

Pastor's Sharing —Rekindling the Passion for God Rev. Almon Li (5/4/2015)

The church's sub-theme for April to June is "rekindling the passion for God". I believe that a lot of believers have withdrawn from the Lord's path and become less interested in spirituality mainly because they have lost their love to God.

We should be aware a very important principle, i.e. all spiritual pursuits or ministries must be based on love otherwise they cannot be sustained zealously. A sister, who had served the Lord zealously for many years, said, "Over the past years, the saddest thing I saw in my ministries was the fading out of believers' first love to God." This is exactly what our Lord wants to remind us: our attitude to serving Him. We must rekindle our passion for God time after time.

So what should we do? Apostle Peter had denied the Lord thrice. After his repentance, the Lord Jesus did not condemn Peter but reconfirm with Peter on what He regarded as the most important thing: "Do you truly love me?" Today, the Lord Jesus is asking us the same question. How would you reply?

One of the most important ways to show our love is to spend time with the one we love. With whom the more time you spend, the more you love him/her. Therefore, we should designate a time with God every day. God has promised us, "Come near to God and He will come near to you." (James 4:8). Many of us know this "secret" but very few of us can keep this practice due to the lack of concrete outcomes.

However, we should not expect any instant effect from spiritual things such as bible reading, praying, waiting for God or change in life. Just because it is difficult to see the outcomes instantly, it is easy for us to give up; if we persist, we will see the outcomes over time. Therefore, we should adjust our mentality: we come near to God because we love Him, not because we want to get something. In fact, we will lack nothing (spiritually, physically) in God, what else should we want from our prayers to God?

It was noted in the Bible that Moses' face was radiant after he had been with God for 40 days on the mountain. Moses had done nothing except being present with God. If we always come near to God, we shall feel His love; if we always come near to Jesus' heart, we shall have greater passion, courage and burden on His kingdom. All these cannot be achieved by any human effort.

We can come near to God to such an extent that we always feel His presence and that He is with us and inside us. Whenever we feel God's presence, we should give our heartfelt thanks to Him because what a wonderful grace it is. If we always walk with the Lord in our daily lives and look upon His glory, we would have the desire to come closer to God, to be more like the Lord Jesus in our thinking and behaviours. God's presence can cleanse our soul and spirit, so that we will have less negative thinking and that our fretful and restless heart will be calmed down.

Today many churches cannot grow although that they have rich biblical knowledge, great faith in God, various spiritual gifts and willing members to spread the gospel. The major cause of their problem may be their lack of the "only one thing that is needed" i.e. always coming near to the Lord Jesus, as the maidservant Mary did.

The Lord Jesus once said, "I am the vine and you are the branches. Apart from me you can do nothing." Therefore, we should build up and nurture a close relationship with God, so that our passion for God will be burning in our heart. Only a spiritual life which is founded on love and matured can sustain this passion and please God.

