



Edification Complex of the Soul: 4th Floor: Unconditional Love: Functional Virtue; Advanced Doctrines Are Built on Basic Doctrine; Who's the "I" in "I love you"?

8. **4th Floor: Unconditional Love: Functional Virtue:** Unconditional love places its emphasis on the subject. This means that the virtue of unconditional love for another is dependent upon the integrity of the one doing the loving. For example, in the right man-right woman relationship the Shulammitte's personal love for the Shepherd Lover is sustained by her integrity which has the capacity to switch from personal love to unconditional love whenever the Shepherd should fail.
- (1) The virtue that supports unconditional love is acquired by inculcation of biblical truth through the filling of the Holy Spirit (see 3rd Floor). Therefore, the motivation for unconditional love is personal love for God. These virtues work in tandem but are sequential in their development.
 - (2) This sequence is noted in our Lord's response to the question posed by a scribe, or γραμματεὺς, *grammatús*: an expert on the Mosaic Law but who is extremely legalistic in its application:

Mark 12:28 - One of the scribes ... asked Jesus, "What commandment is the foremost of all?"

v. 29 - Jesus answered, "The foremost is, [**Deuteronomy 6:4: the Shama': שְׁמַע**] 'Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is one Lord;

v. 30 - and you shall love [**personally**] the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.'

v. 31 - "The second is this, [**Leviticus 19:18**] 'You shall love [**unconditionally**] your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

- (3) In His response the Lord clearly aligns these two virtues in sequential order, first or "foremost" is personal love for God while "second" is unconditional love for mankind.
- (4) This is the application of basic Christian modus operandi to life and circumstances. This includes (1) the claiming of promises in the first stage of the faith-rest technique. As a believer grows spiritually he will advance to stage two with the development of doctrinal rationales and finally stage three, the application of doctrinal conclusions, and (2) the utilization of unconditional love toward all mankind.
- (5) God has given to us over 7,000 promises in Scripture. They are designed to provide for the believer an inventory of divine guarantees by which he may endure and overcome the trials of life.
- (6) These promises are designed to function as a life preserver in the hectic and chaotic environment of the devil's world.
- (7) When fear, anxiety, dread, worry, and phobias capture the thinking of the soul, the claiming of promises restores order and comforts the believer through confidence in God's provision, protection, and power.
- (8) It is only through a stabilized soul that the believer can grow in grace and learn the policies and procedures of God's plan for his life.
- (9) Understanding of this plan is gradual but promises provide an area of refuge in which the believer may find solace and tranquility through a relaxed mental attitude.



- (10) In order for the believer to make a rapid advance in his spiritual growth he must learn to deal with others. This requires an understanding of the difference between personal love and unconditional love for others.
- (11) Personal love is virtue dependent and thus requires the ability to switch over to unconditional love when circumstances occur that require it.
- (12) The difference between these two categories of love can be illustrated by the sentence "I love you." When there is emphasis on the object then the love is personal and puts emphasis on the virtue of the object.
- (13) Since no one is perfect then the one who loves another personally has set himself up for disappointment through unrealistic expectations.
- (14) But should the object fail in some way and if the subject is able to switch over to unconditional love then the relationship can be maintained.
- (15) Virtue is found in unconditional love since the maintenance of the relationship depends on the integrity of the subject.