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O The Deep, Deep Love of Jesus

By S. Trevor Francis

"I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ." (Ephesians 3:17-18)

Who can fully grasp the dimensions of God's great love for us? Yet the Scriptures teach that we are to have a growing awareness of divine love. Love is the very heart and essence of God, not only for the lovely but for the vilest of sinners. Christ did not die merely to display God's love – He died because God is love (1 John 4:8). If the New Testament teaches us anything, it teaches us about God's love in searching for lost men. As we mature in the Christian faith, we begin to realize that every situation that comes our way is an opportunity for God's love to be made more evident in our lives. Once we realize this, our attitude changes dramatically toward suffering people as well as toward ourselves when we are called to suffer. Then even during those times when our spiritual fervor declines and our devotion to God subsides, despite these shortcomings, God's love remains unailing – continually working for our eternal good.

The author of this text, Samuel Trevor Francis, was born on November 19, 1834, in a village north of London, but his parents soon moved to the city of Hull midway up the English coast. His father was an artist. As a child, Samuel enjoyed poetry and even compiled a little hand-written volume of his own poetry. He also developed a passion for music, joining the church choir at age nine. But as a teenager, he struggled spiritually, and when he moved to London to work, he knew things weren't right in his heart.

One day, as he later wrote, "I was on my way home from work and had to cross Hungerford Bridge to the south of the Thames. During the winter's night of wind and rain and the loneliness of that walk, I cried to God to have mercy on me. I stayed for a moment to look at the dark waters flowing under the bridge, and the temptation was whispered to me: 'Make an end of all this misery.' I drew back from the evil thought, and suddenly a message was borne into my very soul: 'You do believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?' I at once answered, 'I do believe,' and I put my whole trust in Him as my Savior."

Francis went on to become a London merchant, but his real passion was Kingdom work – especially hymn writing and open-air preaching – which occupied his remaining seventy-three years. He traveled widely and preached around the world for the Plymouth Brethren. He died on December 28, 1925 at age ninety-two.

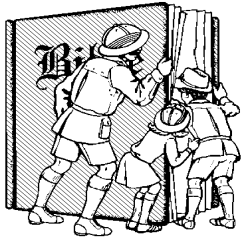
"Ebenezer", the ponderous, rolling melody for this hymn, is traditionally called "Ton-Y-Botel" (Tune in a Bottle) because of a legend that it was found in a bottle along the Welsh Coast. It was actually composed by Thomas J. Williams and first appeared as a hymn tune in 1890 in a Welsh hymnal.

[Information taken from *Amazing Grace* by Kenneth Osbeck, and *Then Sings My Soul* by Robert J. Morgan]

*O the deep, deep love of Jesus – vast, unmeasured, boundless, free!
Rolling as a mighty ocean in its fullness over me,
Underneath me, all around me, is the current of Thy love –
Leading onward, leading homeward, to my glorious rest above.*

*O the deep, deep love of Jesus – spread His praise from shore to shore!
How He loveth, ever loveth, changeth never, nevermore.
How He watches o'er His loved ones, died to call them all His own;
How for them He intercedeth, watcheth o'er them from His throne!*

*O the deep, deep love of Jesus – love of ev'ry love the best!
'Tis an ocean vast of blessing, 'tis a haven sweet of rest.
O the deep, deep love of Jesus – 'tis a heav'n of heav'n's to me,
And it lifts me up to glory, for it lifts me up to Thee.*



Book Room Review

The Exemplary Husband

By Stuart Scott

Jesus Christ summed up all of Scripture, as well as what should be our two greatest priorities, in Matthew 22:37-39:

And He said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"

What is the evidence of our relationship with God? The answer is as simple and yet challenging as these two commandments. Stuart Scott has written a book that gives a biblical and practical blueprint for men who want to live out God's mandate for Christian husbands. He lays out a clear foundation based on the "great and foremost" commandment, and then in practical terms teaches husbands how to love their wives.

