

# The Lesson of Love

by J.R. Miller

---

*J.R. Miller's sermon teaches that mastering the lesson of love is essential for a fulfilling Christian life and requires conscious effort and practice.*

**Scripture:** Proverbs 26:28, Matthew 16:24, John 13:35, Romans 8:38-39, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, Ephesians 5:2, Philippians 2:5, 1 John 4:8-16

**Topics:** "Christian Love", "Endurance in Suffering"

---

## Description

J.R. Miller emphasizes that learning to love is the essence of living, as demonstrated by Christ's life and teachings. He explains that true Christian love is not natural but must be cultivated, requiring patience, kindness, and selflessness, even towards those who are difficult to love. Miller encourages believers to embody this love in their daily lives, reflecting Christ's example of enduring love amidst suffering and injustice. He asserts that love is the key to overcoming life's challenges and that it should be the guiding principle in all interactions. Ultimately, the lesson of love is a lifelong journey that prepares us for eternal life with God.

---

## Transcript

The Lesson of Love

J. R. Miller, 1903

### PREFACE

To learn how to love--is to learn how to live. The lesson is a long one--but it is the great business of life to master it. The Master not only taught the lesson in words--but also set it down for us in a life, His own life. To follow Christ is to practice this great lesson, learning more of it day by day, until school is out and we go home!

"By this all men will know that you are My disciples--if you love one another." John 13:35

"Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love." 1 John 4:8

"Dear friends, since God so loved us--we also ought to love one another." 1 John 4:11

"God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them." 1 John 4:16

"Live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us, as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." Ephesians 5:2

"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails!" 1 Corinthians 13:4-8

The Lesson of Love

Things That are Lovely

To Suffer and Love On

The Hurt of Flattery

"Nor Life"

Having the Mind of Christ

The Second Mile

Losing Self in Christ

Growing by Abandonment

Leaving Things Undone

Living for the Best Things

Serving and Following Christ

Citizenship in Heaven

Gladdened To Gladden

The Gentleness of Christ

Would Our Way Be Better

In the Father's Hands

One Day at a Time

True Friendship's Wishes

Christ In Our Everyday

In Tune With God

The LESSON of Love

Christian love has to be learned. There is natural affection which does not need to be learned--the love of parents for children, of children for parents, of friend for friend. But it is not natural to love our enemies, to love unlovable people, to be unselfish, to return kindness for unkindness. We have to learn this love, and it is the great business of life to do it. The lesson is written out for us in many parts of the Scriptures. We have it, for example, in Paul's wonderful chapter on LOVE.

"Love is patient." Love includes patience. It is not easy to live with all sorts of people--and to keep sweet always. In a letter from a friend, the problem is stated thus: "How to live victoriously when one does not feel well, has many tasks and duties, and must work with a cranky person." That is something of the problem for many good people, and it is not easy to remedy. There is only one way of solving it--by love. And natural love will not suffice. Some mothers solve it with their children. Some gentle wives solve it with exacting, thoughtless, ungentle husbands. Now and then a friend solves it with a friend to whom it is not easy to be a friend. But the Christian is to learn to solve it with every kind of person--however disagreeable, unlovable, and uncongenial--he is never to come to the end of his loving. It takes almost infinite patience to love thus--more, at least, than many of us can command.

"Love is kind." Kindness has been called the small coin of love. It is not shown in large deeds--so much as in countless little gentle things. Jesus wrought a few great miracles--but in between the miracles, all the days, hours, and minutes were filled with kindnesses, little words and acts and looks which no one counted. Love should always abound in kindnesses. Our love should not be kept for great things, but should flow out continually, like fragrance from a flower, as part of our own life.

"Love does not envy." Love is generous. We have learned the lesson well, only when we can rejoice in the joy of others. This is quite as much a part of true love's sympathy, as it is to share the griefs of others. "Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep." We can do the latter--more easily than the former. When we find one in misfortune or in trouble--it is not hard to sympathize with him. But when others are honored more than we are, or prospered more, or when they win success while we fail, or are very happy while we are less so--is it as easy for us to be genuinely glad, as it would be to be really sorry if they were in some kind of grief?

"Love is not self-seeking." Love is unselfish. Unselfishness is at the very heart of all true love. It is the obtruding of SELF into our thoughts, feelings, and acts--which spoils much of our living. We love people until it would cost us something to continue to love them--and then we stop short. We accept serious responsibility when we say to anyone: "I will be your friend." That is what Jesus said to his friends--and then he loved to the uttermost. That is what "seeks not its own" means. It may cost us years of self-denial and exhausting service.

"Love is not easily angered." Love keeps sweet amid all irritation. It probably is too much to hope for in this world of infirmity and sinfulness, that one shall ever attain a condition in life in which there shall be nothing that would naturally excite bitter or unkindly feeling.

Indeed, we could not learn to be sweet-tempered, with nothing to test and exercise our temper. The problem then, is not to find a paradise of sweetness in which to live--we shall have to wait for Heaven for that--but in common human conditions, with infirmities and failings even in our best friends, with a thousand things in the experiences of each day to try our temper--still and always to keep sweet.

Good temper is an admirable quality of love. For some people it is easier, too, than for others. But it is part of the lesson of love which we should all set ourselves to learn, whether it is easy or hard. It can be

learned, too--it should be learned, for it is a Christian duty, one of the fruits of the Spirit, an essential element in Christian culture. We should never excuse ill-temper as only an character weakness or a pardonable infirmity--we should be ashamed to yield to it. Touchy people should determine to conquer their wretched weakness and sin--by which God is dishonored, and the love of tender hearts hurt.

"Love keeps no record of wrongs." Love is meek. It does not keep a list of slights, offences and injustices. "How often shall I forgive?" Peter asked. He thought he was going a long way in the path of Christian love, when he suggested that seven times would be enough. But Jesus said: "Oh, not seven times only--but seventy-seven times," that is, indefinitely. Let your love be simply inexhaustible. Nothing is harder than to have to endure wrong and ingratitude; to love and to have love unrequited. It is not easy to keep on loving, when this is one's experience. Yet that is what our lesson teaches us.

