

# **Reaching the Resistant: Theologies, Models, Case Studies**

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*Roger D. Peugh, Grace Theological Seminary*

200 Seminary Drive, Winona Lake, IN 46590

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It is a great privilege to address the subject "Reaching the Resistant." The twenty years of walking with God and learning to minister in the resistant culture of Germany have helped me see things which my excellent education did not teach me. In addition to our long-term ministry in Germany from 1969-1989, I spent about ten months there with Youth For Christ, mostly in Berlin during 1962-63 which God also used to help form the things presented here.

## **Defining a Resistant People**

A receptive people could be defined as one in which, when the Gospel is presented, significant numbers of hearers respond willingly by choosing to follow Christ and grow in Him to reproductive maturity. By contrast, a resistant people must be seen as a group in which, when the Gospel is clearly and understandably presented in their language, almost all hearers reject Christ and show little or no curiosity to know more about Him or this message.

If that is a near accurate definition of a resistant people, Germany fits. Those Germans who do choose Christ may take from six months to two years of regular hearing and observing before making the decision to follow Him. Only once in twenty years did I ever hear a credible report from or about a person who received Christ apparently upon his first hearing of the message.

## **What reasons could be given for Germany being a resistant people?**

### **1. A national mind set of doubt and criticism**

This generation of Germans has been formed by a mind set ingrained into the whole thought system of Germany. From earliest school experience children are taught to question everything. This creates a national mood of cynicism and questioning of virtually everything, including accepted norms and especially anyone or anything claiming absolute authority. One does not need to be deeply versed in philosophic thought or thoroughly understand the German development of the enlightenment, which I do not, to sense the presence and effects of this negative questioning and cynicism permeating the German society.

### **2. Higher Criticism taught to children**

The Lutheran religious instruction classes, especially in the upper grades of almost all public high schools, have been responsible for destroying the faith of countless young people. Systematic instruction presents the Bible as full of myths and historical contradictions. Presented as fact is the Documentary Hypothesis theory of the formation of the Old Testament and the Form Criticism (Formgeschichte) theory of the formation of the New Testament. This has caused most Lutheran young people to doubt and reject the historical validity or relevance of anything in the Bible.

### **3. Doubting the good character of God**

One of the most commonly used arguments for resisting the presentation of the gospel was "Why does God allow it?" Individuals in the country of Germany have experienced immense pain through two world wars. Along with that, many carry deep shame for the atrocities of the Third Reich. Personal family tragedies are heaped on this pain pile as well. A commonly asked question when a Christian presents the Gospel is: "Why would God have allowed so many innocent people to suffer?" For most this is perhaps just a 'smoke screen' diversion from the message so as to avoid personal responsibility to God. For some it may be an honest cry of their hearts for substantive answers to one of life's most perplexing questions. They find no satisfactory answers for their minds trained to doubt and call in question all authority.

### **4. False sense of religious security**

About 2/3 of all Germans have membership in one of the two State Churches, Lutheran or Roman Catholic. Many of them believe that due to their strong traditional religious connections things between them and God are fine. If these are approached by an evangelistically active Christian, they would take refuge in their church membership to show that they don't need anything else. Church attendance is only about 4%, and only 2% of all Protestants attend church regularly. Only about 1.8% of the 80 million Germans are born again believers, ac-

ording to statistics from DAWN (Discipling A Whole Nation).

### **5. Material success creates false satisfaction with things**

Hardly a country in the world has made the pursuit of material perfection and luxury a higher priority than Germany has. Most Germans over 70 years of age have lost all they owned, twice, and many feverishly cling to the security material things afford. The younger generation wants to take up where the parents left off, and very few of them seem to incur damaging indebtedness in order to experience the luxury they want. Shiny new cars, clothes in vogue, fully equipped and beautifully decorated houses and world travel seem to be "standard equipment" for many and God does not factor in. One person told me: "God is for people when they have hard times. We aren't having hard times so we don't need God."

### **6. Lack of love in the home**

Another significant factor I did not discover until 1980-85 (eleven to sixteen years after beginning ministry there). Most German children have not been told "I love you" by their fathers, nor have they been shown physical affection which would awaken in them the secure sense of knowing that they are loved by their fathers. The accidental discovery of this national plague was by a missionary totally untrained in anthropology and the cross-cultural disciplines.

During language school (1969-70) in the southern city of Radolfzell my wife and I spent fifteen months in a Free Church. During that time much counsel was given to young people who lived in painfully fractured home situations. Not fully understanding the culture, these messed up families were simply viewed as a departure from family norms similar to what we had observed in many American homes.

A church-planting ministry was begun in Stuttgart in 1972. I had the opportunity and privilege to counsel hundreds of people in several thousand hours of interaction over deep personal needs. The fractured family relationship was a common theme. At one point I remarked that we did not live in the Amazon Jungle but rather the German Jungle of cement, asphalt, and bricks in which the outsides of the homes were beautiful but inside the family units were in shambles.

One Sunday afternoon in 1980 a young lady named Helga called to request help. She said she was ready to take her life—that afternoon. She was encouraged to come to our house immediately, which she did. In the course of the counseling conversation it became evident that she was extremely insecure and inwardly distraught. For some reason I asked her if her father had ever told her that he loved

her. She responded in a cynical tone, "No, of course not." I then asked if her father had ever shown any physical affection to her mother, in her presence? Had he told her he loved her, held her hand, or given her a hug or a kiss? Again the answer was no. Her answers prompted me to begin asking such questions regularly during counseling sessions. In the years following most stories were tragically repetitive. I began to gain insight into many German families and my heart began to break for their needs.

