



UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

"I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

ROMANS 12:1-2

F.

Y.

C.

For Your Consideration

*"Let us consider
how to stimulate
one another to love
and good deeds."*

Hebrews 10:24

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Ron Adams

"Be thoughtful and kind."

BIBLE RESOURCES

<http://ra10ar.com>

(Quotations from NASB)

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Christians are admonished not to be conformed to this world. However, it is often difficult to be different and continue to be different from the world. We live in the world. We are surrounded by many people who are not transformed: relatives, neighbors, co-workers, people in leadership positions. Often they don't understand or appreciate our holy calling, and their influence is great.

While persecution of Christians is probably the most painful, it is not the most dangerous. The greatest threat to Christians is being "conformed to this world." The major way such conformity happens is by Christians accepting the wisdom of this world.

Unconditional Love

In an effort to have peace among men, unconditional acceptance, unconditional self-regard, unconditional self-acceptance, and unconditional love are being presented as a panacea. It sounds so non-judgmental, so loving, so caring. So much so, many who profess faith in Christ have been beguiled.

Some think they find these concepts in Scripture, such as in ROMANS 5:8, *"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."* And ROMANS 15:7, *"Wherefore, accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us to the glory of God."*

God's love is unconditional. But does He regard man as okay in his sinful state? Does He accept us into His kingdom just the way we are?

Acceptance by God

The love of God is boundless. He *"so loved the world... that whoever... shall not perish, but have eternal life."* There is not a soul that is not loved by God. In His great love, He has provided a means of salvation to all mankind. But note, salvation is conditional: *"whosoever believeth in Him."* Faith is a condition of acceptance by God. Faith in Jesus is a condition of salvation. *"I said therefore to you, that you shall die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you shall die in your sins."* JOHN 8:24. Godly-living is a condition for having a part in the kingdom, *"Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God."* 1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-10.

Self-Acceptance

While it is good to accept ourselves for what we are, it must not be seen as an excuse for not changing for the better. "That's just the way I am" is nothing more than a rationalization, a cop-out. God showered us with His love while we were sinners in order to free us from the guilt and practice of sin. He saves us from our sins, not in them. Repentance is a condition of salvation. 2 PETER 3:9, *"The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance."*

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Succinctly Put Circumstances don't determine one's happiness.
The condition of one's heart and mind does.

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Worldly Wisdom

The term "unconditional love" as used by some today is nothing more than psycho-babble. The figment of the imagination. Worldly wisdom. The practical application of such a theory is a permissive attitude in a morally nonrestrictive atmosphere. The result is nothing less than all-out abandonment of accountability.

Christians must not be taken in by such "wisdom" as "I'm okay, you're okay...Accept me the way I am...We all have a right to be loved unconditionally."

May our conduct be like Paul's, "For our proud confidence is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in holiness and godly sincerity, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God, we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially toward you."



APPRECIATION

EXERCISE

- ① Make two lists. One list of what you don't have, can't do. The second list of what you do have and can do.
- ② **Now this is very important!** For every item placed on the first list, an item must be placed on the second list.
- ③ When you are finished, throw away the first list. Focus on second list. What profit is there to focus on the first list, other than make you unhappy?

But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment.

1 TIMOTHY 6:6

**Do what you can,
with what you have,
where you are.**



A Psalm for Thanksgiving.

Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth.

Serve the LORD with gladness;

Come before Him with joyful singing.

Know that the LORD Himself is God;

It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves;

We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.

Enter His gates with thanksgiving

And His courts with praise.

Give thanks to Him, bless His name.

For the LORD is good; His lovingkindness is everlasting

And His faithfulness to all generations.

Psalm 100

"... not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions."

LUKE 12:15

THURSDAY'S THOUGHT

REVISITED

NEW THOUGHTS ABOUT A PREVIOUS THOUGHT

Reality Check

"Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

Matthew 5:16

If we were to video tape ourselves for a day, would the viewing of that tape be consistent with how we perceive ourselves? Watching the tape allows us to see ourselves as others and God see us. In the final analysis it matters not what we may think of ourselves or what others may think of us; what really matters is how we appear to God. The reality is that God sees us the way we actually are, in thought and action. May we so live that a video of ourselves would portray a life pleasing to God.

"But to me it is a very small thing that I should be examined by you, or by any human court; in fact, I do not even examine myself. For I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not by this acquitted; but the one who examines me is the Lord."

1 Corinthians 4:3-4

AFTER WATCHING THE VIDEO

Seeing the video can be an eye-opening or eye-closing experience. If you didn't like what you saw, what you do afterwards reveals your true character. Basically, there are three ways to react:

- **Accept it as accurate and decide to do better.**

- **Make excuses why you didn't do better.**

I was not my usual self.

I had a bad day.

Other people caused me to act that way.

Most of the time I'm kind and considerate.

- **Disregard it and dismiss it.**

"That's just the way I am."

For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was.

JAMES 1:23-24