A writer tells a story of a man who had given up his whole life to love. Then there came a time when he knew that all he cared about was slipping away from him. At length after ten years of loving and serving, a letter came which told him that all he had cherished so tenderly was lost, that the life of those years was utterly blotted out. Yet though stunned by the blow, and left alone and desolate, he was not crushed--but went on with his life-work in quietness and hope.

When a friend asked him how he could take up a new life after such blighting disappointment, he said, "It was because I never lost love. Whatever happened to me, I went on loving; whatever change came in others, I was always constant to love. When the crash threw down my palace, though I was miserable, I was not embittered; though I was stripped of everything, my soul was still young; love had kept the springs of life flowing in my heart." This is a secret which all of us should seek to learn. It is easy to let bitterness creep into the heart, when one has to endure wrong day after day, week after week, possibly year after year. There are women who know what this means. There are men, too, who meet this experience. Too often the darkness creeps into their souls and puts out the lights of love.

Nothing on earth is sadder than this. It is a sort of death that is worse than dying. Whatever wrongs or cruelties we have to endure--we should always keep love in our hearts. We should never allow love's lamps to be put out. We should keep on loving and thus be more than conquerors over all the hardness that besets us. In all such experiences, love will save us, keep us alive--and nothing else will.

Sometimes one finds a sweet fresh-water spring beside the sea. When the tide is low you may take your cup and drink of the pure well, and the water is fresh as if it flowed from the bosom of a rock on the hillside. Then the sea rolls over it and for long hours the brackish floods bury the little spring out of sight. But when the tide draws back again, you find the water as sweet as ever. So love should be in our hearts when the black, brackish floods of wrong have swept over them. The love should never lose its sweetness.

Another quality of love to be learned, is seeing the good and not the evil in others. That appears to be the meaning of the words, "Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres." There is in some people, a disposition to see evil in others and even to be secretly glad because of it. This is a satanic spirit! Our Lord's counsel, "Judge not," condemns it. We are not to put on our strongest glasses in order to look at others--and see the flaws and faults in them. Rather we should turn our glasses on ourselves, to find our own defects, while we try to discover the good there is in our neighbor.

It is amazing how some people are worried over other people's defects and sins--and how little concern meanwhile, the evil things in themselves give them. But that is not what Christian love does. It looks for the good in others--and seeks to woo it out into something better. If only we would learn this lesson and think of finding the good in others, instead of the evil, covering all unlovely things, hoping all beautiful things--how changed all life would be! How much nearer together we should be drawn--if only we saw each other more clearly, more truly!

These are parts of the great lesson. How can we learn it? Christ only can teach it to us. We must let the heaven-life enter our hearts.

"When we were playing out in the barn today," said Marjorie, "the sun shone in through a knot-hole high up in one of the boards, and it made a path, a golden path, way up. I guess if anybody could have walked up on it and slipped out where it came in, he would have found a road-way into heaven." The child's imagination was very beautiful. Christian love is like such a shining pencil of light breaking into our world through a rift in the sky. If we could walk up on it, we would find a foot-path into heaven. This love is heaven's life brought down to earth. Jesus Christ brought it down when he came. He was the first who ever loved in this way in our world. He wants all his followers to learn to love in the same way, "As I have loved you, that you also love one another." He will teach us the lesson, if we will only learn it. When we have mastered it--we are ready for heaven!

#### Things That are LOVELY

Nothing that is not beautiful, is fit for a place in a Christly life. Strength is essential--but strength need not be rough and unlovely; art has learned to give it graceful form. Truth and honesty, justice and right--are prime elements in a worthy life--but they need not be unbeautiful. Sometimes, it is true, we see men in whom these great qualities are strongly marked--yet in whom beauty is lacking. Some even boast of being blunt men, meaning that they say what they think, not caring how they may say it. But there is no reason why any sturdy quality of character, should be lacking in loveliness. We may clothe the plainest virtue in garments of grace. We may be honest--and yet gentle and kindly. We may be true--and live very sweetly.

In a cluster of "whatevers" indicating the principal qualities in an ideal character, Paul includes "whatever things are lovely." Perhaps it has been too much the habit in Christian teachers, to overlook beauty as an essential feature of a complete life. Christ, who is always to be our model, was "altogether lovely." He was strong, and true, and just, and righteous--but there was no flaw in his character, no defect in his life. We should never tolerate in ourselves, anything that is not beautiful.

Some things are not lovely. There are ways that are not winning. There are people whose personality is not attractive. They fail to draw others to them. They neither make close friends--nor keep friends. They may be good in the general fabric of their character--honest, truthful, upright, just. No one could condemn them or charge them with anything really wrong. Yet they are not lovable in their dispositions. There is something in them that hinders their popularity, that mars their influence, that interferes with their usefulness.

Sincerity is one element in loveliness. Artificiality is never beautiful. There are many people who suffer greatly in their lives by reason of their affectations. They are unnatural in their manners. They seem always to be acting under the restraint of rules. It was said the other day of a good man, that he talks even in common conversation as if he were delivering an oration. There are some who use a great deal of exaggerated language in complimenting their friends, even in expressing the most commonplace feelings.

There are those whose very walk shows a studied air, as if they were conscious of a certain importance, a burden of greatness, thinking that wherever they appear, everybody's eyes follow them with a sort of admiration and worship. All affectations in manner, in speech, in dress, in bearing, in disposition, are unlovely. They are classed with insincerities. Only the simple, unaffected, natural life--is truly beautiful.

Selfishness is unlovely. It has many ways, too, of showing itself. Indeed, it cannot be hidden--it crops out continually, in act and word and disposition. There are those who are disobliging, never willing to put themselves out to do a favor, or to show a kindness to others. They may talk unselfishly, affirming their interest in people and their friendship for them--but when the test comes--SELF asserts itself. Selfishness is simply the absence of love--love is not self-seeking.

Unselfishness is lovely. It does not count the cost of serving. It loves unto the uttermost, and never fails in helpfulness. It thinks of others, not only as of itself--but, like the Master, forgets itself altogether.