While lecturing as a guest teacher in a Bible school in German speaking Switzerland a young lady asked for the opportunity to receive counsel. These same questions were raised. She said that her father had never told her he loved her. I asked: "Has your father ever given you a hug, or through physical affection, expressed his love for you?" She said her mother had told her that once, when she was an infant, her father had held her. She told also of another time as a small child when she had visited her grandparents in another town. Upon her return home her parents met her at the train station and her father reached up into the train car to lift her out and put her down on the platform. That was the only time she ever remembered having been touched by her father. She said it was a wonderful feeling.

This all came to significant clarity in June of 1985. While instructing at a pastor's seminar in the Black Forest we came to the subject of evangelism and of how to reach the German people. We began by talking about how to express love to people without Christ. I said to them,

"For the first time to any public audience, may I venture to make some observations about the German family? It has been my privilege to serve as a 'guest worker' in your country for over sixteen years. I have talked to hundreds of people in several thousand hours of counseling and heard a tragic sameness as they report about their family life. Most of the people have never heard the words 'I love you' from their fathers, nor have they received any significant amount of physical affection such as hugs, embraces, or kisses from their fathers. I believe this is a national problem which has huge implications for our discussion of evangelism. If we cannot express our genuine love to our fathers or our children, how can we, as pastors, express God's love to our congregations or to lost people?"

These comments had not been planned before that moment and I had no inkling what these few sentences would cause. For the next two hours, with much agony and many tears, these men reported, one after another, about the painful memories of their childhood and upbringing. One pastor said during a break that he had absolutely no feelings about anything. He could not remember ever having cried at all. The profound sense of agony was overwhelming as I heard my beloved German friends re-

count their pain. God also began to awaken a sense of urgency within me to see the situation corrected.

## The Discovery of the Centrality of the Biblical Principle of Love

### *The need to express love through forgiveness*

Let us back up five years from that 1985 conference. In May of 1980 the church planting ministry where we were involved suffered a devastating division. Of the more than ninety people attending, about a third of them left. The pain of that split and the horrible things that were said to me and about me caused terrible hurt and agony in my heart. God helped me confess the sin of bitterness and to pray intensely to avoid it in the future. I asked Him many times to help me love these people as He loved them. Slander was wide spread and many precious relationships were lost. These were relationships with dear friends, some of whom I had had the privilege of pointing to Christ. (My sense of failure and near continual self-incrimination for my terrible ministry mistakes and sins—some real and some only perceived—led to four months of deep depression during the fall of 1980. This depression included a fierce battle against suicidal thoughts. How God brought light and hope into those dark months through His perfect Word and loving friends is a thrilling story for another time.)

When we returned to the States in 1982 for home ministries, God did even more healing in our hearts. From the vantage point of distance and being free from the immediate heavy weight of responsibility for a hurting church, God impressed upon my heart the need to share with these precious people as many messages as I could on the subject of love. I planned the exposition of many New Testament passages on love after our return to Germany in the fall of 1982.

### *The centrality of the love commandments*

During the study of *Matthew 22:34-40* in preparation for one of those messages, God challenged my heart deeply. I had known these verses since my early childhood in a good Bible teaching church. The Scripture reads,

- 34 *But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together.*  
 35 *Then one of them, [which was] a lawyer, asked [him a question], tempting him, and saying,*  
 36 *Master, which [is] the great commandment in the law?*  
 37 *Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.*

38 *This is the first and great commandment.*

39 *And the second [is] like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

40 *On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*

During study of this text, God fixed my eyes on verse forty. The thought surfaced that if one didn't even own a copy of the Old Testament, understanding these two commandments would instruct the reader about what God expected of people. In Old Testament times this is the summary of human responsibility. We certainly have the same responsibility in New Testament times, according to Christ. Suddenly the hub of the Christian life became clear! This expressed the core and essence of life and ministry. This was the kingpin! This was the cornerstone! This was the pivotal statement of Scripture, having to do with human responsibility.

Of course God wanted to say many more things to His people in biblical times than just to speak to them about human responsibility. He instructed regarding His character and abilities, human failure and inability and many other subjects. However these two verses summarize all that God wanted people to know about what they were supposed to do.

In that study session, for the first time, the why and how of the ministry became very simple to grasp. Servants of God are to set the example. We are to love God and love people and our ministry is to help people love God and love people. Conceptually that is a simple concept to understand, but it is only in His strength we can live it out. It is easy to get, impossible to do—in human strength. At first there was nervousness about the profound simplicity and the massive implications of this truth. Why had its majesty and grandeur never adequately been pointed out before? Could it be that this was a strange and therefore non-credible interpretation, since up until then many good Bible teachers had not pointed to the profound centrality of these two commandments?

Every Bible teacher ought to get nervous at the thought of advancing an interpretation of a passage which finds absolutely no verification in the Christian literature of the centuries. Some Twentieth Century Evangelicals seem to invent and teach comical and strange interpretations of passages, apparently without the humility that listens to God's voice through earlier Christians and with an arrogance that makes it seem like all wisdom finally started with this generation!

Initial nervousness was followed by anger at what appeared to be a blinding of Satan to the centrality of these two commandments. Why had sincere and gifted Bible teachers failed to point out that everything in the Scriptures dealing with human responsi-

bility was, in one way or another, a direct expression of these two commandments? Why had such excellent teachers failed to point out the centrality of these in regard to ministry mind set and activity? I felt disturbed and discouraged. God began a re-vamping of thought and activity which continues until today.

Bear in mind that this discovery from God's Word was made in the midst of counseling many German people who were hurting. Immorality, depression, suicidal tendencies and interpersonal tragedies were most common on the list of issues heard in those counseling sessions. Immediate application to the lives of those seeking help was made as these far reaching principles were learned. Christians were encouraged to become expressive of this love so that the recipients would readily say they were loved by these Christians. Non-Christians were introduced to the One who loved them enough to die for them. In a very deliberate fashion, question-asking from 1982 to 1985 regarding the German home was being viewed from this context of Christ's directive to be lovers of God and lovers of people.

