

Tuesday 24th November Helen Baddeley
Are there limits to God's power and love in my life?

Morning everybody, it's good to be with you again today.

This morning, I want to talk to you about the question of 'are there limits to God's love and power in our lives?' And I think this is something that we probably all know the answer to, but sometimes I just think it's helpful to, to just think about it. Because there are times when you feel as if God is distant from you, and you feel as if His, the feeling of His love, is not close. And so I've been thinking about that, and just asking God to show me afresh, what is the truth? What is the truth about His love, and about His constancy in His love, and I remembered hearing Graham Cooke speak in Brighton many years ago, and him saying that the, I'm trying to remember exactly how he put it, but what he basically said was, the only factor in how much of the love of the Lord we are able to receive is in our expectation of what He will give to us. It is dependent upon us, not upon Him. And the more I've thought about that, the more I thought, it's important that we position ourselves in such a way as to be able to fully align ourselves with His constancy, with His love towards us, align our hearts. So I've just written a few thoughts here.

So how do we limit God? And how do we limit His love and power in our lives? And I suppose really, it boils down to unbelief. So if we have unbelief about ourselves, and so it again, it comes back to knowing who we are in the Lord, knowing who He says we are, then when we have come to a place of understanding who we are, then we're able to understand and accept and receive a greater measure of the Lord. It's a constant realigning I think, is the only way I can put it down. But if we are to say, if we're having a really bad day, that and I was going to read from Lamentations in a minute... he's always having a bad day! But um, if we were to say that God doesn't love us, or that His love is not there, is distant from us, or He's removed His love from us, then we are effectively calling God a liar, which is obviously not the right thing to say, is obviously not true. Because God's word always stands, it will never fail, He will never fail us. And from Lamentations, I was looking at the scripture that 'great is your faithfulness' comes from. The first part of the chapter is pretty dark, and not particularly helpful. And you read it and you think, gosh, he's really having a bad day, but I'm not going to read that part, you can read that later if you want to.

I'm going to read Lamentations 3 from verse 21. And it says, 'Yet this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope. Because of the Lord's great love, we are not consumed. For His compassions never fail. They are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, The Lord is my portion; therefore, I wait for Him. The Lord is good to those whose hope is in Him, to the one who seeks Him. It is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord. It is good for man to bear the yoke while he is young'. I'm going to leave that there.

So God's love towards us is limitless. I like to think of it like and I've heard this being used as a description before, but I like this description of a plumb line, I'm sure you all know what a plumb line is that when you're building something, you have to set a line down, that creates a straight line. We've just been retiling our bathroom. And when the wall isn't quite straight, you have to set a correct line using a spirit level or plumb line or something to make sure that your tiles don't go off crooked. And I think when the thing about the Lord is that His love is the constant and if everything starts going off crooked, it's not because of Him moving away from us, it's because we have misaligned and turned away from Him. And I just think that it's so important to remember how His love is always there. It's always speaking towards us. When we truly receive the love of the Lord and accept the truth about who He says we are, we become powerful people, able to truly love others and set people free. If we stay in unbelief, and self pity, we are choosing to call God a liar and work for the enemy, effectively. Because the enemy's plan is to undermine us, to say to us, the Lord doesn't love you, the Lord doesn't care about you, you have been pushed aside by the Lord, you don't have His favour. That's what the enemy likes to tell us. He likes to drip feed lies to us if we choose to listen to them. So we need to have our vision corrected, because if we're looking through the eyes of unbelief, then we're not looking into the eyes of the Lord. I think it's possible for us to block the love of the Lord over our lives. That's the key, He never changes, His love never changes, it's constant. But our ability to receive His love can change as we allow the enemy the right to hold that place in our lives, if we do, if we

choose to listen to those lies, and believe that and make that our standpoint. It's possible, I believe, to block the love and the power of the Lord in our lives.

So how do we get it right? We have to go back to the Lord again and ask him to remove those things that we have been blinded by, to ask Him to take away the things that are stumbling blocks, the things that are causing us to be un-contrite in our hearts. What does contrite mean? It means to be mouldable, to be like sand, to be able to be shifted and moved by the Holy Spirit, by the Lord. But we have to guard our hearts and our minds from the lies of the enemy, and not allow him to whisper in our ear the things that are not true. And it's hard at the moment when we're not able to gather together and we're not able to encourage one another in the way that we normally do. But I think it's important, even in this time that we learn to dig into the Lord even further by ourselves and together when we're online and sharing on the phone. But it's really important somehow, as Paul said on Sunday morning, that we learn to find that place with the Lord on our own, and dig into Him alone. Because I really do feel, just as Paul said on Sunday, that the strength that we gain through that time alone with the Lord in the secret place, is a strength that He builds into us that nothing can shake, no one can shake that off us, so that we remain constantly in love with him.

The first commandment is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and to love your neighbour as yourself. I think, I always get so moved by how simple it is. And how profound it is, that wrapped up in that whole thing is the key, is the answer. Turn your face towards the Lord and pour your love to Him and He will pour His love to you. It's like a hose pipe. You know, if it's got a kink in it, or it's got a bend in it, or it's blocked, the water can't come through. Make sure there aren't any bends in your road today. Make sure there aren't any kinks in your hose directly to the Lord. Let your flow between Him and you be flowing. And we are in control of that. Because He gave us a free will, it's our choice to turn to Him and to listen to Him.

Yeah, I want to pray. So Father, I just pray now that for all of us listening to this this morning, that you will reveal to us where we have limited the flow towards us, of Your love and Your power in our lives, where we have unknowingly prevented you from blessing us and pouring over us. And Father, I ask that you would just show us what those things are, those stumbling blocks, those things that are in the way. Help us to undo those kinks in the hose and let the flow of Your love come towards us with such power, that we would be blown away and that we would be able to be released and be fully available for you to use as a channel of love to those in the world around us. Thank you Father, for your graciousness, for Your faithfulness, for Your love, Lord. Amen.

Have a great day. Bye



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