Another lovely attribute in the Christian life, is peace. It never worries. It is never fretted. It is quiet, not noisy. It is the quality of a self-disciplined life. Hurry is always unbeautiful. The lovely life is never in haste--yet never loiters. It is self-poised. If women knew how much a quiet, self-controlled manner means in the making up of a winsome personality, they would seek for it more than for great riches. Nervous flurry, especially in a woman, is unlovely. It shows itself in flustered manners, in hasty and oftentimes rash speech, too often in ungoverned temper. The exhortation, "Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life," does not refer merely to speech--but especially to the inner spirit, to the manner, to the whole bearing of the life.

Nothing is lovelier in life than the spirit of contentment. Fretting mars the beauty of many a face. Discontent spoils all one's world. Out of whatever window he looks, the discontented person sees something that is not pleasing. If there is a contented mind--there is only good seen everywhere. The happiest homes in the world are not those in which are the finest carpets, the costliest pictures, the most luxurious furniture--but those in which glad, happy hearts dwell. A mind at rest, glorifies the plainest surroundings and even the hardest conditions.

Paul was in a prison when he wrote: "I have learned, in whatever state I am, therein to be content." The secret was in himself.

Love is the great master-secret of all beautiful things in character; love deals also with the manner of life's expression, as well as with its acts. Many good deeds--are done in a very unbeautiful way. Some people do kindnesses in such an unfitting way--that those they help wish they had not tried to help them!

There is a great deal of thoughtlessness, too, in many people. They love their friends and are ready to do for them anything the friends need, even at much cost or great sacrifice--but they fail utterly in the amenities and graces, which together are the charm and sweetener of all beautiful helpfulness. Love in the heart--should always inspire whatever things are lovely in behavior, in conduct, in disposition; and nothing that gives pain to others, either in act, word, tone, or manner, can be lovely.

Self-love is the secret of many of the most unlovely things in disposition, in character, in conduct.

A writer says: "All extreme sensitiveness, fastidiousness, suspicion, readiness to take offence, and tenacity of what we think our due--come from self-love; as does the unworthy secret gratification we sometimes feel when another is humbled or mortified; the cold indifference, the harshness of our criticism, the unfairness and hastiness of our judgments, our bitterness toward those we dislike; and many other

faults which must more or less rise up before most men's conscience, when they sincerely question as to how far they do indeed love their neighbors as Christ has loved them."

We are told that love "does not behave rudely." There are many things which cannot be said to be sinful, which are yet rude. They are not beautiful. They are unrefined. All displays of uncontrolled temper are rude. All harsh and unkind words are rude. Rudeness in every form, is out of harmony with the spirit of love.

The matter of manners should never be regarded as unimportant. Expression is a true index of character. In reading and speaking, a great deal depends upon pronunciation, accent, emphasis, tone, and the fine shadings of the voice which help in interpreting thought, feeling, emotion. To a refined and cultivated ear, defects in expression, inelegances in utterance, are painful. The charm of good eloquence lies in its simplicity, its naturalness, its niceties of expression, and in its true interpretation of thought. Beautiful living, in like manner, is not only refined and cultivated--but also interprets truly--what is best and most beautiful in the heart.

Anything rude, is a worse marring in a woman than in a man. Men are of a coarser grain than women, of more common material. Rude things do not appear so rude in a man as in a woman. It is expected that every woman shall be beautiful, not only in her character--but also in her behavior, not only in what she does--but in the way she does it. There are books which claim to tell people how to behave--but true refinement cannot be learned from even the best of these. There is many a woman who is thoroughly familiar with the rules and requirements of society, whose life is full of rude things.

A young woman writes that on three successive Sundays she heard three different preachers, and that each of them spoke very earnestly on the importance of self-control. This persistent recurrence of the same lesson had set her to thinking of the subject, and she wrote with some alarm regarding her own lack of self-mastery. She saw that she had been allowing herself to fall into certain habits which are very rude, which are marring the sweetness of her disposition and making her disagreeable. She is living in a boarding-house, and she began to see that she had been behaving herself in a very selfish way toward her hostess. She had permitted herself to become exacting and critical, finding fault with everything. She had been acting like a peevish, fretful child, losing her temper and giving way to her feelings in a most rude fashion.

This young woman's frank confession of the faults into which she sees that she has drifted, shows how unconscious we may be of rude things in our life and conduct. Other people see them, however, though we do not. It does not take long for one to get a reputation as a discontented person, as unreasonable, as hard to get along with, as disagreeable, or as a gossip, or a meddler in other people's matters. We need to keep it in our prayers continually, that we may have the gift to see ourselves as others see us. It would be a good thing if we all were to read the thirteenth of First Corinthians at least once a week all through our life. It would be like looking into a mirror which would expose the rude things in our behavior, that we might cure them.

The cure for rudeness is not found in books of etiquette, nor in any mere external culture--but in love in the heart. Rudeness of all kinds soon yields to refinement of spirit. Love makes the roughest man gentle. It inspires in us all beautiful things--gentleness, kindness, good temper, thoughtfulness, obligingness, every form of unselfishness, the spirit of serving, and the truest courtesy. Jesus was the truest gentleman that ever lived, and all who really follow him--will catch his spirit and learn the beauty of his refinement.

## To SUFFER and Love On

"Then Jesus said to his disciples--If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me!" Matthew 16:24

A Christian is not called to an easy, comfortable, self-indulgent life--but to self-denial, sacrifice, and cross-bearing. When two of his disciples asked for the first places in his kingdom, the Master said to them: "You know not what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup I am about to drink?" Speaking of suffering wrongfully. Peter says, "But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. To this you were called"--that is, you were called to suffer wrongfully. He is writing to servants or slaves. Ofttimes they would find their position very hard. Their masters would be severe, sometimes cruel. They are exhorted, however, to submit quietly, not only to the good and gentle--but also to the harsh.

None of us are slaves--but many of us have to work under others, and the others are not always "good and gentle." The problem in many lives, is how to maintain the Christian spirit, how to be Christlike in one's place--under others who are unreasonable, exacting, unjust, or unkind. The New Testament teaching is that we are to do our work well, to manifest the patient, gentle spirit of Christ, whatever our hardships and wrongs may be. In back of the human masters, stands another Master, and it is for him we are really working. He is the one we are to seek to please in all that we do. This changes the character of all service. Our Master would not be pleased if we did our work negligently, if we skimmed it, or if we showed bitterness even under harsh and unjust treatment.