### Further Discovery During 1985 Home Ministries

A week after those June 1985 conversations with the pastors in the Black Forest, home ministries were begun in Stateside churches. The heart was full of agony because of these most recent discoveries. On the first Sunday in Akron, Ohio, the urgent plea was issued for brothers and sisters in the States to pray for revival of love in the German home. Situations were described like those mentioned above. At the end of the service a man came up weeping bitterly. He said, "Roger, you can never know what you said tonight!" He had married a woman from German speaking Switzerland. She had been operated on for cancer three weeks earlier. Her father had hugged her for the first time in her life just before she went into surgery! He wept bitterly as he related this and indicated how profoundly helpful it was for him to understand that this was a widespread problem in the German speaking world.

His response prompted more prayer and preparation for the message the following week in Ashland, Ohio entitled: "Loving the Unloved—and often Unlovely." Starting with Christ's love commandments in *Matthew 22:34-40*, the pivotal human responsibility was stated. Since most people, including many Christians, think love is just an emotion, Christ's words in *Matthew 5:43-48* were explained, showing that love is far more than a feeling. Christ said:

- 43 *Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.*  
44 *But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless*

*them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;*

- 45 *That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.*  
46 *For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?*  
47 *And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more [than others]? do not even the publicans so?*  
48 *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect*

Jesus made it clear that love is like light. Light is most needed and most effective in the face of its opposite, namely when it is dark. Love is most needed and most effective when hatred and indifference are present. Of course the greatest expression of hatred in history was at the cross. The greatest expression of love in history was also at the cross, and **LOVE WAS VICTORIOUS OVER HATRED!!!!**

Love is not primarily a feeling we have for people who are nice looking, nice smelling, nice behaving, and who treat us with dignity and respect. Love is most needed as an expression to those people who are indifferent, unkind and even downright mean to us. In fact, when Christ washed the feet of Judas, His betrayer, He did not use a wire brush but rather the same tenderness he showed when washing the feet of Peter, James and John. Christ used tenderness on Judas with full knowledge of the terrible crime he was about to commit against him. That certainly raises a host of questions about how we would treat our "worst enemy" in a similar situation!!

In Ashland, Ohio a description was given of a "typical German father" who, while sincerely and deeply loving his children, seeks to motivate them with biting, stinging criticism as well as negative comparisons with siblings or other positive performers. Certainly the average German father has deep love in his heart for his children, but this negative expression creates exactly the opposite impression in the hearts of the children. Approval, as an expression of "earned and therefore deserved" love, is only given by many fathers on the basis of performance. The country seems to have a disproportionately high number of driven perfectionists. This could partly explain the stellar performance of world famous German architects, printers, musicians, engineers and scientists in all branches. Once again, with deep passion, the Ashland church was asked to pray for revival of biblical, Christlike love in the German home.

In that same message it was pointed out that the German people of 1985 had an unusual problem Germany was an unloved nation. My own aunt said to my mother: "If Roger goes to Germany to serve, you have raised him for nothing." Speaking good

German and having a German license plate means that when seeking help or asking for directions in France, Switzerland, or Holland, disrespect and unkindness are expressed to me because they think I am German.

The memories of the war time years have left deep scars and the Germans, as a people, are mistrusted and even hated by many of their neighbors. Many Germans, prior to 1989-90 when the wall came down and the country was reunified, had no positive sense of national identity. German flags were rarely flown. (It is my personal opinion, not yet verified by Scripture, that appreciation and/or love for one's homeland is a component of the positive identity of a healthy person.) Hitler had fanned this love of homeland into a white heat. Loss of the war and subsequent revelations about Hitler's horrible atrocities drove the postwar generation into an unhealthy cynicism about the rightness or value of national pride and patriotism. Germans who traveled in the United States were often confused by the presence of an American flag, especially when they found them in nearly every church worship center.

It is God's desire, and it must be the desire of His servants as well, that we share His love and forgiveness with these precious people. No country is perfect. Germans need not and must not continue to hate their own country because of atrocities committed by a past generation. Every nation has enormous blotches on its national history. This includes our own United States with its horrible Civil War and sickening abuse of various ethnic groups. Most of us and our ancestors were not involved in these terrible acts. I, personally, grew up in the middle of the Yakima Indian Reservation in Washington State and am aware of the senseless slaughter and mistreatment of the Indians. We have many things about which we cannot be proud in our own American history. Therefore, it is not right for us to throw stones at the German people but rather to show them God's forgiving love expressed in Christ.

After the service that day in Ashland, Ohio, a man whose last name was Schwartzwaldler came up to talk! Literally translated his last name means Black Forester. He said that he was a fourth generation American German who spoke no German, and that in the message he had heard a description of his father as if I had known him for ten years. This was overwhelming. It had been assumed that the harshness, negative criticisms and lack of affection only pertained to the current generation. He said that his father had been raised just like his grandfather before him. For the first time it became clear that this was a problem spanning generations. These discoveries caused nervousness—and at the same time there grew an outlook of great hope and a sense of focus for future ministry in Germany.

During the remainder of our 1985 summer home ministries, while sharing the message "Loving the Unloved—and often Unlovely," across the country many expatriate German-Americans related, often with tears, that they had left Germany because of this harsh coldness and, for this reason, had no desire to ever move back. They said they had never experienced expressions of love until they came to the United States. This, of course, grieved us because we intended to return to Germany in a few short weeks. There was a growing realization that God wanted to use us to make a significant difference in that great country.

Upon returning to Germany in October of 1985, the same message was shared with our precious congregation in Stuttgart which had been delivered in churches across the United States the weeks before. With deep passion and many tears, these dear ones were also told of specific ways some of them had begun to express God's love to others in their midst. It was a very tearful and emotional hour in the life of the church. I loved those people dearly and wanted to share the depth of that love with them.

