

May 2022

Dear brethren and the household of faith:

It is my pleasure to write this newsletter on one topic that many may not have thought about. Jesus once spoke about what will be happening in the last days. There are many things Christ said, but we want to focus on one of them.

In Deuteronomy 6:5 it says: "And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might."

We are to love the Lord with all we have. Why? Because He first loved us. "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" (John 3:16). This is the greatest thing God wants from us—that we should love Him. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends (John 15:13).

Jesus said that in the last days the love of many shall wax cold. This is one of the signs of the last days. And those whose love shall wax cold are those who first loved God, those whom God called into His Church, those who were part of the work of God, those who were laborers with Christ.

Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, *because thou hast left thy first love* (Revelation 2:1–4, emphasis mine throughout).

And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold (Matthew 24:12).

Many have grown cold; they do not love God as they once did. Jesus knew this would happen, and here is an example: when He and the disciples were eating, He asked Peter three times:

So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep (John 21:15–17).

Why? He wanted to know if Peter's love toward Him would be cold or not. Do we love God now more than when we first came to know Him, or has our love waxed cold?

But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you (John 5:4).

Jesus knew that some people did not have the love of God in them. They were pretending to love God. They had an outward show, but in their hearts they did not have the love of God in them. When love is cold among brethren this might take place:

And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, *and brethren*, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death (Luke 21:16).

Many thought that betrayers would come from outside the church. But, betrayers are those whom you are eating with at the same table.

Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen. And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake. Then they suorned men which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God. And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the council, And set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law: For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us. And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel (Acts 6:9–15).

Jesus said that the people will know that we are Christ's if we love one another.

By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another (John 13:35).

This is the commandment Christ gave to His disciples (John 15:12). Christ loved us in that He laid down His life for us.

Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth (1 John 16–18).

Lack of love is what is causing splits in the churches of God groups, that has made some to go Babylonian ways, watering down doctrines. People love leisure more than God. They appear from the outside to be of God, but they do not love Him as He is to be loved. Many now love other things of the world. This should tell us where we stand.

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be *lovers of their own selves*, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, *lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God*; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away (2 Timothy 3:1–4).

We are in the last days of this age, we should look at what is taking place in the church, not outside. Verse 5: *Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away*. They do not love: "Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, people love leisure and money more than God (verse 3). Many are now open to seducing spirits because of a love of leisure.

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron (1 Timothy 4:1–2).

Many do not fear committing sin because their love toward God has waxed cold.

But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord (2 Peter 2:10–11).

They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate (Titus 1:16).

Many boast because they have numbers, but they do not love God.

For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy (2 Timothy 3:2).

Many pretend to love God like the Pharisees of Jesus' day.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves (Matthew 23:14–15).

The Apostle Paul said this to the church when he was in Thessalonica:

And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness (2 Thessalonians 2:10–12).

If we love God, we must love His truth which is His Word—the Word He gave His Church from the beginning. The love of God will enable us to stand strong even during troubling times.

Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. 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. We love him, because he first loved us (1 John 4:17–19).

It will enable us to abide in Him—it will enable us to know God.

Can we just love God because we receive things from Him? No, we are to love Him even if we get nothing from Him. He created us because He loved us.

When he slew them, then they sought him: and they returned and enquired early after God. And they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer. Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues. For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his covenant. But he, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath. For he remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again (Psalm 78: 34–39).

He helps us, but do we love Him?

And smote all the firstborn in Egypt; the chief of their strength in the tabernacles of Ham: But made his own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock. And he led them on safely, so that they feared not: but the sea overwhelmed their enemies. And he brought them to the border of his sanctuary, even to this mountain, which his right hand had purchased. He cast out the heathen also before them, and divided them an inheritance by line, and made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents. Yet they tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies: But turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers: they were turned aside like a deceitful bow (verses 51–57).

Why is the love of many, if not all, growing cold? Love is the life blood of the Church. It is the bond of perfection and that is why Paul said this to the church in Corinth:

But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way. [He showed that love exceeds all things.] (1 Corinthians 12:31).

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not [love], I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not [love], I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not [love], it profiteth me nothing. [Love] suffereth long, and is kind; [love] envieth not; [love] vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily

provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. [Love] never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, [love], these three; but the greatest of these is [love] (1 Corinthians 13:1–13).

How is your love toward God? Is it hot or cold? Compare yourself now to the first time you heard the Truth and came into the church. Our prayer is that your love toward God may grow hot till the end.

Your servant in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Isaya Owak', with a large, sweeping flourish above the name.

Isaya Owak