The example of Christ in suffering is the copy set for us. "Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow his steps." What does this example teach us? For one thing, Christ endured his suffering quietly and patiently. "Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again." Most of our Lord's sufferings were at the hands of men. He was a friend of men, and sought always to do them good. But his kindness, met only unkindness in return. Those he sought to save, rejected him. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not."

We all know the story of Christ's wonderful love. He never ceased doing good, and men never ceased persecuting him. At last they nailed him to a cross--but really they were crucifying him, driving nails into his hands and feet and heart--all the three years of his public ministry! Yet his love was never chilled by the enmity and cruelty of men. He never had a bitter thought in his heart. Even on the cross, when human hate had done its worst, he loved on as tenderly, as patiently, as sweetly--as if he had been receiving only love from the world all the years.

This is part of the lesson set for us--and it is a lesson not easy to learn. It is hard to receive injury from others--and always to return kindness for it. Especially is it hard to suffer wrongfully--and keep one's heart sweet and loving through it all. Yet that is the lesson, and we find right here one of life's most serious problems.

We cannot avoid suffering at the hands of others. In the truest and most congenial friendships, there sometimes are things which occasion pain. Even in the sweetest home, there is frequent need of mutual forbearance and forgiveness. Then there are many who have to suffer continually, ofttimes cruelly and bitterly, at the hands of others. Here then is the problem--to keep love in the heart through all unkindness, ingratitude, and injustice; never to allow bitterness to creep in; never to give way to any feeling of resentment; always to be forgiving, loving, ready to help. It was thus, that Christ went through his life to the very end, praying for his enemies even on his cross, and giving his life to save those who were driving him

out of his own world!

We should remember that no one can really hurt our life--but ourselves. Men may rob us of our money. They may injure us in many ways. They may cut our bodies to pieces. But they cannot touch our real life. All the wrongs they can inflict upon us, will do us no actual injury. But if we give way to anger, if we let bitterness creep into our hearts, if we grow unforgiving or resentful, we have hurt ourselves. If on the other hand, we keep love in our hearts under all the human wrong we suffer--we have won the victory over every wrong.

Another of Christ's steps in his suffering, is shown in the words, "when he suffered, threatened not--but committed himself to him who judges righteously." He could have avenged himself on his enemies. He could have smitten them down, when they wronged him so sorely. "Do you think," he said to his disciples, who wished to interfere to save him from his enemies, "Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?" But he did not do it. He did nothing to check the wicked plots of his enemies. He lifted no finger to resist their malignant assaults.

"But these were terrible wrongs against him!" you say. "Why did he submit to them so quietly? Is there no justice in the world? Must wicked men be allowed to go on forever in their wickedness and cruelty?" Here is the explanation: "He committed himself to him who judges righteously," that is, into the hands of his Father.

This means two things. It means that he committed the sins of his enemies, with their deservings of wrath and their power to harm, to God, who is just and judges righteously. He himself would not take any revenge--he left the matter to his Father. Paul teaches us to do the same with those who wrong us or sin against us: "Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord." We are not the judge of any man. It is not our place to punish a man's sins against us. Commit that to God--he is just.

The other thing meant is that Jesus committed himself, his own life, to God, with all his hurts and injuries, and all the grievous wrongs which had been done to him. His Father was able to take all these cruelties and all his Son's untold sufferings, and not only prevent their harming him--but use them even for the glorifying of his name. He was able to bring his Son through all the terrible experiences, and out from them, unharmed, with no trace of hurt upon him--and he did. Christ's enemies thought to quench utterly the light of his name in the black shame of the cross. But we know that no ray of brightness was put out--his name never shone so radiantly as it did after he had come again from death.

It is thus that we should do with our wrongs, when others seek to injure us, when they treat us unkindly or unjustly--we should commit ourselves and our ill-treatment to our Father. He will look after the equities. It is not our duty to avenge ourselves. Then we may also commit our lives to the same divine love--no matter how cruel, how vindictive, how relentless our enemies may be, nor how terrible the hurts they have done to us. He will preserve us from all the hurts of men's malignity. He will bring us safely through all danger and all assaults of evil. "Who is he who will harm you--if you be zealous of that which is good?"

But someone who has been suffering injury at the hands of others may say: "This terrible wrong against me has broken up my life, blighted my beautiful hopes, ruined all my promise of happiness!" Yes; but God can build beauty yet for you, out of these broken things. Keep your heart sweet with love, and your soul unstained by sin--and then trust your life to your Father. He will bring blessing and good out of all that seems such a pitiful ruin today.

Could there ever again be such a wreck of all that was beautiful in a life--as there was that Good Friday evening, when a few friends took down the body of Jesus from the cross and laid it away in the grave? But we know what came out of that ruin. It will be the same with everyone who, in time of human betrayal or wrong, commits all with confidence to God.

The same lesson applies to all suffering--as well as to the enduring of wrong from others. Some people suppose that affliction always does good, blesses the life, enriches the character. But, in fact, affliction oftentimes hurts a life irreparably! If we do not submit ourselves to God in our grief, if we resist and rebel, if we chafe and repine, and go on grieving inconsolably--our affliction hurts our lives. It mars the beauty. It hushes the song. It dims the eye. It robs the heart of its love.

If, however, we reverently accept our affliction as a messenger from God, sent on a mission of love, bearing gifts and blessings from heaven for us--then we shall get good and not evil, from our pain and loss. We have only to keep our hearts sweet, trustful, songful, without bitterness, without fear--and then leave with God all the outcome of the suffering.

There is a story of an Indian child who one day came in from the wheat-field with a hurt bird in her hand. Running to the old chief, she said: "See! This is my bird. I found it in the wheat. It is hurt." The old man looked at the wounded bird and replied slowly: "No, it is not your bird, my child--it is God's bird. Take it back and lay it down where you found it. If you keep it, it will die. If you give it back into God's hands, he will heal its hurt and it will live."