After the service a young man asked for an appointment to talk. He said he could not remember hearing the words "I love you" from his father nor had his father ever shown him any physical affection. In fact, the only time he could remember his father ever touching his mother was when he laid his hand upon her hand in her casket. We wept bitterly together as he shared these things.

Another lady in the church related, with deepest emotion, that she had grown up in a German ethnic community in Hungary and had never found love until she ventured outside of her German community to have contact with the Hungarians. Her life was touched by a number of Hungarians who expressed love and kindness to her for the first time. The positive response in the Stuttgart church that day and in the following weeks and months was overwhelming and it fueled the passion to share this message more widely.

The next opportunity came at the New Year's retreat at Word of Life Camp south of Munich 1985-86. There, at the largest service—a Sunday morning with about 600—present, this message was given, bathed in prayer. With love, compassion and a deep desire to serve them, these dear people were made aware of this long-standing problem in the German home—and God's glorious solution bringing such vibrant hope and joy. They could experience the love of Christ and then begin to express His love to others.

After that service a tall, dignified, white-haired gentleman in his 70s approached, wanting to share some observations about the message. I listened

with some apprehension, fearing I had offended him, in spite of every attempt to express my love in the message. He said he had grown up in a Prussian militaristic family and had lost five uncles as officers in the Second World War. He remembered from earliest childhood being told by his parents, "Men don't cry," "Men don't show emotion," "Men are to be as hard as steel." With thankfulness and kindness he helped me see that the problem I had observed had been trained into the men of that precious country from their earliest childhood. His explanation added a very significant piece of the puzzle I could never have known. Their society had conditioned them to believe wrong was right in this area and to speak and act accordingly.

In the intervening months and years it has been an indescribable privilege to share this message with dozens of audiences across the country of Germany. During later visits to the Word of Life castles it was learned that the cassette from that January 1986 Sunday morning was still being widely circulated among new staff members who came to work with the Word of Life team. It was overwhelming to see that this message was striking such a responsive cord in the hearts of many.

One young lady, a Bible school graduate in our church, reported that she had gone back to her unsaved father and given him a warm expression of her love. He had never once hugged her or told her he loved her until that moment. She said that the relationship was totally transformed since she, as a Christian, took the initiative to express her love to him. It has been a privilege to see the beautiful healing that has resulted in many relationships because these young Christians have now gone back to demonstrate God's love to their parents.

## **Finding the Key to the Heart of the German People**

In 1963 I ministered in Berlin for seven months alongside seasoned YFC missionaries, Bill and Joannie Yoder. Bill had grown up in Wooster, Ohio, and was then directing the Youth for Christ ministry in that great city. One day, while we were printing the monthly YFC newsletter, Bill made the following unforgettable comment: "I'm praying that someday, someone will find the key to reaching the heart of the German people." Could it be that the kind practical expression of Christ's love was the key to reaching the heart of the resistant German people?

Starting in 1985 I began slowly learning how to express love to the men of our congregation. I would affirm my love for them verbally. It meant listening without judgmentalism to confession of or struggle with sins causing them deep shame—then pointing them to Christ's wonderful forgiveness. It would mean a touch on the arm while shaking their

hand, or a tap on their shoulder, coupled with prayer for the opportunity to give them a meaningful embrace. God gave such opportunities again and again. Hardened hearts softened and often their eyes filled with tears many times. Deep bonds grew between us.

One Sunday morning, prior to the service, I walked up behind a young man, a new Christian, who had a very difficult relationship with his father. God had prompted me to pray for him often during that week. As he was seated, I knelt before him and told him I had been praying about him and his dad that week and asked him how things were going. I told him I loved him. As I had approached him from behind and when I left, I consciously placed my hand on his shoulder. The exchange lasted less than two minutes, maybe less than one. In a conversation about four months later he said that the most meaningful event in his life the whole previous year was the day I put my hand on his shoulder and told him I loved him!!

In conversation with another young man I shared my deep love for him. His father had told him, only once, that he loved him, but had said these words in great anger at the end of a heated conversation. The young man was strongly encouraged to forgive his father for all the hurt and to express his love to his father with words and touch. He did both and their relationship was transformed. Further evidence of that transformed relationship between him and his father came when, some months later, his father greeted me with a warm embrace which he initiated!!

## **A Summary of the Theology and Practice**

From Christ's instruction in *Matthew 22:34-40* the following observations can be made:

### **I. The first Commandment – to Love God**

#### **1. First and foremost the missionary must know how to demonstrate love for God**

Because it is very difficult to be involved in practicing an attitude or action which we have not clearly defined, one thing we do in class is to critique the following attempt to define "love for God." Many classes of students have worked on these lines, including a good number of Doctor of Ministry candidates with an M.Div. and more than twenty years of ministry experience. Without exception, every student has related that this is the first time they have ever sought to formulate an encompassing working definition of "love for God." If we don't have a clear concept in our minds, how will we hope to express it to Him in a way which pleases Him?

**An attempt to formulate a working definition of love for God:**

*Spirit empowered, fervent, faithful devotion to the God of the Bible which mobilizes me to renounce every form of sin and to live in complete dependence on Christ and in joyful obedience to His revealed will in every detail, overflowing in practical loving service to others, ultimately leading them to respond in like love to God and others.*

Note that this definition seeks to balance several biblical elements: Attitude of devotion to His person, purity, obedience to His perfect Word, service to others and reproduction of reproducers.

## 2. The importance of this love

*Revelation 2:2-5*—Biblical first love is more than mere orthodoxy of form Cf. *Isaiah 1:10—20* (note v. 19)

The Bible teaches that at least six good things are worthless without biblical love. In the “love passage” of *1 Corinthians 13:1-3* we learn, first, that eloquence without love is just irritating noise; second, great insight and wisdom are empty bubbles without biblical love; third, visionary faith which can remove mountains is valueless without biblical love; fourth, generosity which motivates one to give it all away is an empty shell without biblical love; fifth, martyrdom—the sacrifice of one’s own life for a cause—is a waste without biblical love. *Revelation 2* adds a sixth, namely that theological orthodoxy and correct practices without biblical first-love fall under God’s judgment. Brethren, if it is that important, then we must passionately rediscover what it means to live out this directive of our Lord.

