

Unrequited Love

Written by admin

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by Rev. Brian Mathis



You know often in one's life we find ourselves walking around doing things for people who in reality despise us. We go through everyday working for and caring for those individuals and groups who if you were not there would find someone else to do what we do.

I woke up this morning thinking about this very thought and a passage of scripture came to me and I just had to share it. It's found in 2 Samuel 19. King David has been run out of Jerusalem by his son Absalom. Absalom and the army of Israeli are going out to war against David's mighty men. David gives orders to the leaders of his men that they should spare Absalom's life. However, an interesting thing occurs during the battle and Absalom finds himself hanging in a tree by his hair. Joab one of the leaders appointed by David and his guard kill Absalom and bury him near where he dies. When David is informed of the news, his mourning is so great that those who fought for him feel ashamed. Joab makes this declaration to him in verse 5-6; *""You have today covered with shame the faces of all your servants, who have this day saved your life and the lives of your sons and your daughters and the lives of your wives and your concubines, because you love those who hate you and hate those who love you. For you have made it clear today that commanders and servants are nothing to you, for today I know that if Absalom were alive and all of us were dead today, then you would be pleased.*
2 Samuel 19:4-6 (ESV)

It strikes me that today someone reading this is just like King David. Yes, as Christians we are called to love people even our enemies; *"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,*
Matthew 5:43-44 (ESV)

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My question is though at what point do we stop and take a stand? We can still love people and we must be always willing to forgive them for the harm they bring into our lives there must come a time and point of separation from the people and things that keep us locked into a pattern that prevents us from reaching the goals God has for each of us in this life. Joab goes on to tell David something that is appropriate for each of us to understand today. *"Now therefore arise, go out and speak kindly to your servants, for I swear by the Lord, if you do not go, not a man will stay with you this night, and this will be worse for you than all the evil that has come upon you from your youth until now."*

2 Samuel 19:7 (E.S.V)

Often we become so consumed with those who hate us and mean us harm that we forget to show love to those who desire only the best for us. We lose focus on what is important and begin to live a life centered on the unrequited love of people who only desire to do us harm. It is not that we cannot show them love and compassion as we should but we ourselves must be in relationships that build us up so we can have the strength to love those who wish to do us harm. I never really understood this old saying, *"we cut off our noses just to spite our faces"* until I look at it from the point of who we love and how we love than it makes some sense to me. We will love things and people that are not able to and have no desire to return that love; often missing out on what is real.

"You see love is not just an emotion that we have but a mindset that we must establish if we really desire to see it flourish". (Ravi Zacharias)

So who or what do you love? Is it healthy love? Does it build you up and allow you to share more love with others or is it like David's love for Absalom that in reality was harmful and would have led to his death if those around him had not intervened? I think Jesus' words in Mark 12:29-31

are so important when we look at our relationships today.

"Jesus answered, 'The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." (E.S.V)

If we love others as much as we love God and ourselves we are living with the in the right form of love and will not be trapped in a harmful and destructive type of love. Have a blessed day as you walk in the light of God's Word.

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