What the old Indian said of hurt birds, is true of hearts hurt by sorrow. No human hand can heal them--the only safe thing to do in time of grief, is to put our lives into God's hands, to commit them to him. His hands are gentle and skillful. They will not break a bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax. We need never be afraid of suffering, "For hereunto were you called." There must be a reason for this in God's thought of us. We know, at least, that we never can reach the best things in life--but by the paths of pain. All the richest blessings of grace, lie beyond lines of suffering which we must pass to get them. Even of Jesus it is said, that he was made perfect through suffering. There were attainments which even he could reach in no other way. All that is worthiest and most Christlike in godly men bears the marks of pain upon it. We must pay the price--if we would get the blessing.

Then we must suffer oftentimes also, for the sake of others. Christ suffered for men in a way in which no other one ever can suffer. The influence of his unspeakable sorrow is renewing and refining the whole race. Sorrow in any life, softens other hearts. If there is death-crape on a door on any street, the whole neighborhood feels its softening, quieting influence. Everyone who passes that house, comes under the mystic spell. Even the children at their play are moved by the death in another family. We are all woven together into one mystic web of humanity, so that no man can live to himself. We must be willing to suffer--that others may receive blessing from our pain.

We never can become greatly useful without suffering. We cannot get the power of sympathy, which alone will fit us for being helpful to others in the best ways, but in the school of pain. We never can do anything worthwhile for humanity, without first learning in suffering the lessons we will teach in song and hope.

#### The Hurt of FLATTERY

"You know we never used flattery!" 1 Thessalonians 2:5

"A lying tongue hates those it hurts, and a flattering mouth works ruin!" Proverbs 26:28

"He who rebukes a man will in the end gain more favor than he who has a flattering tongue!" Proverbs 28:23

"Whoever flatters his neighbor is spreading a net for his feet!" Proverbs 29:5

"Everyone lies to his neighbor; their flattering lips speak with deception. May the Lord cut off all flattering lips and every boastful tongue!" Psalms 12:2-3

"Beware of the flatterer!" John Bunyan

An English writer has some good words about flattery. They are suggested by a character in a recent story. It is that of an old woman who was clever--but very disagreeable. One of her friends said to her that she ought to be more gracious and to give amiability a trial in her life. She was conscience stricken and confused as she thought of herself. "I'm a beast of an old woman!" she said. "I can be agreeable if I choose; nobody more so." "Then why not choose to be so?" it was suggested. So she tried the experiment and was greatly encouraged. Her amiability gave pleasure to her friends--and she kept it up.

But she was not always wise in her new role of amiability. For instance, she fell into the habit of flattery, thinking that in this way she could please people. On every occasion she practiced this new art with assiduity. The result was not always felicitous, however. Too often she would so overdo her praise of people--that its insincerity became apparent. Even the vainest people were made aware, by the extravagance of her words, that she was only playing with them, and the effect was not to please--but to offend. She would break out in enthusiasm over a friend's bonnet or dress. She would go into paroxysms of mirth over the retelling by another friend of some old story or of some threadbare bit of humor. She would tell some old, withered woman, how fresh and young she looked--like a young girl in her teens. So the good woman's excessive efforts at amiability, had the effect of sarcasm upon those she supposed she was pleasing!

There are many people who fall into the same mistake. It is a quite common opinion that almost everyone is susceptible to the influence of flattery. There are different ways of flattering.

There are some who are so extravagant in their expressions, that none but the very vain and silly take their words seriously and are pleased by what they say. They flatter everyone, on every occasion! They go into ecstasy over everything you do or say. They lose no opportunity in your presence of saying complimentary things about you. But there is no discrimination in their effusive talk, which is as fluent over most trivial things--as over the most important. Besides, it lacks the note of sincerity. They only proclaim the shallowness of their own hearts--and their lack of sense in supposing that they can deceive people into believing that they mean what they say.

There are others who flatter and yet do it in a much wiser, more delicate, and less effusive and objectionable way. They watch for opportunities to pay compliments, and say things which will please those to whom they are speaking. They exaggerate the good qualities which they commend, or the worthy acts which they praise. They repeat the kind things they have heard said about their friends.

Their motive in all this is to get the good opinion of those they laud. But, really, in just so far as it is insincere, such complimenting is unwise in friendship. Even those who are in a way pleased by such praise for the moment--are in the end offended by it. There is an instinct in every man who is not

hopelessly self-conceited which tells him when the words of commendation he hears are sincerely spoken--and when they are only empty words.

In every phase and form, flattery is despicable! On the whole, too, it fails to deceive, and, therefore, fails to please. It is resented by every worthy person--and weakens, rather than strengthens friendship.

The moment one who claims to be our friend utters anything which we know to be an exaggeration of his interest in us, his regard for us, or his opinion of us or of something we have done--he has hurt himself with us. Friendship needs no flattery in its professions or in its fellowship. Friendship must be thoroughly sincere in all its expressions. Insincerity in any form, or in any smallest measure--is a kind of disloyalty against which every true heart instinctively revolts.

Yet there are people who have become so used to adulation that they cannot be happy without it. They expect everyone to say complimentary things to them and of them. They have lived so long and so entirely in an atmosphere of approbation, that any speech which lacks this quality seems tame and cold to them.

Flattery is a danger to which women are more exposed to, than men. Everybody tries to say complimentary things to women. Men are more likely to hear the bare truth about themselves, even though oftentimes it is disagreeable. In school, and on the playground, boys are in the habit of speaking out bluntly and frankly to each other, not asking or thinking whether the words will give pleasure or pain. It is very rarely that a boy hears flattery, unless it is from his gentle mother, who sees everything in him from love's point of view.

In college and university life, young men are not encouraged to think more highly of themselves than the facts of their character and conduct warrant them to think. Their faults are oftentimes mercilessly exposed. Men get some of their best lessons, too, from the brusqueness of their fellows. At the time they do not like it--may even think it almost brutal--but it helps to make men of them. When college students win compliments and praise from their fellows, it must be for something worthy, almost heroic. They are not in great danger of being spoiled by flattery.

But with women it is altogether different. Even as little girls, they are petted and praised by everyone. They grow up in a hot-house atmosphere of appreciation. Too often they are trained to expect complimenting on all occasions, wherever they go, whatever they do. They are dressed by their mothers with a view to admiration, and it is regarded as the proper thing for everybody who sees them to go into a measure of rapture over their 'lovely appearance'. Their early attainments and achievements are always praised, sometimes in exaggerated fashion.

