

## AUGUST 2004

### “WHERE IS THE LOVE?”

*“Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold.” Matthew 24:12*

The Lord and his disciples were on the Mount of Olives and they were asking him what the sign would be that would signal his return to earth, or what will things be like before he returns to earth to establish his kingdom. He then goes on to talk about wars and rumors of war, nations and kingdoms rising up against each other, the increase of famines and earthquakes, which all are just the beginning of birth pains; the end is still yet to come.

But then he goes on to take a different turn in his description of the end in the direction of the Church. He goes on to describe the condition of God's people living on earth right prior to his return. He says that many will turn from the faith, which is what the apostasy is all about as mentioned by the Apostle Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2:3. The word he used in Matthew 24:10 is *skandalizo*, the same word used in John 6:60, where Christ talked about those who were offended by his teaching. It speaks of those who are negative to the truth and are offended by the teaching of the Word of God, reject it and walk away from it.

The second thing that Christ brings out is that **the love of most will grow cold**. And Christ is not referring to the unsaved in society, **but to believers in Christ**. He's stating outright that the love of the majority of Christians will grow cold, a phenomenon that is rampant in Christianity today. Many will want to argue the point saying that they “love”, or that there is so much “love” in their churches, or that this believer or that believer is “loving”, but it is a feigned love, a faked love, a pseudo love, a phony love; a “love” that is produced by the human good side of the flesh nature.

First of all, how we know this passage refers to believers in Christ is by the use of the term, “*the many*”, *ton pollon*, τῶν πολλῶν, which actually refers to the majority of Christians, (thankfully not all believers). The term, “*the many*”, found in both the OT and the NT, was a term, along with many others, that was used to describe the elect of God. It was a term that had been established back in the OT, brought up into the Gospels and then on throughout the rest of the NT used to describe God's people here on earth.

Then there is the use of the word for love, *agape*. In the Greek it's *he agape, the love*, which is a love indigenous to God's people. The Greeks had the word prior to the Church Age, but basically despised it and preferred not to use it, instead they loved the word *eros*. They loved *eros* love for it was full of romance and things that intoxicated the emotions, much like the idea today of “falling in love”, while *agape* was too sterile for them. (They even worshiped a demon named *Eros*). And not only that *agape* is produced by the filling of the Holy Spirit, no Holy Spirit, no *agape*! So we know that we're talking about Christians here.

So the love of Christians will grow cold in the time preceding Christ's return to earth. And we see this going on all around us; believers producing what they think is love, or what they call

love, but it isn't the relaxed, spiritual mental attitude of agape. **It's an emotional phenomenon produced by human good.** Basically all they do is mimic what others in their churches are doing and pass it off as love, which varies from church group to church group. What they have is an emotion produced out of their legalistic self-righteousness, a polishing up of their old sin natures producing a human good type of love, but it isn't the true biblical love produced by the filling of the Holy Spirit; it isn't **the mental attitude dynamic of the new nature**.

Both the Apostle Paul and the Apostle Peter wrote about having an unfeigned love. **If there is an unfeigned love, then there is a feigned love.** You see, you can't fake agape, you either have it or you don't, **but one can fake a love that you pass off as agape!** In 2 Corinthians 6:6, Paul said that his love was unfeigned, "*In purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love.*" He puts it as *agape anupokrito*, or non-hypocritical love. Hypocrisy, or *hupokrisis* in the Greek, was the word used by the Greek actor as he held up a mask to cover his face as he "played a part" on the stage. **And that's what so many Christians do today- play a part!** Their stage is the church they attend, their audience is the other people in the church, and the mask they wear? It's the mask of "agape love"! But they can't fake agape so they put on something else that they pass off as agape. So you have churches made up of people all wearing masks- all phonies!