## 3. The focus of this love

*Luke 10:38-42*—In the Mary and Martha scene, Jesus said that Mary chose “the better part.” Every serious Christian would agree that focus upon the person of Christ is a facet of this love which pleases Him. Martha could have chosen to focus on Him in the midst of her busy preparations but instead, with jealousy and anger, she focused on her sister’s failure to help her. Christ was not exalting the supposed inactivity of Mary while putting down the necessary hard work of Martha. Martha’s spirit and attitude were wrong. If Mary had been absent from the house, then Martha could have done all the work of serving and feeding Christ with a proper attitude.

## 4. The Early Church began cross-cultural ministry out of the context of this devotion to Christ. The first cross-cultural missionaries went from worship to work.

*Acts 13:1-4*

1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been

brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

- 2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.
- 3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid [their] hands on them, they sent [them] away.
- 4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

V. 2—“they ministered to the Lord”—“ministered” (leitourgeo) = service (attending to Him).

“and fasted”—meaning at the very least an intense focus in the Lord

## 5. A response of love

The Early Christians understood this as a “response love” which was their answer to the love Christ had demonstrated to them. God is the source of all love and the love a Christian demonstrates to Him is really derived from Him.

1 *John 4:19* “We love, because He first loved us.”

## 6. Christ’s love for us is to be our driving motor for service.

*2 Corinthians 5:14* “The love of Christ constrains us ...” Literally translated: “the love of the Christ ...” This love which Paul describes is not Paul’s love for Christ. It is a genitive of possession, meaning it is Christ’s love for Paul.

(NASB “controls”). The word ‘constrains’ has also been translated “imprisoned.” What better prison can a believer be in than to know he or she is totally surrounded and held captive by the great love of Christ.

## 7. The purity and the intensity of our proper motivation for service is in direct proportion to how well we comprehend the magnitude and purity of Christ’s love for us.

In the first year of teaching at the seminary the students of the class were asked at this point to list as many facets of God’s love for us which they could. After calling out about five or six, the room went silent. They were asked if they could think of more and there was silence. It certainly appears that at least that group of students was poorly taught regarding the greatness of God’s love. If we have a weak grasp of His love for us, we will have weak motivation for service. This raised a larger question about how well the greater Church is instructed regarding the magnitude and quality of God’s love for us?

At that point a list of at least some of the facets of God’s love was made. In part, God love is ...

- 1) **Atoning**—*John 3:16* “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”
  - 2) **Giving**—*John 3:16*
  - 3) **Humble**—*Philippians 2:5-8* “5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” (Is it possible to be proud and truly love?)
  - 4) **Self-denying**—*Philippians 2:5-8*
  - 5) **Full of compassion**—*Psalms 103:13* “Like as a father pitieth [his] children, [so] the LORD pitieth them that fear him.”
  - 6) **Forgiving**—*Isaiah 38:17* “Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul [delivered it] from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.”
  - 7) **Everlasting**—*Jeremiah 31:3* “The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, [saying], Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.”
  - 8) **Active, life-giving**—*Ephesians 2:4-5* “But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love where-with he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)”
  - 9) **Rich in mercy**—*Ephesians 2:4*
  - 10) **Chastening, correcting**—*Hebrews 12:6* “For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.”
  - 11) **Comforting, consoling**—*2 Thessalonians 2:16* “Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given [us] everlasting consolation and good hope through grace”
  - 12) **Sacrificing**—*Romans 5:6* “For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.”
  - 13) **Totally undeserved by us and in that sense unconditional**—*Romans 5:8* “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”
  - 14) **Impartial**—*Titus 3:4* “But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared”
  - 15) **Secure**—*Romans 8:38-39* “38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” *1 John 4:18* “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.”
  - 16) **Purposeful**—*John 3:16* “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, THAT (= in order that) whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”
  - 17) **Immense beyond all comprehension**—*Ephesians 3:19* “And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.”
  - 18) **Total, complete, finished**—*John 13:1* “Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.”
- When Paul said in *2 Corinthians 5:14* that the “love of Christ constrains us” he was referring to the love partially described in this list above. We must not forget that Christ gave this model of love to husbands to show them how to love their wives. The songwriter F. M. Lehman formulated it very well in his song, “The Love of God”:
- “Could we with ink the ocean fill, and were the skies of parchment made; were every stalk on earth a quill, and every man a scribe by trade, to write the love of God above would drain the ocean dry. Nor could the scroll contain the whole, though stretched from sky to sky. O love of God, how rich and pure! How measureless and strong! It shall forever more endure, the saints’ and angels’ song.” (Nazarene Publishing House, 1945).

## 8. God’s love is unearned and undeserved

The Early Church understood fully that God’s love for Israel was not conditioned by their relative size, strength, prowess or worthiness by any earthly standards.

