

# Helping Others To Grow

Even though we know that God has promised He would never leave or forsake us, [**Hebrews 13:5-6; Deuteronomy 31:6, 8; Joshua 1:5**], in the midst of our trials we sometimes feel alone and wonder, where is God?

Yet, while we are looking for God to personally intervene in our lives, we may overlook the way He does come to our assistance, a way we may not have considered before.

**The apostle John records Jesus Christ's special prayer that concluded the final meal He had with His disciples.**

**Jesus Christ talked to God the Father about what is arguably the most important lesson of our entire life. The depth of God's love for His people.**

**John 17:6-26** [New King James] *"I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me. I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth. I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."*

**As human beings, it is difficult for us as true Christians to comprehend that God the Father has the same love for us that He has for the One who is so very important to Him, His Son Jesus Christ.**

But this is precisely what Jesus Christ was asking for, [**verse 23**] from His Father.

What Jesus Christ then said to the Father was also remarkable, [**verse 26**] so remarkable that we can easily read over it and not take in what was actually requested by Jesus Christ.

**This is an amazing part of God's plan for all humanity.**

We are to grow in the love that God the Father has for His Son, Jesus Christ, and show that love to one another, [**1 John 4:7-8**].

John pointed out that the very nature of God's being was a deep love for His creation and future created children.

**If we do not express this same love to others, we cannot claim to have any knowledge of who God is.**

The Greek word translated "love" in these scriptures is "agapé" which means a spontaneous love irrespective of the "rights" or response of the recipient, [Romans 5:8], a sacrificial love, [John 3:16-17] that puts aside personal desires, [Philippians 2:5-8].

**1 John 4:12-17** [New King James] *"No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Saviour of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. 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."*

**Even if we have never seen God the Father, we can see this love of the Father in Jesus Christ and in all those true Christians who have the active presence of God the Holy Spirit in them.**

It is through this expression of godly love in true Christians that the love of God can be seen in times of trials.

**The true Christian who helps us when we are low, sticks with us through our darkest days or holds our hand as we face death, allows God to be present through the manifestation of His love, [verse 16].**

**Galatians 6:10** [New King James] *"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith."*

**Because as true Christians we are vehicles of God's love for other human beings we have an enormous responsibility to express God's love to our husband or wife, our family, our brethren in the Christian Church, and indeed anyone else as opportunities arise.**

This love is no mere sentimental, romantic inclination. **This love gives, shares, supports and lays down its life for others, [John 15:12-13].**

**1 John 3:17-18** [New King James] *"But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth."*

**This love must be a practical love, for we are, as true Christians, the connection through which God helps, encourages and empathises with other people.**

Therefore we must love our mate more fully, our children more deeply, our extended family, friends and neighbours, more sincerely, and the people yet to be called by God to become Christians, more actively, thus depriving no human being of God's love.

If when a person under a trial cries out to God, "where are you?" we can answer, "God was there, in the outgoing, active love of His people, true, Holy Spirit filled Christians," [Romans 8:9].