

Loving well.

*A key to loving
freely.*

v1.4

Mark Goatley

www.All4Him.org

There is nothing more powerful than love. After all God IS Love! And we are made in the image of God, so when we love well and freely then we are truly imitating God. 1 John 4:16 says *“So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. **God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.**”*

So why then is it so hard to love? And why is it so hard to Love well? I believe that Love is a whole lot more powerful than we give it credit for. It was for His love of the world that God sent Jesus to die on the cross to deal with our lack of love. (John 3:16) When Jesus was asked by a scribe what is the greatest commandment of all? “Jesus answered, *“The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”* (Mark 12:29-31)

Here Jesus tells us the two most important commands and they are both about us loving and being able to love. Loving God well, this first commandment is what I have set my life to, heart, soul & mind, as well as loving my neighbor.

So why is this so hard?

I believe we have an adversary the devil working against us, and I believe that one of his big strategies is to convince us that love is

frivolous and powerless and that it is for the weak and ineffective, ie it is not for powerful people.

When you think of business or corporation what place is there for Love? It is something to be kept out, seen as wasteful and inefficient. Something that could lead to compassion or emotion and it appears the opposite to efficiency or profit. I stand by my opening statement, that there is nothing more powerful than Love, because *“If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ² And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³ If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.*

⁴ *Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant ⁵ or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶ it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*

⁸ *Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰ but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. ¹¹ When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. ¹² For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.*

¹³ *So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love. 1 Cor 13:1-13*

So what are some of the things that the adversary, the enemy of Love (God) wants to put in our way?

Everything that he can throw at us can be dealt with, so he needs to trick us and deceive us so that we don't deal with it. Or better still get us to believe the lie that IT is more powerful than love.

Bitterness and Anger feel powerful and in a lot of ways are powerful and it is this power that is why they are attractive, held onto and used. But there is a secret as to the real power of bitterness and anger and who they actually change.

Very often bitterness and anger are held onto and used as the person who is angry feels powerful and in control when they are punishing another person, or maybe getting back at someone because of an injustice, or even just to send a message to that person 'Don't do that to me again, or you will pay dearly like you are now.' People will do extraordinary things when they feel they have been wronged.

This is a hugely misunderstood concept as while anger may and most often does feel powerful, and we may feel like we can and should 'do something', bitterness and anger are going to bring about destruction and Love and forgiveness are going to build.

The real secret truth is that the person that will change, both in behaviour and appearance is me. That is the person who has embraced this bitterness and anger. They themselves actually take this on and **become** bitter and angry, and it affects every part of their lives. Would anyone do that intentionally? No of course not, but this is subtle and it creeps up and 'we are feeling powerful and people

are keeping their distance and I like this feeling! I feel powerful again! People are finally treating me with a bit of respect!' The problem is that it isn't respect that you are feeling it is more likely disrespect or fear. For that is all that bitterness and anger can reap is more negative emotions like themselves.

When we look at the fruit of the Spirit of God which is Love, Joy , peace, Patience, Kindness, gentleness, goodness and self control (Galatians 5:22) we don't find bitterness or Anger anywhere near the list.

I do want to say that there are forms of motivation or reaction that I happen to think are very good and right. For instance the passion that rises up in someone when they hear of or see an injustice. Like Jesus' display of Passion when he saw the temple of God turned into a market place. ¹⁴ *In the Temple area he saw merchants selling cattle, sheep, and doves for sacrifices; and he saw money changers behind their counters. ¹⁵ Jesus made a whip from some ropes and chased them all out of the Temple. He drove out the sheep and oxen, scattered the money changers' coins over the floor, and turned over their tables. ¹⁶ Then, going over to the people who sold doves, he told them, "Get these things out of here. Don't turn my Father's house into a marketplace!"*

¹⁷ *Then his disciples remembered this prophecy from the Scriptures: "Passion for God's house burns within me." (John 2:14-17)* Or a child being abused or deprived, here I would say if passion or even anger doesn't rise up within you then something is wrong. This can and should drive and motivate us to action, good positive action. There are times when in-action is sin. Frank Perretti tells us that "Evil prevails when good men do nothing".