### *Deuteronomy 7:6-8 (cf. vs. 9-10)*

- 6 For thou [art] an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that [are] upon the face of the earth.
- 7 The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye [were] the fewest of all people:

- 8 *But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.*
- 9 *Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he [is] God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations;*
- 10 *And repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face.*

*Cf. 1 Corinthians 1:26-31 "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble ... that no flesh should glory in His presence."*

### 9. The Early Church understood that a person who sensed having been forgiven much would love much in response.

*Luke 7:47 "Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, [the same] loveth little."*

Recognition of personal sinfulness, and the resultant sense of brokenness and need for God's great forgiveness, happens and grows as the believer regularly meets God in His holy presence. There can be no clear and total recognition of human sinfulness apart from this meeting with God in His holiness, and there can be no craving for forgiveness apart from our recognition of human sinfulness. Remember in *Isaiah 6:1-8* the prophet saw God face to face: *"Then said I, Woe [is] me! for I am undone; because I [am] a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."*

The Apostle Paul became wedged in by the Holy Spirit into the position of balance between the greatness of the undeserved forgiveness which he had been given and the great confidence of Christ's calling and equipping of him to do the work of an Apostle. *1 Timothy 1:12-15* *"12 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; 13 Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did [it] ignorantly in unbelief. 14 And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. 15 This [is] a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."*

### 10. The Early Church understood that love moved Christ to come to earth.

The Early Church understood that love drove Christ to come down to earth as the first missionary,

and response love would drive His followers to cross any boundaries necessary to copy His model. Christ gave the perfect model of leaving home for a missionary journey. This is the exposition of what is to be the heartthrob of any servant of our Lord, especially that of every cross-cultural missionary. (Note a valuable article on the Kenosis by Grace Theological Seminary founder, Dr. Alva J. McClain.)

#### *Philippians 2:5-8*

- 1) What did Christ leave?
- 2) To what conditions and receptivity did Christ come here on earth?
- 3) What was His mind set when He came?
- 4) What are the great-commission implications of Philippians 2:5-8

## II. The Second Commandment – To Love Others

Note *Matthew 22:35-40*—particularly 37-40

37 *Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.*

38 *This is the first and great commandment.*

39 *And the second [is] like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

40 *On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*

### 1. This love is important

This command is equal to the first command to love God. In fact, a number of Scriptures make it extremely clear that if a believer claims to have love for God but fails to express love toward others, the claimed love for God is empty.

### 2. This love is not just nice feelings for nice people

Since love for others is commanded, it is more than positive emotional feelings toward people whom the believer likes. Genuine emotions cannot be commanded. Screen actors obviously can "command" or "act out" emotions for the sake of demonstration.

An interesting question for youth discussion in groups is: Is love "commandable?" Usual answer is NO, because people are thinking primarily of the feeling-aspect of love and they know that emotions are not "commandable."

### 3. This love is intended for everyone

Christians are to express this Christlike love to anyone in need—our "Neighbor."

*Matthew 5:43-48*

43 *Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.*

44 *But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless*

*them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;*

- 45 *That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.*
- 46 *For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?*
- 47 *And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more [than others]? do not even the publicans so?*
- 48 *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect*

Christ corrected the prevailing false notion of His day that love was only for those who treated the giver of love in pleasant ways. In fact, He made it clear that true love is most evident when it is expressed to people who can only be described as evil.

Christ's definition of His love working through the life of a believer from this context: Helpful kindness expressed to a recipient who is an enemy or at least viewed as detestable by the giver of love.

Christ also said love is helpful, expensive kindness expressed to needy people who are unpleasant to look at and part of a culturally repugnant group which is rejected by the culture of the giver of love. We note this in the story of the 'Good Samaritan.' **Luke 10:25-37** (Three attitudes toward people in the story of the Good Samaritan—outline from message from Dr. John Talley in the early 1970s):

- 1) Thieves—What's yours is mine if I can get it;
- 2) Priest & Levite—What's mine is mine and I'm keeping it;
- 3) Samaritan—What's mine is yours if you need it.

#### 4. The personal model for this love

The model is the self-preservation love believers already actively express toward themselves.

"As yourself" Compare **Ephesians 5:28-31** for meaning from a parallel text. We are not commanded to pump up love for ourselves, but rather express the self-preservation love we already are active in demonstrating toward ourselves. If we are hungry, we get food. If our neighbor is hungry, as a demonstration of love, we get food for our neighbor.

#### 5. The encompassing nature of this love

Everything believers do to minister to unsaved people in the Great Commission and to edify believers in the worldwide body of Christ finds its source in God and is a practical expression of this second love commandment.

#### 6. The Christlike nature of this love

The Bible describes a love operative through believers which is like Christ's love.

The following partial list of the facets of God's love through His children to others is only intended as an incomplete overview. As the reader looks over this list, ask the question: "On a scale of 1—10, how do I measure up to this standard in my life?"

- 1) **Seeks to cover others**—**Proverbs 10:12** "Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins." **Proverbs 17:9** "He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth [very] friends."
- 2) **Enduring**—**Proverbs 17:17** "A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity."
- 3) **Oriented toward the needs of others**—**Matthew 19:19** "Honour thy father and [thy] mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." **Galatians 5:14** "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, [even] in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." **Luke 6:31** "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise."
- 4) **Impartial, unconditional**—**Luke 6:35** "But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and [to] the evil." cf. **Matthew 5:43-48**
- 5) **Merciful**—**Luke 10:36-37**—the Good Samaritan
- 6) **Christlike, Godly**—**John 13:34-35** 'A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all [men] know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.' cf. **Ephesians 5:2 & 25; 1 Thessalonians 4:9; 1 John 4:7** "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God."
- 7) **Sacrificial**—**John 15:13** "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."
- 8) **Without hypocrisy, full of integrity**—**Romans 12:9-10** "[Let] love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good."
- 9) **Affectionate**—**Romans 12:10** "[Be] kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another."
- 10) **Serves the other person**—**Romans 12:10**
- 11) **Fulfilling** —**Romans 13:8-10** "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. 9 For this,

*Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if [there be] any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love [is] the fulfilling of the law."* 1 Timothy 1:5 "Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and [of] a good conscience, and [of] faith unfeigned."