As they grow older it is the same. In girls' colleges the freshmen are "hazed" with flowers and suppers. Men of all ages vie with each other in showing gallantry to women. Any exhibition of rudeness to them is regarded as unpardonable. They are always listening to compliments, which sometimes verge on flattery. The wonder is--that so many women, brought up in such an atmosphere, escape unhurt in their life and character--and maintain the sweetness, the simplicity, the humility, the thoughtfulness, and the gentleness, which are among the highest qualities in ideal womanliness. That more are not spoiled by the continual adulation which they receive, and are taught to expect--is another proof of the innate nobleness of woman's nature.

It must be admitted that the influence of such a training upon the character and disposition is not strengthening, and does not tend to develop the best things in the life. We all need opposition and

antagonism to make us strong and to bring out the graces and virtues in us. The girls who do not live in an atmosphere of flattery--but who are subject to more or less criticism, find their compensation in the greater self-knowledge which they acquire.

There is a genuine appreciation of others and of what they say and do--which is not only proper--but is a bounden duty. It is right to express our admiration for what pleases us in others. In this case, the motive is not to receive compliments in return, nor to gain favor and influence--but to give cheer and encouragement. Paul tells us that we should please our neighbor for his good to edification.

A child is striving earnestly to master some art or science--but he is disheartened, for he is not succeeding. Nothing will do him so much good--as a word of appreciation and confidence, a word of encouragement, which will spur him to do his best. If he hears only fault-finding and criticism, he may lose heart altogether and give up. But when he learns that someone trusts him, and expects him to succeed--he receives new inspiration which makes him stronger to go on with his striving.

There is a great lack of just this proper and wholesome spirit of appreciation and genuine encouragement. Many times life is made a great deal harder for people--by the lack of kind words. Thousands live faithfully and work hard at their commonplace tasks, day after day, year after year--and yet never hear a single sentence which tells them of any human interest in them or in their work.

This is so in many homes where it might be supposed that the law of love is most faithfully observed. Scarcely ever is a heartening word spoken by one to another. If all in the household would form the habit of giving an expression to the loving appreciation which is in their hearts, it would soon transform the home life.

The same lack prevails, too, everywhere. Many men sink under their burdens or faint in their battles, because no one ever thinks to express the kindly interest and appreciation which are in his heart. One of the best services anyone can render to his fellows--is always to be an encourager. How rarely do we say the hearty word of cheer which would warm the blood and make it tingle! We should miss no opportunity to say kindly and encouraging things to all about us. Life is hard enough for many people at the best, and we should be glad to make it easier when we may, and we can make it easier for all about us by showing genuine appreciation. What really helps people and makes them braver and stronger is not flattery--but kindness, which is bread of life to hungry hearts.

"Nor Life"

"I am convinced that neither death nor life . . . will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:38-39

One of the finest passages in Paul's letters--is his triumphant expression of confidence that nothing can separate the Christian from the love of God. We are not surprised that he should mention death, for death carries us out from "our home of time and place," into a mystery which no eye can penetrate. We are grateful therefore for the assurance that death will not separate us from the love of God.

There is a deep significance, however, in the fact that life itself is named among the perils to which we are exposed, and in the assurance that it cannot separate us from God's love.

Living is fraught with far more danger than dying! Think what life is. It is not merely getting through this world in the best way we can. We are not here only to make a living--but to make a life, to grow, to do

God's will, to leave at least one spot of the world a little brighter and better. Think of the way we begin life--as babies, with great possibilities--but all to be developed. Think how much depends upon our strength--and yet how weak we are; upon our wisdom--and how ignorant we are. Think of the evil there is in the world--and how easy it is for us to drift away on its dark tides. Think of the temptations we must meet continually--and how unequal we are to the terrific struggle with them. Think of the work we have to do--and the burdens we must carry--and the responsibilities that are ours. Think of the mistakes we may make--and of what disastrous consequences may result from them.

It is not easy to live! Every step of the passage from birth to death--is through perils and antagonisms. Yet we have the assurance that even life, with all its dangers, perils and conflicts, cannot separate us from the love of God; that in all these things we may be more than conquerors through him that loved us.

As serious then as life is, we need not dread to live. No enemy can really harm us. No burden can crush us. No power can wrench us away from the keeping of God. Indeed, divine love changes all the hard things--into blessings. There is a way of living in this world, by which the evil is transmuted into good. Before the Master went away he prayed for the keeping of his disciples in the perils they must meet, committing them to the Father's care. He did not ask that they should be taken out of the world. It might have seemed greater kindness to them, if he had done this. But they had a work to do in the world and there was also a work to be done in them.

When we find life almost harder than we can bear, with struggle, opposition, human enmity, or sore trial--it will help us to remember that our Master wants us just where we are--or he would not leave us there.

But while Jesus did not ask that his disciples should be taken from the world--he did ask that they might be kept from its evil. The true prayer in time of great trial, care or sorrow, is, not that we shall be delivered from the difficult experiences--but that we may pass through them unharmed. It is right for us to pray to be kept from evil--but there is only one evil. It is not sickness, it is not poverty, it is not human wrong and cruelty, it is not earthly loss--the only evil is sin! Nothing else can harm us! One rebellious thought will hurt us more than all the martyrs' fires we could suffer, or the longest and most dreadful agonies of pain we could endure!

There is another word of Paul's which comes in here: "We know that to those who love God--all things work together for good." Instead of being something to dread, therefore, because of its dangers and antagonisms, its burdens and sorrows--life is a school of good. Temptations are meant by the Evil One to destroy us--but when we resist and overcome them, they become helpers of our growth and progress, leaving us stronger and wiser. Sorrows which seem only to wound and scar--purify and enrich our characters. The best lives are those that have suffered the most and struggled the most. The men and women who reach the finest things in character and the largest usefulness, are not those who have had only ease and a comfortable life--but those who have learned in struggle how to be strong--and in suffering how to be sympathetic and gentle.

In the hardest experiences of life--we are always sure of God's love. An Arctic explorer was asked whether during the long months of slow starvation which he and his companions had endured, they suffered greatly from the pangs of hunger. He replied that these pangs were forgotten in the feeling that their friends at home had forgotten them and were not coming to rescue them. There is no suffering so bitter--as the sense of abandonment, the thought that nobody cares. But however painful and hard our condition may be, however men may wrong us and injure us--Christian faith assures us that God loves us, that he has

not forgotten us, that he cares.