I am obviously not talking about a vigilante here or going about randomly destroying things or losing connection with our brains. *Ephesians Ch4 v²⁶ "And "don't sin by letting anger gain control over you." Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry, ²⁷ for anger gives a mighty foothold to the Devil."* Anger motivates us and fires us up, it is what we then do with that energy that determines whether we end up being constructive and helping, or destructive. Whether we let it control us, or we control and direct it. I believe that anger is a God given emotion and that it is necessary and that it can be used very powerfully for good. **There are some things on this planet that need to be destroyed and torn down by righteous men and women.**

Love and kindness are truly powerful as well. *Eph 4: ³¹ Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of malicious behaviour. ³² Instead, be kind to each other, tender hearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.*

But the real secret power that comes from bitterness and Anger is what it does to the person that it is holding. Think now if you know of any bitter people? Now picture their faces, is it a pretty picture? No. The real power of Bitterness and anger is what it does to the person who grabs hold of it and decides that they want to partner with it.

As Christians I believe we are supposed to be wanting to become more like Jesus, I believe that the list of the fruits of the Spirit that I listed earlier, rather than being a list of things that we are to try to be

and strive to become, are in actual fact a list of 'the fruits of the Spirit' so they are in actual fact showing us what the Spirit is like.

We are not ourselves the best judges of whether our anger is in fact good righteous anger or a destructive selfish anger, here we need to be humble enough to ask others around us if our anger is doing good or harm. If the thought of asking someone else terrifies us then it is probably a sign that our anger is destructive.

Here it comes to a decision point for us, do we just shrug our shoulders and say "Whatever", or are we going to move forward in an attempt to become better people and much more fun to be with? Do we actually want to Love well? Do we believe our life and the lives of others around us will be better if we do?

If you want to move ahead in loving well then the powerful key is forgiveness. Here I mean everyone and everything, totally releasing and forgiving everyone that has wronged you and not requiring ANYTHING, or ANY response from them. Setting them free, and implicitly setting you free, the difference that this will make to your heart is immense. So make out a list if you need too and then speak out loud your total forgiveness to each person on the list and each offence or situation that comes to mind. Just get it all out, this isn't the time for over processing, just let your heart talk and let it all come out. Understanding can come later, for now just let it come.

If this is all too much then begin by asking God to bring you to a place where you can begin to forgive and release people.

I was at a counselling centre in France when I learned a valuable lesson. I was unknowingly holding unforgiveness and I needed help to be able to release it. 'Unknowingly' and 'needed help' are key words here, I couldn't even see it and I certainly couldn't fix that which I was unaware of, I needed external help. So I was instructed to go outside and to make a little cross, and then to speak out, out loud, all of my disappointments, anger and fears giving them all over to Jesus. I had been forgiving people for things that had happened, but I was still carrying the burden and stress of that. Jesus died on the cross to take care of and deal with all of our burdens and hurts. This was all good and I knew this but I wasn't taking advantage of it. All of the stress and muck was still sitting on my shoulders, **I needed to give that and All of the hurt over to Jesus.**

So out I went and prayed all of this over to Jesus looking at the little cross that I had made from a few sticks. It just poured out of me and I let everything come out unhindered. Nothing happened initially but that night as I got into bed I noticed that my shoulders were very much more relaxed. The next morning I got up and repeated the exercise. Giving every care and hurt and disappointment over to Jesus, letting them pour out of me, unchecked by my mind, just everything out and leaving it all with Him **trusting Him to do a better job of handling it all than I was.** Well this second time there was an emotional release as I felt the transfer of all that worry and hurt. I was able to truly hand it over, Yay God!

You see I was being a great Christian and forgiving people, and there had been some significant things take place, but I'm not Jesus and I was not able to deal with all of this just through my

forgiveness, I needed to **do something with the hurt and the pain,** I needed to give it over to Jesus as that is His provision to us and why He did what He did at the Cross. I needed to do something with my hurt. This here is probably the biggest key to loving well. If you are able to 'Do something with your hurt' ie give it over to Jesus, and then NOT take it back. Then you are mostly there. As I deal with people all over the planet, this is by far the most common thing that I encounter, that is blocking people from loving well. That is they have not done anything with the hurt that they have encountered. I think it actually must make Jesus sad to see so many of His most favoured ones, not able, willing or aware of their need to hand over their hurt to Him. Jesus went through the agony of the cross for this, your hurt is already dealt with, just take the time now to hand it over and set your heart free, so you can begin once again to Love well.