"Most books (of this type) lack a firm, clear biblical base for the counsel that is given. Not so with *The Exemplary Husband*. This book is replete with God's infallible, inerrant, and very practical perspectives on the what, why, and how of being the best husband any man could be. I recommend it highly." – Wayne Mack

{You may purchase this book from our Book Table for \$15.50}



"A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." Proverbs 17:22

Newsbytes and Announcements



Twelfth Annual Ark-La-Tex Regional Founders' Conference, Feb. 26th – 28th: This conference will be held at the First Baptist Church in Greenwood, Louisiana. Dr. Tom Nettles, Professor of Historical Theology at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, will be the keynote speaker. He is the author of *By His Grace and For His Glory; Ready for Reformation*; and co-author of *Baptists and the Bible*. Pastor Earl Blackburn, Dr. Fred Malone, Dr. Joe Nesom, Pastor Ken Fryer, and Pastor Steve Garrick will be the other speakers. The theme this year is *"Calvinism and the Great Commission"*. For more information, contact Pastor Kendall Holley @ 318-687-6404, or visit the website at www.founders.org.



Visit our Website: Once again we would like to mention that our website is now up and running. You can visit it at www.fbccclintonla.com. Many of the sermons preached by our pastor, Dr. Fred Malone, are available to listen to or to download to your ipod, copy to a CD, etc. Visit the site and see what is there, and share the news with others that might benefit from the materials available. We are thankful for Carrie King, a faithful member here, who has put long hours of work into this project so that many more people might have the opportunity to hear the preaching of the Word.



Persecution in China: On August 6, 2008, Pastor Zhang "Bike" Mingxuan, one of China's best-known evangelists, was arrested and imprisoned by Chinese police. Pastor Bike, who traveled around the country by bicycle, was instrumental in the creation of the Olympic Prayer Bands. The wristbands brought the persecuted church in China to the minds of Christians everywhere for the purpose of prayer, but they also brought more attention from Chinese officials. More than 58,000 people participated in the international petition effort to secure his freedom, and he was finally released on August 29 in good health and "praising God". Unfortunately, the attacks on Pastor Bike's family have continued. On Oct. 16, as he was traveling, his apartment was ransacked and his wife and two sons attacked by the Public Security Bureau. One son was beaten to unconsciousness. Chinese officials also have attempted to shut down the house church where Pastor Bike preaches. On Oct. 10, police sealed the door of the church and blocked it with two truckloads of garbage, even though the government had given the church permission to meet, China Aid said. "During the past 22 years, Pastor Bike has been arrested 26 times, beaten and evicted from his home numerous times because of his faith," the human rights group said. "Despite the persecution, this family continues to boldly preach and help the house church Christians." [Faith and Family Values, 2008, Issue 3 – Voice of the Martyrs, China Aid Association, Baptist Press]



Children From Religious, Intact Families Fare Better, Study Says: Children living with both biological parents or adoptive parents who attend religious services regularly are less likely to exhibit problems at school or at home, a new analysis of national data shows. The study by psychologist Nicholas Zill, the founder of Child Trends, and statistician Philip Fletcher, found that children in such a situation – when compared to children not living with both parents and not attending religious services regularly – are 5.5 times less likely to have repeated a grade and 2.5 times less likely to have had their parents contacted by the school because of a conduct or achievement problem. Additionally, intact families who have regular religious participation (defined as at least weekly or monthly) are less likely to report parental stress and more likely to report a "better parent-child relationship," the analysis, which focused on families with children ages 6-17, says. The study, co-released by the Family Research Council and more than 30 state family councils as part of FRC's Mapping America Project, was based on interviews in 2003 with parents of more than 100,000 children and teens by the National Center for Health Statistics for the National Survey of Children's Health. The data "hold up after controlling for family income and poverty, low parent education levels, and race and ethnicity." ... "Children who live in an intact family and attend religious services regularly generally come out best on child development measures, while children who do neither come out worst. Children with one factor in their favor, but not the other, fall in between..." say Zill and Fletcher. In addition, the authors said that children in an intact religious family "are more likely to exhibit positive social behavior, including showing respect for teachers and neighbors, getting along with other children, understanding other people's feelings, and trying to resolve conflicts with classmates, family, or friends." Pat Fagan, the director of FRC's Center for Family and Religion, said the study should impact social policy. "Social science data continue to demonstrate overwhelmingly that the intact married family that worships weekly is the greatest generator of human goods and social benefits and is the core strength of the United States," he said in a statement. "Policy makers should strongly consider whether their policy proposals give support to such a family structure. Children are not the only beneficiaries but also their parents, families, communities, and all of society." [Baptist Press, Dec. 30, 2008, by Michael Foust]