Life is not a series of merely unplanned, unpurposed, fortuitous happenings. "Every man's life is a plan of God." A divine purpose runs through all the events and circumstances of our days. This purpose is not only that we should do a certain amount of work in the world--but that we ourselves should be built up into strength and beauty of character.

Work is not a curse, as is sometimes thoughtlessly said--it is a means of grace. The reason we have to work is not primarily because the world needs the work--but because we need it!

Men are not in business just to build so many houses a year, to sell so many bales of goods, to cultivate so many acres of land, to do the routine work of their calling successfully--they are set to these duties in order that in them they may grow into men--strong, true, gentle, worthy men.

Women are not appointed to certain tasks in household work, in social life, in teaching or business, merely to become good housekeepers, good business women, or good teachers, nurses, or physicians--the divine purpose in all their toil--is that they may grow into noble womanhood.

Sometimes men fail in their business ventures or in their professions. They give their best strength and their most strenuous efforts to some work, and it does not succeed. The work fails--but the men need not fail. It is a great thing to meet misfortune victoriously, coming out of it with life unhurt, with new strength and courage for another effort.

A distinguished lawyer lost an important case in the courts. He showed no feeling of discouragement, however, and a friend asked him how he could take his disappointment so calmly. "When it is over," said the great lawyer, "I have no more to do with it. If I kept thinking of my defeats, I feel that I would go mad. But I will not brood over them. When one case is done, I drop it, whatever the result may be, and go on to the next."

It is a fine thing to see a boy, when his competitor has won the game, reach out his hand to him in manly congratulation. He has lost the game--but he has won in nobility. The only real defeat, is when a man shows an unmanly spirit and yields to depression after losing in business, or pouts and sulks and acts like a baby when he has failed to get the prize he wanted.

It is one of the wonders of divine love, that God will take even our blemishes and sins, when we truly repent of them and give them into his hands--and make them blessings to us in some way.

A friend once showed Ruskin a costly handkerchief on which a blot of ink had been made. "Nothing can be done with that!" the friend said, thinking the handkerchief worthless and ruined now. Ruskin carried it away with him and after a time sent it back to his friend. In a most skillful and artistic way--he had made a fine design on the handkerchief, using the blot as its basis. Instead of being ruined, the handkerchief was made far more beautiful and valuable.

Just so, God takes the blots and flaws and stains upon our lives, the disfiguring blemishes, when we commit them to him, and by his marvelous grace changes them into marks of beauty!

David's grievous sin, was not only forgiven--but was made a transforming power in his life. Peter's pitiful fall, became a step upward through his Lord's forgiveness and gentle dealing. Peter never would have become the man he afterward became--if he had not denied his Lord, and then repented and been

restored.

There ought to be great comfort for us in the truth--that God is transforming us in all our life. It is not easy to make a man or a woman into the beauty God wants to see. Some of us are harder to make, too, than others. Sometimes the cost is terrific. It took a great deal of severe discipline and schooling to make an apostle of Peter--but the price paid was not too much--when the result was such a magnificent man.

Sometimes we think God deals severely with us. We have many defeats and disappointments. We have sorrows and losses. We stumble and fall again and again. 'Why is it?' we ask. Here is the answer: God is making us. He wants us to grow into strength and beauty of character. He wants us to do service among men which shall be a blessing to them. He wants to have us get to heaven at last. It costs a great deal--but is any price of pain, anguish, or loss too great to pay, for such an outcome?

There is one thing always to be remembered. Paul tells us that we become more than conquerors in all life's trials, dangers, struggles, temptations, and sorrows, only "through him that loved us." Without Christ--we can only be defeated. There is only one secret that can turn evil into good, pain into blessing--that is the love of Christ. There is only one Hand that can take the blotted life and transform it into beauty.

But there is a way we can miss all this blessing. God's love changes not; nothing can separate us from it. Yet unbelief can rob us of all the blessing of that love. We can shut it out of our hearts if we will. Then everything in life will harm, instead of help us. The one secret of being in the world and not of the world; of passing through life and not being hurt by life's evil; of having all things work together for good to us--the one and only secret--is to have the love of God in our hearts. No one can be lost, whose heart keeps this blessed love in it always.

Having the Mind of Christ

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Philippians 2:5

The ideal Christian life, is one in which the mind that was in Christ Jesus rules. But what is the mind that was in Christ? Is there any word that describes it? What was the very heart of Christ's mission?

What one day was there in all his life, when he showed forth most clearly the central glory of his character? Was there any one act in all the multitude of his wonderful works, in which the radiant blessedness of his life was revealed in greater fullness than in any other? If you were asked to name the one day in the life of our Lord when he showed most of the splendor of his person--which day of all would you choose? Would it be the time of his transfiguration, when the brightness of his deity shone out through the robes of flesh that he wore? Would it be the day of his miracle of feeding the five thousand, or the day when he raised Lazarus? Or would you take some scene when he stood amid throngs of lame, sick, blind--and healed them all? Or would you say that the brightest moment of his earthly life was when he was riding into the city with great processions of joyous people crying, "Hosanna!"

None of these hours of human splendor was the hour of the fullest revealing of the heart of Christ. None of those radiant days was the day when most of his true glory was manifested. None of these achievements of power was the greatest thing Jesus ever did. The brightest day in all his earthly life--was the day when he hung upon his cross! The revealing of his glory that was divinest, was when men thought that he had sunk away in the deepest shame. The act that was the sublimest of all his achievements, was the giving of

himself in death for men. We could spare all the miracles out of the gospel story, and all the narrative of gentle and beautiful things--if the cross were left. The cross is the fullest representation of the glory of Christ. If we ask, then, where, on what day, in what one act, the completest revealing of Christ can be seen, the answer is--on Good Friday, when he died between two thieves.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." The very hall-mark of Christlikeness, is the stamp of the cross. We say we want to be like Christ. We say it in our prayers, we sing it in our hymns, we put it into our consecration services. But what do we mean by being like Christ? Are we not in danger of getting into our vision of it, merely an easy kind of life, a gentle piety, a dainty charity, a fashionable holiness, a pleasing service? When two disciples asked for the highest places, the Master spoke to them in serious words of his baptism and his cup of suffering, asking them if they were able to drink of the cup and be baptized with the baptism. When we say we want to be like Christ, He points us to his cross and says: "That is what it is to be like me; are you able?" The cross shows us a vision of what our life must be--if we are following Christ. The cross stamps itself on every true Christian life. Some people wear crosses as ornaments. If we are Christians like Jesus, we will wear the cross in our heart.

