



The Victory Of Love Over Fear



1 John 4:17, 18
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"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. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love." -1 John 4:17, 18.

Three questions can help us study this passage:

- [1] What kind of love is this?
- [2] What kind of fear is this? And
- [3] how does love casts out fear?

What kind of love is this? This is love as it exists in the life of a child of God, who is a recipient of God's love, that produces obedience to Him and love toward others. When my reception of God's love motivates obedience to God, and a willing display of love toward others, I have the kind of love John is talking about, and "love has been perfected." This doesn't mean that love is so fully developed that it is incapable of any further increase or improvement! No, this means that love has fulfilled it's purpose. When God's love for us causes us to obey Him and love others - divine love has reached its goal ("perfected," teleios - to complete, to attain its' purpose.)

What kind of fear is this? In the Bible, the word "fear" takes on the definition that is suggested by the context where you find the word. Consider just four kinds of fear:

- [1] Deep concern for the spiritual welfare of others, 2 Cor. 11:3.
- [2] Respect shown for one in an authoritative role, Eph. 5:33; 6:5.

[3] Godly fear, Eccl. 12:13. And ...

[4] The painful terror of anticipated punishment, Heb. 10:27.

Which kind of fear is cast out by love that "has been perfected?" Obviously the fourth. Love does not cause us to disregard those with spiritual needs, or disrespect those in roles of authority, or abandon godly fear! But the love we have as children of God excludes or rules out the painful terror of anticipated punishment! That "certain fearful expectation of judgment" in Hebrews 10:27; that servile fear of expected torment cannot co-exist in the same heart where there is this perfected love.

How does love cast out fear? If I'm living in fellowship with God - where His love abides in me, I obey Him and love others - as that love finds fulfillment in my heart and life, that eliminates the fear of expected punishment. "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind," (2 Tim. 1:7).

Thank God, that through the gospel plan, love can be perfected (reach its goal) in your life, thus eliminating that despair and dread of expected punishment - and putting in its place, boldness in the day of judgment! Such teachings in God's Word should be esteemed with the most sober attention and application.

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