Bulletin Bloopers:

1. Weight Watchers will meet at 7 p.m. at the St. Martin's Church. Please use large double doors at the side entrance.
2. The Fasting and Prayer Conference includes meals.
3. Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Don't forget your husbands.
4. The peacemaking meeting scheduled for today has been canceled due to a conflict.
5. Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.



Testimonies of Grace Skip Moody

I was raised in a Christian home, attending a Southern Baptist Church every Sunday we were not out of town. I always believed in God as Creator and Jesus as Savior, and when I was around 12 years old, I walked the aisle during Vacation Bible School and was baptized. We were taught that after profession of faith in Christ as our personal Savior and baptism, salvation was guaranteed. My teen years were in the late sixties and early seventies, and like so many of my friends, I was involved in many of the sins of the times. My understanding was darkened. I believed I could go on sinning and still be saved. There was no real comprehension of repentance in me. I was married and had a son at a very young age. The marriage ended in divorce. Many years passed while I lived a sinful life. When I met my future wife, Joan, I didn't want marriage or children.

In 1991, amid family trials, I was arrested (the first and last time, by God's grace). While several guns were pointed at me and I was being handcuffed, the policeman was saying something about my rights, but all I could hear – not audibly, but clearly, - was God asking me, "Do I have your attention now?" That is when God subdued me. He arrested me. He made me willing in the day of His power. In jail I asked for, and was given, a Bible. I read it (I had read the Bible through several times in my life and was familiar with it) and prayed for forgiveness in Jesus. Many miraculous things happened those few days in jail. Through the ordeal, I lost my vehicle, and most of my money, but I was happy because I received the real treasure – Christ Himself. By God's grace, all charges were dropped.

I began attending Trinity Baptist Church where Cary Kimbrell, an old classmate of mine, was pastor. Brother Cary guided me through the Doctrines of Grace. I realized that now that I had come to Christ in faith and repentance I needed to be baptized. Joan and I were baptized the same day (she will tell you her story).

God had transformed me, radically. Joan and I were married and He blessed us with Emily and Grace, and with countless other blessings day by day. We have built a life around Him, to love Him and to serve Him. Blessed be the one true and living God in the persons of the Father; the Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

[Skip and his wife, Joan, are faithful members of First Baptist Church, Clinton, LA]



ARBCA Missionary Focus

Raymond and Diane Perron – Quebec, Canada <raymondperron@sympatico.ca>

Raymond writes: We keep thanking our God for His mercy and for the privilege of serving Him in our missionary capacity here in the province of Quebec. We are also immensely grateful for the grace of ministering with ARBCA, which is such a dear family of churches. We have so much to be grateful about and to rejoice in.

Recent months have been quite eventful, especially as our radio station (CFOI-FM) has started airing. Our hands were really full with the setting up of all the equipment, choosing the music and putting it on our studios' computers, preparing all the programs, etc. Thank you so much to your prayers for us as we kept and are still laboring with all the demands of such a project as this.

In July we had the joy of seeing our son Jonathan married to Catherine, a very nice young lady whom we have received as God's wonderful and merciful providence for our son. We are most thankful for the wedding day, and we know that the prayers of the saints on our behalf have been answered.

This past summer, Antoine Robillard (with his wife Liliane and their young son Philemon) served as an intern in our church in Rouyn-Noranda under the supervision of Pastor Jean Lepine. It was a pleasure for us to have an intern in our midst and we are most pleased with the experience. Antoine and the church in Rouyn-Noranda were both very enthusiastic about it, and, God willing, we would like to keep providing our young men who are in training for the ministry with such an opportunity.

After a cloudy period, our church in Quebec is experiencing a wonderful time of visitation by God. There is an obvious renewal in the preaching of God's Word as well as hunger for the bread of life on the part of our people.