Suppose we vary the question, and ask what act in our own life we look back upon with the greatest satisfaction, what day we think of as the brightest and divinest of all our days. What achievement of yours do you consider the highest in all your life? Do you think of a day when you made some signal triumph in school, or won some unusual success in business, or carried off the honors in some contest, or did some fine piece of work which men praised? We are apt to think the red-letter days in our life, are the days when we gathered honor for ourselves. But in the light of the lesson we are now learning, are these the best days in our lives? Someone has said, "The greatest thing a man can do for his heavenly Father--is to be kind to some of the Father's other children."

The things that are really the brightest in your past life, are not the honors you won for yourself, the brilliant successes you achieved, nor the prosperities which added to your importance among men--but the deeds of love which your hand wrought in Christ's name, for some of his little ones. The one brightest day in all your past life--was the day you did your purest, most unselfish, most self-denying act for your Master, in serving one of his people. It is only when we have some measure of Christ's self-renunciation, that we have touched the truest and Christliest things in life.

There is a fable of a potter in China who received from the emperor a command to make a rare set of porcelain ware for the royal table. With greatest pains he began his work, desiring to make it the finest achievement of his life. Again and again, however, when the pieces were put into the furnace, they were marred. At length another set was ready for burning, and the potter hoped that this one would be successful. But as he watched it in the furnace he saw that this, too, would be a failure. In despair he threw himself into the fire and his body was consumed. But when the pieces were taken out they were found to be so wondrously beautiful that nothing like them had ever before been seen. Not until the potter sacrificed his own life in the doing of it--was his work successful.

The old heathen legend has its lesson for Christian life. Our work never reaches the highest beauty, is never fit for our King, until love's self-sacrifice is wrought into it. Things we do for ourselves, to win honor for our own name, to make profit for our own enrichment, are never the things that are most beautiful in God's sight. The greatest things we do are those that are wrought in utter self-forgetfulness for Christ's glory.

There will be strange reversals in the day of final revealing, when all things shall appear as they are. Many of earth's trumpeted deeds will shrivel into nothingness. Many of earth's proud names, bedecked with brilliant honors and garlanded with human praises, will fade away into insignificance, because there is no love in the things which won them their distinction. And up out of the shadows of obscurity, where they were overlooked by men, and left unhonored and unrecorded, thousands of lowly deeds will rise into immortal beauty and honor, because love inspired them. Up, too, out of the throngs of earth's unnamed will rise a multitude of lowly ones to receive reward, to shine like the stars, because they lived out the lesson of the cross.

There are some who complain bitterly because from all their loving--they get such small requital. Sometimes it is not only unrequital--the love is hurt, smitten in the face, wounded, scorned. In many a home there is one who loves and lives for the others--and yet is unloved. In all departments of life, there are those who must think and plan and labor and endure, while the honor of all they do, gathers about some other brow.

It ought to be a sweet comfort to all such--to know that precisely this is the highest, the divinest duty of love. These are the lives that are most like Christ's. He loved and was rejected and shut out of people's homes and hearts, persecuted, wronged, at last nailed upon a cross. Yet he loved on! The fountain in his heart flowed as full as ever. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

It would be well if we could get into our hearts a vision of the central meaning of the cross. It was not merely a man giving himself for the helping of his fellow-men--it was the Son of God giving himself, pouring out his own blood to redeem lost men.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." It is not enough to tell in flaming words of the love of Christ to men; we must be in flaming lives the love of Christ to men. It is not enough to sit in our places of worship and sing praises to God for our own salvation; we must hasten out to seek and to save the lost!

### The Second Mile

One of our Lord's remarkable exhortations is, "Whoever shall compel you to go one mile--go with him two." That is, do more than you are expected to do, be better than you are expected to be, go farther in love and service and self-denial than you are required to go.

The immediate reference is to the old hard days when most men had to serve despotic masters and often do compulsory service. For example, men would be required to go with invading soldiers to guide them through the country and carry their burdens. "If such forced service is demanded of you," said Jesus, "do not resist; go cheerfully; go even farther than you are compelled to go."

Of course, this is only an illustration of a principle. The Christian is to accept hardness patiently. He is not to watch the clock lest he may work a few minutes over-time. He is not to keep account of all the things he does for others, lest he may do more than he is required to do. Rather, when he is serving, he is to do more than strict duty demands. He is to go two miles instead of one. The religion of his day was not satisfactory to our Master. So he said to his disciples, "Except your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."

We are Christ's true followers--not when we do no murder--that is going one mile--but when we keep our hearts free from all bitterness, all unkind feelings, all desire for revenge--that is going the second mile. The religion of the Pharisees said they must love their friends, but hate their enemies, giving as they had received--going only one short mile. But the friends of Jesus must go the second mile and love their enemies and pray for those who persecute them. "What are you doing, more than others?" is the question which tests Christian life. Anybody can love those who love him--and be kind to those who are kind to him. You must do more--you must go two miles.

The principle applies to everything in life. A good many people want to go only one mile in consecration, in praying, in loving others, in doing God's will. But mere one-mile following of Christ is pitifully inadequate. What kind of a friend do you like--one who will go just the easy one mile with you, while the path is flowery, and the air full of sweet fragrances--and then drop off when the road gets steep and rough, and the winter winds begin to blow? Or do you like the friend who stays by you when it costs to be your friend, when he has to carry burdens for you, has almost to carry you, sometimes? Do you like best, the friend who goes only one short, easy mile with you--and then drops off--or the friend who goes the second mile? Was Orpah or Ruth the better friend to Naomi?

What kind of friends d

---

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jr-miller/the-lesson-of-love/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**