- 12) **Not vengeful**—Romans 13:10 "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour"
- 13) **Builds up the recipient**—1 Corinthians 8:1 "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth." Hebrews 10:24 "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works."
- 14) **Encompassing**—1 Corinthians 16:14 "Let all your things be done with charity."
- 15) **Serving mutually**—Galatians 5:13 "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only [use] not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another."
- 16) **Unifying**—Philippians 2:2 "Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, [being] of one accord, of one mind." Colossians 2:2 "That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ."
- 17) **Admonishing, correcting, broken hearted**—Acts 20:31 "Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." Hebrews 12:5-11; 2 Corinthians. 2:4; Galatians 6:1.
- 18) **Compassionate, merciful**—Galatians 6:2 "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." Luke 10:33 + 37.
- 19) **Understanding, compassion, empathy**—Hebrews 5:2 "Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity."
- 20) **Hospitable**—Hebrews 13:1-2 "Let brotherly love continue. 2 Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."

## 7. Biblical love must be expressed

Many people claim to have love in their hearts for others, but it is equally true that the intended recipients do not receive the message the sender is thinking of sending. Every student of communication

knows that what is communicated is not what the sender intended to send but what the recipient understood. Love must be communicated or the recipient will never know it. It became apparent in the years of our ministry in Germany that many believers did not know how to express their love to others. A number of missionaries who sincerely wanted to point people to the Lord were inwardly bound up so that their lack of freedom to express Christ's love severely hampered the effectiveness of their work.

I remarked once in a session in which short term workers were being reviewed that many of them were incapable of expressing love. This was seen, by me at least, as one of the most significant hindrances to the effectiveness of these missionaries. Others in the conversation brushed this observation aside, apparently viewing it as too simplistic. My conviction remains that this is the crux of the problem.

When encouraged to reach out to others such people might respond: 'Well, I could never just walk up and talk to him!' 'I could never just go over and knock on her door and ask if I could spend time with her. I'd feel so strange doing that'. 'I could never give those new neighbors a plate of cookies as a welcome gift. They'd think I'm trying to butter them up for the kill or something!' 'I don't 'do' hugs! I've never felt free giving someone a hug and I'm not about to start now. It's just the way I am.' 'I've always had a hard time forgiving others. My folks never did it. We just aren't that way in our family either.' 'Verbal compliments cause a big head! And besides, if someone else is doing what they are supposed to, I don't thank people for just doing their duty.'

Each of us has probably heard these and more excuses for withholding love. Perhaps we have used some of them. But if Christ would give a gift, if He would talk to strangers, if He could touch a hurting person, if He could forgive us, if He could encourage with words, then so can all of His followers. He lives within each of His followers and any form of love He showed, He can demonstrate to others through them, if they are willing to let Him.

Marriage and family counselor Dr. Gary Chapman delivered a message called the 'Languages of Love' which enjoyed wide circulation as a cassette. Later he later published this teaching in a book form bearing the same title. He discusses five "channels" of love the Lord used to communicate love and acceptance to His followers, and then applies them effectively to marriage and family.

Dr. Chapman's tape was given to us as a gift for Christmas in 1988 and his instruction has become the core of what I believe and teach about how Christ expressed love and how He expects His followers to practically demonstrate love to others.

These “languages of love” find much wider application than just in marriage, however. Pre-evangelism and reaching resistant or distant people are direct applications I have made of this teaching. The tape is required listening for my Philosophy of Missions class. The WATTS acrostic is only to be viewed as a memory aid. These facets are not listed necessarily in the order of their importance but so that they could be easily remembered.

**W Words** (of encouragement, affirmation)—*Deuteronomy 7:7-8; John 13:34-35*.

Our Lord was constantly affirming His disciples in their relationship to Him and His love for them. He spoke words which communicated clearly that He loved His followers and they belonged to Him. He spoke with distant people (the woman at the well) in such a way that they knew they were being viewed with dignity, respect. He showed them they were worth talking to.

**A Actions** (of service)—*Romans 5:8*.

Christ demonstrated His servanthood with practical action. He washed the feet of His disciples, He fed the hungry, He ministered to the needs of many sick and lame in the country of Palestine. These, of course, were demonstrations of His Messiahship but also practical acts of loving service to every recipient.

**T Touch** (Tenderness)—*Matthew 19:13-15; Mark 10:16*.

Little children were brought to our Lord and He put them on His lap and touched them. He touched leprous people whom nobody else would approach, let alone touch. A comparable group in present day society would be those who are HIV positive or have AIDS. Jesus communicated His love through touch.

**T Time** (Attention, listening)—*Mark 3:14*.

Jesus chose His disciples that they might be with Him and He might be able to spend time with them. Repeatedly throughout the Gospels we find our Lord giving special attention to these disciples and other followers, both men and women, both from the standpoint of instruction as well as hearing their opinions, attitudes, and confusion.

**S Sending gifts**—*John 3:16*.

God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son. These words are so well known to everyone who has any knowledge of the Bible that it is easy to forget the power and importance of this statement. God's greatest gift to mankind was His son. Imitators of Him are able to be free in expressing love through sending gifts.

In addition to these five channels or means of expressing love which Gary Chapman has so eloquently described in his tape and book, several others have occurred to me which also could be added to this list:

**Forgiveness**—*Eph. 4:32* “*And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*” Hardly anything bonds the heart of two people together deeper than when full forgiveness for a deep wound has been given and received.

**Discipline**—*Hebrews 12:5-11*

Christ our Lord also spoke correctively to His followers and expected the church to express discipline as a form of love. The Hebrews passage makes it clear that a son who does not receive discipline lacks the security of knowing that he has a father who loves him. This is a painful form of the expression of love, but clearly needed on some occasions.

As in raising children, discipline as a form of expressing love should be used as sparingly as possible and everything short of painful discipline whenever possible. Quite evidently the Apostle Paul used admonishing words (*Acts 20:31*) as one form of correction and according to that passage he spoke those words with tears. When he ‘got in their face’ with correction, tears streaming down his cheeks, they knew he cared and loved them.

