel. Nevertheless pagan women caused even him to sin. (Neh 13:26)***

***“What has MY BELOVED to do in My house, having done lewd deeds with many? And the holy flesh has passed from you. When you do evil, then you rejoice. (Jer 11:15)***

***“I have forsaken My house, I have left My heritage; I have given the DEARLY BELOVED OF MY SOUL into the hand of her enemies. (Jer 12:7)***

***To all who are in Rome, BELOVED OF GOD, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom 1:7)***

***As He says also in Hosea: “I will call them My people, who were not My people, and HER BELOVED, who was not beloved.” (Rom 9:25)***

#### IV. IN WHOM I AM PLEASED – BEING AUTHENTIC LOVERS OF GOD

- A. The truth of being authentic lovers of God in weakness is emphasized by Peter in John 21:17.

*He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?” Peter...said to Him, “Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.” (John 21:17).*

- B. David experienced the joy of being an authentic lover of God in his weakness. See the Psalms (Ps. 32; 40).

*Ps. 18:1. I will love You, O LORD, my strength. 19. He delivered me because He delighted in me. 35...Your gentleness has made me great.*

*Ps. 17: 8. Keep me as the apple of Your eye.*

*Ps. 60: 5. That Your beloved may be delivered*

*PS. 38:3. There is no soundness in my flesh because ...of my sin. 4. For my iniquities have gone over my head...8. I am feeble and severely broken... 9. Lord, all my desire is before You; and my sighing is not hidden from You. 10. My heart pants, my strength fails me...15. For in You, O LORD, I hope; You will hear, O Lord my God. 18. For I will declare my iniquity; I will be in anguish over my sin. 20. Those also who render evil for good, they are my adversaries, because I follow what is good.*

*PS. 51:1. Have mercy upon me, O God, according to... the multitude of Your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. 2. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity...3. For I acknowledge my transgressions...6. Behold...in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom. 10. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. 12. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit. 13. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways...15. O Lord...my mouth shall show forth Your praise. 17. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart-- these, O God, You will not despise.*

*PS. 56: 8. You number my wanderings; put my tears into Your bottle; are they not in Your book? 9. When I cry out to You, then my enemies will turn back; this I know, because God is for me. 10. In God (I will praise His word)...11. In God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me? 12. Vows made to You are binding upon me, O God; I will render praises to You, 13. For You have delivered my soul from death...that I may walk before God in the light of the living?*

*PS. 69: 1. Save me, O God! For the waters have come up to my neck. 2. I sink in deep mire...5. O God, You know my foolishness; and my sins are not hidden from You. 13...my prayer is to You, O LORD...in the multitude of Your mercy...14. Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink...16. Hear me, O LORD, for Your lovingkindness is good; turn to me according to the multitude of Your tender mercies. 30. I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify Him with thanksgiving. 32. The humble shall see this and be glad; and you who seek God, your hearts shall live. 33. For the LORD hears the poor, and does not despise His prisoners.*

*PS. 103: 2. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: 3. Who forgives all your iniquities...8. The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy. 10. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished us according to our iniquities. 11. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; 13. As a father pities his children, so the LORD pities those who fear Him. 14. For He knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust. 17. But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him...*

*Ps 119: 132 Look upon me and be merciful to me, as Your custom is toward those who love Your name. v.159. Consider how I love Your precepts; revive me, O LORD, according to Your lovingkindness.*

C. This truth is emphasized in the Song of Solomon

*I am dark, but lovely...like the tents of Kedar, like the curtains of Solomon. (Song 1:5)*

*You are fair, my love!...You have dove's eyes. (Song 1:15)*

*Sustain me...refresh me...for I am lovesick. (Song 2:5)*

*"O my dove, in the clefts of the rock...let me see your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely." (Song 2:14)*

**V. THIS COMBINATION OF BEING LOVED AND LOVERS OF GOD.**

A. This combination of these truths emphasized in the Song of Solomon

*My Beloved is mine, and I am His...(Song 2:16)*

B. This combination of these truths emphasized by the apostle John.

*Then Peter...saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, "Lord, who is the one who betrays You?" (John 21:20)*

*17. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. 18. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. 19. We love Him because He first loved us. 1 JN. 4:17-19*

*Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. (1 Jn 3:21)*

C. Jesus' teaching in context to the Pharisees in Matt. 12.

*"But if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. (Matt. 12:7) (the guiltless is translated the innocent in NAS NIV).*

*"A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench, till He sends forth justice to victory; And in His name Gentiles will trust." (Matt. 12:20-21)*

D. Jesus' encouragement to Peter

*"Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." (Matt. 26:41)*

E. Spiritual identity – our core identity as a born-again believer is as a genuine lover of God.

*...present yourselves to God as **BEING ALIVE FROM THE DEAD**, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. (Romans 6:13)*

1. Are you a slave of sin who struggles to love God or are you a lover of God who struggles with sin?
2. We must present ourselves before God by defining ourselves as lovers of God and not by our most recent struggle. We do not define ourselves by our struggle. Yes, we acknowledge struggle. However, we define ourselves as a genuine lover of God who struggles.