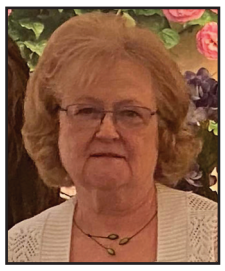
Perfect Love

By Glenda Ward
McDowell County



"This is the first and greatest commandment." Matthew 22:38

The greatest commandment is to Love the Lord with all one's being. *"And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might"* (Deuteronomy 6:5). "…*Thou shalt Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind"* (Matthew 22:37).

God's essence of demands in Scripture is calling individuals to Love God and their fellow man. (Reference Matthew 5:43-45). The Scripture identifies the primary affection with which people are to relate to God (Love); and emphasized the necessity to do so with one's total being: heart (affections), soul (Spirit), mind (intelligence), and strength (will). (Reference Deuteronomy 6:4-5).

During His ministry, Jesus had three encounters with the scribes. Scribes were allies of the chief priests and elders. At this time scribes were standing by ready to challenge Jesus (Reference Matthew 22:34-35). This was the first time an individual scribe had approached Jesus with questions. The scribe asked Jesus, *"Which is the first commandment of all?"* (Mark 12:29). Jesus quoted (Deuteronomy 6:4-5), a scripture passage affirming (the Lord …is One). God's Word also relates the foundational principle for the Ten Commandments and contains the essence of God's covenant with Israel. It is two statements in one: The nature of God and one enjoying a certain response to that understanding. It is this foundational principle that must first be deeply ingrained in the heart (mind) and then put into action.

The scribe asked Jesus for one commandment, but Jesus gave him two: Love for neighbors is rooted in Love for God! (Read Leviticus 19:18: Deuteronomy 6:5). The definition of Perfect Love that John speaks about is Deuteronomy 6:4-5. When we receive God's Love for us completely with no qualifications, recognizing that we do not deserve it, nor can we offer anything for it, something changes within us. We can do what was humanly impossible – Love others perfectly, and completely. It is all about the heart and our willingness to give and receive Love that comes from the heart (the Holy Spirit). It is our calling to show God's Perfect Love, but we can only show and tell what we have seen, heard, and experienced ourselves through God!

Jesus told the scribe that He had answered wisely. The scene ended with Jesus judging the scribe. Jesus having foiled the questions, Jesus then asked them His own question found in Mark 12:35 when Jesus taught in the temple. Jesus goes on in His teachings to the common people to beware of the scribes who go in long clothing, and love salutations (the fact that people were to rise and honor these scribes when in their presence) in the marketplaces. Mark 12:38-40.

We are to walk in Love as Christ Jesus also Loved us. (Ephesians 5:1-2). As believers, we should be followers of God. We can follow God in self-sacrifice and prove a forgiving Spirit (Ephesians 4:32); keeping ourselves in the Love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. (Jude 1:21). We can only love perfectly when we have been changed by God's Perfect Love. Descriptions of God's Perfect Love can be found in 1 John 3:11-4:18; Matthew 5:43-48. The foundation of Christian doctrine is laid in the words of God. The confirmation of a doctrine is found in our own experience. Two words make up religion: Love and fear. Christianity is the only religion in the world the substance is Love. God dwells with His people and moves them to reflect His Love. God's people have complete confidence given the coming judgment. God's Love is Perfect with us. Observe 1 John 4:16-17: *"…God is Love; and He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in Him. Herein is our Love made Perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment…"*. From the beginning of time, God's Love has always been Perfect.

The reason for complete confidence because of the coming judgment is that confidence is a sign of assurance that our Love for our God has reached a level or state of perfection in our hearts. We have nothing to fear because our Love for our Lord overcomes that fear; the fear that is in the heart of the non-believer. It is a Love that is pure and unmingled so that we can look forward to the descending of our Lord Jesus Christ without fear. Nothing can separate us from God's Love, we have the assurance of eternal life, and strength as we approach the trials of this world.

Let God's powerful Love penetrate your heart! It will change you! His Love won't allow you to stay the same. Thank God His Love can take a heart of stone and turn it into a heart of flesh. He will breathe life into you that you never thought possible. That is the power of God's Perfect Love!

Glenda Ward is a member of Grand View Baptist Church in McDowell County. She is the mother of five grown children. Glenda is a Christian writer/author of "Something to Think About" – weekly Christian Articles. She writes Church Programs & Bulletins, VBS Material, Christmas and Easter Programs; all material based on the KJV of the Bible. Also testing the field in tributes, individual memorial writings, etc.

Out of town? You can still read the "Good News" on our new Website: www.brcnews.com And find us on Facebook

BEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

Welcomes You to

Celebrate Recovery

Thursday's at 7:00pm

Hope & Help from Addiction Through Christ

Granny's COUNTRY KITCHEN
3448 Miller Bridge Rd
Connelly Springs, NC
(828) 397-3588
OPEN • MON-SAT 6AM - 8PM SUN 6AM-3PM
Let Us Cater Your Next Event
The Taste That Takes You Back

INSURANCE MADE IN NORTH CAROLINA
Auto Insurance Made In North Carolina

828-652-4525
Kenneth W Day
FSS, LUTCF
Agency Manager
kenneth.day@ncfbins.com
Real service. Real people.
An Authorized Agency for
BlueCross BlueShield of North Carolina
FARM BUREAU INSURANCE®
Auto • Home • Life • Health • Bank
NCAUPR43611
*North Carolina Farm Bureau® Mutual Insurance Company
*Farm Bureau® Insurance of North Carolina, Inc.
*Southern Farm Bureau® Life Insurance Company, Jackson, MS
*An independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem. Isaiah 66:13