You say, "Mike, you can't judge people"! I don't have to; the Word judges them. *Agape* love is the mental attitude of the Godhead, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and it is produced in us by the filling of the Holy Spirit operating in the new nature in the sphere of Bible Doctrine metabolized by faith. **If that believer is not filled with the Holy Spirit, if that believer has not confessed their sins according to 1 John 1:9, if that believer is not positive to Doctrine, and if that believer is not living by faith, then there is not producing of agape in them by the Holy Spirit!!**

Now, after having arrived at that doctrinal conclusion, that the Holy Spirit is not producing the agape mental attitude in their stream of consciousness because they have rejected the dynamics of how it is done out of their ignorance, arrogance or both, **then anything and everything you see coming from them is nothing more than a feigned love, a faked love produced by the human good side of their flesh natures!** Man's sinful natures produce both human sin, which are acts that are wrong, and it also produces human good, which are acts of human righteousnesses, which are as filthy rags in the sight of an holy God.

Paul talked about unfeigned agape love and Peter talked about unfeigned phileo love, "*Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply from the heart*", 1 Peter 1:22. It, too, being a non-hypocritical *phileo* love. We see so much hypocritical love going on in Christianity today, with their "We love you brother" stuff spewing out of their mouths, but it's hypocritical; it's just a mask that they are wearing. **Where's the new nature activity? Where's the filling of the Holy Spirit? Here's one, "Where's their love for Bible Doctrine?"**

You see, you can't have *phileo* love without agape love, and we have seen what is entailed in agape love. So it's all phony; something that is faked for the benefit of an audience. God has seen this for thousands of years; they honor him with their lips, but their hearts are far from him. **True**

**love must come from the depths of our innermost being, from our regenerated nature, not this surface business, which is what hypocrisy is all about!** Their surface expressions of love have as much sincerity as Hollywood actors greeting each other with a kiss saying that they love them. Biblical love is not an emotion and the flesh cannot produce it. It is produced in us by God the Holy Spirit in our new natures and it is non-emotional; it is spiritual in nature and it loves truth- Bible Doctrine! And it is also manifested in acts as the Apostle James brings out. Unbelievers look at Christians all the time and call them phonies, and why shouldn't they- most of them are! They can see through their religious hypocrisy to their phony love. Too bad Christians can't see it for themselves. **They could if they were under doctrinal teaching, but that's the problem- they aren't! The litmus test for true agape love is one's mental attitude toward Bible Doctrine. Agape loves Bible Doctrine!**

Christians know that they should be manifesting Christ's love as they sit next to each other in pews, but they aren't. They are outside the loop of the spiritual dynamic, so they come up with something produced by their flesh natures- a faked love. **You see, they have to save face; they have to keep up appearances, so they put on the mask of love without the reality.** They wear their masks in public and in their churches, but inside they are no different than the unsaved in this pagan nation: selfish, self-absorbed, self-seeking, self-gratifying, self-willed, (lovers of themselves), self-glorifying, lovers of money and all it can buy, proud, abusive, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. The people being described by the Apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 3:1-5 is a reference to **Christians** living in the Last Days!

Are we one of them? Are we one of this army of Christian hypocrites? Do we have a form of godliness but deny the power of the true spiritual dynamic? Are we one of those who flock to these meetings with the other hypocrites **wearing our masks**? Are we in the majority of Christians whose love has grown cold? Do we not understand that God can see past our masks of hypocrisy to see us as we truly are? **Are we so deluded to think that we can fool God??** If broken down old Pastor-Teachers can see past the mask of believer's hypocrisy with their phony love because of the divine insight God gives them through the Word, don't you think that God can do that too? We may fool others; we may have obviously fooled ourselves, but do we think that we can fool God? **Are we that far gone?**

*"Be warm and be filled"*, you say. What hypocrisy! Where does the love of God lie within you? Where is our love for the Word of God? Where is our love for the ministries that bring forth the Word of God? Where is our love for those men and their families who have sacrificed so much to bring forth the message about God's grace? So many great men of the Word are "dying on the vine" financially and socially, their message rejected, they forsaken and abandoned by most Christians, while the Christians hypocrites flock to their religious mega-centers with their programs of human good and works, and their phony "love" to pride themselves on what they have done. Let them not think for one minute, though, that their hypocrisy is not being noticed by God, for God is watching. You may surround yourself with religious hypocrites as phony as yourself, but where is your love? Not the phony, faked love we see today, but where is your true love? The true love of agape. You can recover it by confessing our sins to God, being filled with the Holy Spirit, having a change of mental attitude toward Bible Doctrine, grace and faith, and getting under the doctrinal ministry of some Pastor-Teacher

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