

Church in Regina

NEW LANGUAGE

CHRIST IS A CHILD BORN TO US,
THE EMMANUEL BORN OF A VIRGIN. (ISA. 9:6; MATT. 1:23).

Loving the Lord and Loving One Another for the Organic Building Up of the Church as the Body of Christ—Week 1

To Overcome the Leaving of the First Love

The Lord charges us to overcome all kinds of religion, and...He also charges us to overcome some other matters. The first thing we are charged to overcome is the **leaving**, the **missing**, the **losing**, of the first love. Many in Catholicism are absolutely for the Catholic Church, but they do not love the Lord or His holy Word. They do not say, "The Bible says..." Instead, they say, "The pope says..." or "The church says..." When they say "the church," they mean the Catholic Church. This is why the Lord Jesus in Revelation 2 says that Jezebel calls herself a prophetess and teaches and leads His slaves astray. This indicates that the Roman Catholic Church is a self-appointed prophetess, one who presumes to be authorized by God to speak for God. Those who are loyal Catholics respect only what the pope says, what the church says. They do not care for what the Bible says. This indicates that **they do not have any love given to the Lord.**

If we love someone, we surely want to **hear his voice, his word.** On the other hand, if we do not love a person, we do not want to hear his voice, his word...When we wake up in the morning, the first thing we should do is say, "O Lord Jesus. O Lord Jesus." It is better to add, "I love You." We should say, "O Lord Jesus, I love You. O Lord Jesus, I love You." How intimate, how sweet, and how affectionate this is!..Our God, our Christ, our Lord, is not only loving but also **very affectionate.** He is full of affection. God has "fallen in love" with us, His chosen and redeemed people. If you say, "O Lord Jesus, I love You," right away you will fall in love with Him. Quite often I would not do some things, not merely because they are not right or because I fear God but because I love Him. I would say, "Lord Jesus, I love You, so I cannot do this." **I just cannot do certain things, because I love Him.**

...[C]onsider what the first love is. Many Christians think that the first love is the love with which we loved the Lord Jesus when we were saved. I would not say that this is wrong, but it is not adequate. The first love, which is the best love, is much more than this... The first love is **the love that is God Himself.** In the Bible we are told that God is love. In the whole universe, only God is love. The Lord charges the husbands to love their wives. But it is impossible for the husbands to love their wives in themselves because we are not love. There is only one person who is love—God.

God is not only the best but also the first. In the whole universe, God is first. Genesis 1:1 says, "In the beginning God..." This is the opening of the Bible. God is the beginning. God is the first. Colossians tells us that our Christ must have the first place. He must have the preeminence. Christ must be the first. What is it to recover the first love? To **recover the first love** is to **consider the Lord Jesus as the first in everything.** If we **make Christ everything** in our life, that means we have overcome the loss of the first love.

We need to consider our situation. **Is Christ the first in everything with us?** The first item that we have to overcome is the loss of Christ as the first, as the best, as the real love. The failure of Israel was that they forsook God, the fountain of living waters, and the degradation of the church is the leaving of the first love. Actually, to leave the first love is just to leave Christ, not taking Him as the first in everything...Christ should be first **not only in big things** but **also in small things**...We should give Christ the preeminence in the way that we dress and the way that we style our hair. When we give Christ the preeminence in everything, this is to recover the loss of the first love.

(Excerpts from The Overcomers, chapter 2)

Announcements:

- ◆ Brothers' Meeting—Feb. 26 at 6pm
- ◆ Love Feast—Mar. 12
- ◆ Sisters' Meeting—Mar. 12 at 4pm

Church Meetings:

- ◆ Lord's Table, Lord's Day, 10:00-12:00PM
- ◆ Prayer Meeting, Tuesdays, 7:00-8:00PM
- ◆ YP & College Meetings, Fridays, 6:45-8:30PM
- ◆ Children's Meeting, Saturdays, 10:00-11:00AM
- ◆ Small Group, Fridays & Saturdays, 7:00-9:00PM

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Prayer Burdens:

1. Lord, cause our faith to grow exceedingly and our love for one another to increase. Infuse us more with faith so that we may receive more of You as our life. Save us from being lovers of the self, money, and pleasure. Lord, make us the overcomers who live in faith and love today.
2. Lord, rekindle our love for You. May we love You with our best love, our first love. Lord, constrain us so that we may love You and love the church. Pour more of Your love **for the church** in us.
3. Lord, may Your love in us grow more daily. Save us from not loving You and not loving the brothers. Make us those who are humble so that we may be saved from all kinds of destruction. May love prevail in us and among us.
4. Lord, save us from doing things without love. Cause us to exercise our spirit of love to do all things in love and out of love. May Your life increase and grow in us so that this life may be expressed as love in the church.
5. Thank You, Lord, for being our wonderful Shepherd. Keep us open to You and save us from running astray. Lord, cause us to be those who are faithful to cherish and nourish Your sheep.
6. Lord, we want to participate in Your wonderful shepherding in the church life today. Cause us to exercise our spirit to be one with You and to shepherd others. Keep us abiding in You as the true Vine so that we may bear remaining fruit.

North America/Other Burdens

1. Pray for the vitalization of all the churches in the Lord's recovery through the exercise and practice of all aspects of the God-ordained way to become a living testimony of Jesus in all the localities for an anti-testimony to the degradation around us.
2. Pray for a lampstand in Oxbow. Strengthen Sister Karen to reign in life to be a testimony and recover her whole family to stand in the unique ground of oneness.
3. Pray for Brother Isaac and Marie Hiebert who plan to move to Foam Lake at the beginning of April. May this move be one with the Lord's move for raising up a lampstand in that town.

Church in Regina:

1. Lord, we pray for our contacts. Recover them back to the genuine ground of oneness. Remember the Sernat Family (Anthony, Orlando and Phoebe), Reena Vaidya & Family, Mugisha Family & Dadie Family.
2. Please pray for the arrival of Morco family. May they be able to settle in Regina and be gained to see Christ and the church.

Misaiming Concerning Loving the Lord

Misaiming: "Most men I know would feel somewhat uncomfortable singing 'love songs' to another man, even if he is Jesus Christ. The mystic's love for Jesus is romantic; the orthodox believer's love for Jesus is filial and is always linked to his saving work....Apart from his saving acts we do not have any reason to love him any more than we love any other historical figure" (Modern Reformation, July/August 1995, p. 28).

Truth: The **Bible** is a record of a divine romance between God and His chosen, redeemed, regenerated, and transformed people. God in Christ is our Husband, and we, the redeemed, are destined to become His wife. For eternity the Triune God and His redeemed will enjoy a blissful married life. Since God and His people are involved in a holy, heavenly romance, it is fitting for all believers in Christ to have a kind of "romantic" love for the Lord. As virgins betrothed to Christ, we, male and female alike, should not be ashamed to express our love for Him. We may express such love in prayers, praises, and hymns written according to the divine revelation in the Scriptures. Spiritually speaking, in relation to God in Christ as the Husband and as components of His wife, all believers in Christ are females, and in this sense our love for Him should be not only filial but also "romantic." To be sure, our love for Him is a response to His love for us in His saving acts. Nevertheless, **we love Him not only for what He has done for us but also for the surpassing worth, the supreme preciousness, of what He, the all-inclusive Christ, is in His person.** As we grow in our love for Him, we experience and enjoy Him not merely as a "historical figure" but as a present transcendent yet indwelling reality. Neither religious sentimentality nor the forms of cold "orthodoxy" should hinder us from expressing our "romantic" love for our lovely Bridegroom.

(Excerpts from Affirmation and Critique, Knowing the Triune God, Vol. I. No. 1. January 1996)

Events, Conferences & Trainings:

Chinese-Speaking Conference

February 17-19, 2023, Anaheim, CA USA

March ITERO

March 24-26, 2023, Anaheim, CA USA

Memorial Day Conference

May 26-29, 2023, Chicago, IL USA

July Semiannual Training

July 3-8 2023, Anaheim, CA USA

October ITERO

October 5-7, 2023, TBD

Thanksgiving Conference

November 23-26, 2023, Dallas, TX USA

Dec. Semiannual Training

December 25-30, 2023, Anaheim CA USA