At the end of July, I had the privilege of visiting our dear brothers in France and Switzerland as they so kindly invited me to preach and teach at their summer camp. It is such a blessing to enjoy fellowship with our missionaries David Vaughn and Olivier Favre, as well as with the pastor in the Lausanne's church, Regis Berdoulat. They are just wonderful men of God, humble and fully dedicated to the cause of the Gospel. Our dear brother David Vaughn came to preach to the Quebec Association General Assembly two years ago, and we have invited Pastor Olivier Favre for 2010 and Pastor Regis Berdoulat for 2011.

In September we had the joy of having Jim and Pat Dundas from Dover, Del., for a 37-hour course in counseling with an application to a life center. As far as I know, it was the first time in Quebec that we had a counseling course from a nouthetic approach in a Vanillian perspective. This course was given as a part of our pastoral training program and it was greatly appreciated.

September was also the occasion of officially starting our new church planting project in Aylmer in the house of Andre and Carole Pinard. This project will be under the supervision of Pastor Daniel Durand in Montreal, and myself in Quebec City. Our dear brother Andre Pinard holds a Ph.D. on irresistible grace in Jean Calvin. In August, he was in Quebec City for a Conference on Calvin as a part of the 400th anniversary of Quebec, an activity organized by the evangelicals of the province. As he gave this conference, our brother Andre was dressed up as Calvin himself.

We invite you to visit our web site at : <http://aerbq.com/>

Children's Corner

HEARTS in the morning


Start your morning with heart. Enjoy this special breakfast with someone you love!

What you need:

- Your favorite pancake recipe and syrup
- Pan or griddle
- Cooking spray
- Liquid measuring cup
- One 5-inch heart-shaped metal cookie cutter
- Wooden clothespin
- Spatula
- Adult help

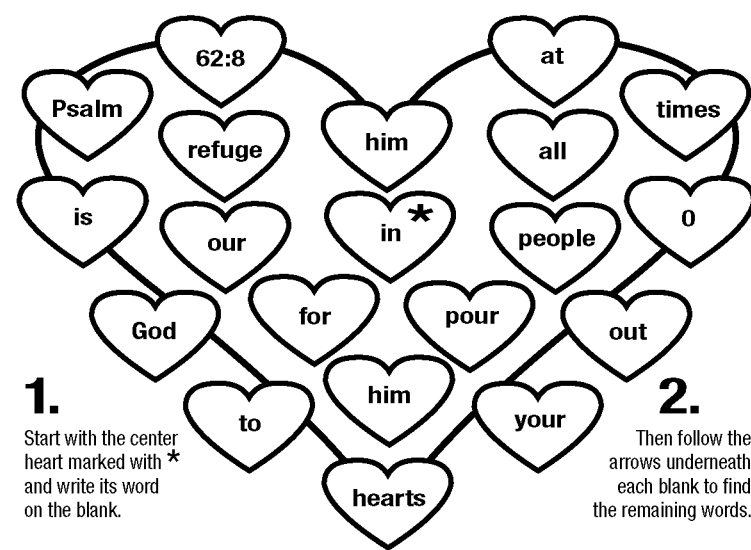
What you do:

1. With an adult's help, follow your recipe to make your favorite pancakes.
2. Spray cooking spray onto your pan or griddle.
3. Pour pancake batter into a liquid measuring cup. (This helps with pouring individual pancakes.)
4. Place the cookie cutter on the pan or griddle. Then clip the wooden clothespin onto the cookie cutter to act as a handle.
5. Pour batter (about 3-4 Tablespoons) into the cookie cutter.
6. Cook until the top is bubbly and the pancake is dry around the edges.
7. When the heart is ready to flip, use the clothespin to lift and remove the cookie cutter.
8. Turn the pancake with the spatula and cook until golden on both sides. Enjoy with your favorite syrup or fruit.



OUR HEARTS

This special Bible verse from the NIV describes what God wants us to do with our hearts.



1. Start with the center heart marked with * and write its word on the blank.

2. Then follow the arrows underneath each blank to find the remaining words.

“Trust _____ ,
 _____ ; _____
 _____ , _____
 _____ ”

Answer: "Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge." Psalm 62:8

Let the little children come to Me...