**8. Love expression is on a spectrum ranging from tender to tough.**

Paul expressed the toughness regularly with tears and viewed his expression as a model for the Ephesian elders (and for us today) to follow (*Acts 20:17-38*). Parents who discipline their children are expressing love to them according to *Hebrews 12:5-11* and many other passages.

**Conclusion and Applications**

The Church of Jesus Christ and the end of this Twentieth Century needs to passionately rediscover the great love commandments our Lord gave, seeing both their grandeur and centrality to life. The clearer and deeper our comprehension of Christ's love for us, the purer and more intense will be our response love back to Him. The purer our ‘first-love’ response to Him, the greater the love available to flow through our lives to others. The deeper our visible and expressed love for people, the greater our credibility and effectiveness in our ministry. People really do not care how much we know until they know how much we care.

How many Bible school and seminary students have passed all the exams and can say all the right

words and sentences, but who could not be gentle enough with a cat to make it purr!!! They have harangued, wheedled, needled, nagged, irritated and condemned the listeners until their hearts broke or they rebelled. Churches have been needlessly split and unsaved people have been hardened and driven far from God and His good news of forgiveness by people who refused to express Christlike kindness and love. The numbers of candidates we are currently seeing prepare for cross-cultural ministries are perhaps fewer than 30 years ago, so we MUST make sure that all of this smaller group are Christlike lovers who are effective servants from the very first day of their ministries!

Allow me to make some practical conclusions for us as instructors of missions:

### **1. Teach the love commandments**

We must give clear biblical instruction regarding the centrality of the love commandment to all of our disciplines. Anthropology, biblically understood, should only be the proper study of human kind in order to find more effective ways to express love for them. Paul, in *1 Corinthians 9:19-23*, sought to be sensitive to his hearers because he loved them and wanted to win them to Christ. Therefore, missiological anthropology is not a discipline alone but an expression of love. Cross-cultural communication is an attitude and a skill which must emanate from this hub of love as described above. Cultural adaptation and lifestyle equivalence are not mere 'methodologies' in order to create a certain image. Rather these must be expressions of true love for and appreciation of the cultural context of the message recipients. Language learning to the highest proficiency possible is not a technique but an expression of genuine love for people. All the missiological disciplines must be viewed and clearly instructed from this hub our Lord has defined.

### **2. Model Christ's love**

We instructors must model these love commandments in all we do by constantly demonstrating kindness and honest directness with every student regarding expectations, class performance, life change, and any other practical matter. When they graduate, they MUST be able to say: Our instructors cared about us and showed us, constantly, that they did. They loved us like Christ loves.

### **3. Be a conscious mentor**

Students in the missiological disciplines must be mentored so that they become Christlike communicators of God's love in a variety of ways. If it is discerned that a student we'll call Bill cannot freely express love for parents because of unresolved problems, Bill certainly is disqualified for mission service

anywhere until this problem is rectified. It only takes a fellow missionary or man from the church to act like Bill's dad and Bill's inner war will find a new target. Bill must learn to go back and build genuine relationships of love and kindness with his parents in order to break down the barriers against the expression of caring love which have built up within his heart.

A number of people dodge responsibility for personal growth by saying, 'That's just the way I am' while continuing to demonstrate an unbiblical attitude or to speak in loveless ways to others. No fantastic musical giftedness or brilliant language proficiency or impressive oratory prowess or even the combination of all three can justify allowing such a student to pass through our educational systems without being confronted with the need to become Christlike. If Christ wasn't 'that way' than 'that way' is sinful and wrong and not just merely a quirk of personality. While expressing all due respect for the value of personality tests and the helpful things that I personally have gained from them, any behaviors which fall short of the beautiful balance of Christ must be addressed by a mentor so that people grow.

A person who claims inability to express love to another person must learn to express that love. A person who cannot speak in loving terms must learn, with God's help and the help of a mentor, to speak in loving ways. I did not grow up speaking the German language and wanted to minister to the Germans so I gladly learned their beautiful language. We must learn to speak the languages of love our Lord spoke. We cannot be allowed to dodge our responsibility by saying, 'That's just the way I am.' There is no justification whatsoever for tolerating less than a total commitment to learn to demonstrate love like Christ did. He said that learning to love Him and love other people is our main responsibility while we live on this planet!

In the closing minutes of the 1996 Evangelical Missiological Society National Convention in Orlando, Dr. David Hesselgrave made an impassioned plea for us to avoid the invention of new theologies and new methodologies in our discipline. He urged us to return to the Scriptures and the model of Christ. As I stood in the back of the room and heard that battle cry of our seasoned and godly mentor, my heart shouted a thousand amens of agreement.

I have diligently sought to avoid the invention or presentation of a new theology or methodology. Rather the rediscovery of the majestic, significant, effective centrality of what our Lord called the greatest of all human responsibilities has been the passion on my heart. These love commandments clearly address the central need of every human being. Significant works in psychology have agreed that the basic need of people is to know they are loved. Why

would it surprise us that our Lord addressed this widely recognized basic human need with these two fundamental commandments?

I am thankful beyond words for that plea from Dr. Hesselgrave and want to express public appreciation to him for his godly mentoring of a younger generation of missionaries and instructors of missions with such biblical balance. I trust that these minutes have been a contribution toward fulfillment of your intensely expressed request, Dr. Hesselgrave.

Before closing I want to express deepest appreciation to my wife, Nancy, for her faithful love for nearly 32 years of life and ministry together. She has shared fully in these discoveries with me. God is allowing us a thrill in married love neither of us

dreamed possible at the start. I also want to express deepest appreciation for my outstanding and faithful student secretary, Valerie Kesterke. Without her sacrificial help this presentation in this form would have been totally impossible.

May God's richest blessings rest upon all of us as we, with passion and abandon, seek to discover the meaning and application of our Lord's commandments in our lives and ministries. To God alone be all the glory through the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. —Amen.

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