I now try to make this a bit of a habit, when I am feeling under pressure or struggling with people I will take some time and go and make myself a little cross. Sometimes this has been just a little finger drawing in the dust but it gives me a place to put everything including the things that I cannot reconcile as Jesus IS real and His love over us IS immense.

This takes practice, especially the art of leaving things with Jesus rather than picking them up again ourselves, but this is walking with Jesus as a mate, one that can and will carry our burdens and walk life beautifully with us. As this little tool was being explained to me I was told again of the picture from the Old Testament Leviticus 16:10 and Hebrews 9:7 . Once a year on Yom Kippur the priests

would place all of the sins of the entire nation onto the head of a goat. This scapegoat was then sent out into the desert to die, taking the sins of the nation with it. Jesus as the ultimate sacrifice takes the place of this scapegoat with His redemption/saving of us at the cross.

We though still need to give things over to Him and let them go. This is what I wasn't doing, I was being an ace Christian and forgiving people all over the place, but I wasn't doing anything with the hurt and I was just storing things up inside. I was becoming like a pressure cooker, there was huge pressure built up inside of me and it would randomly leak out. **I was not safe to be around.** I thought I was fine but all that unresolved stuff inside of me wasn't as dealt with as I would have liked to have thought, and it was leaking.

It really is only you that is being punished and held prisoner here, once you realise that, then the only thing to do is to totally forgive and release everyone you feel has wronged you, big or little it all adds up, even if people who you don't think are particularly involved come to mind still speak out total and complete forgiveness to them, release them and give Jesus the hurt and pain. Your heart freedom isn't free Jesus has paid the price to achieve this, and you have a role to play in the battle. We don't get to control anyone and we don't get to even sook when they don't do what we expect them too. We must leave people free.

We must get this that we are not being powerful or getting them back or teaching them even slightly by being angry and withholding

our love from them. **All we are doing is destroying our hearts, ourselves and our relationships.**

The obvious and the subtle

There are types of Anger that we are all very aware of and there are types of anger that we can be not so aware of. Anger can come out as passive aggressive behaviour. Anger is often used to control, this can be huge angry outbursts or maintained displeasure, or removing your love from a person in order to punish. Often people using passive aggressive anger or punishment in order to control will be in total denial of what is going on. Passive aggressive is when it shifts from pushy angry to super sweet, see I'm really a nice person, you are the one with all of the problems here. Unfortunately Christians often will use Passive aggressive forms of anger as they know that they are not supposed to be angry, so they hide it even from themselves.

The reality is that Christians do get angry and disappointed and it isn't always for the wrong reasons. We live in a broken fallen world and people do do wrong things and people do do evil things and people do also do wonderfully righteous and Godly things.

“There is one person that we do get to control and on a good day that is us.” Danny Silk

When relationship is broken with someone it is often because they are not doing what we want them to do, or not reacting to us in the ways that we want. i.e. their responses are wrong. Here we have to realise that we just don't get to control others or need them to react

as we want them to. This is purely control, and we do not get to control others. **In order for our hearts to be free we need to set others free** and release them from our expectations/control to act or react in certain ways.

There is a very real spiritual side to this as well. We often stay with other families as we travel and this month as a 6yo was being put into bed there was a tirade of “I want to die, I don’t want to be here anymore.” Now this is a well adjusted little guy so this was extremely out of character for him. I quietly started to pray, both for wisdom and over him. What came to mind was that I had seen some pretty strong dislike had come out to another little boy. Then what came from his mouth were phrases that there was no way he knew or would say in that way. Pretty quickly I realised that I was dealing with a spirit of suicide that had gained access to this guys mouth. Not to his heart but it was freely flowing from his mouth. It was very bitter and had hatred of everything all over it. It was demonic. I asked him if he was OK with the enemy of God having a free reign on his tongue? He responded ‘no’ so I said “what do you want to do about that?” His response was “ask Jesus’ help, can you help me with that please?” So I said to him “of course I would love to, no problem.” So we started with what I thought was possibly the doorway to this which was the ‘strong dislike’ that I had seen toward the other boy. He forgave and prayed blessing onto the other little boy and then I led him in a prayer of commanding the enemy of God out and then inviting Jesus to come and fill every space. His demeanour was now totally calm and he was ready to go to sleep. The next morning I asked him about it all and one of the questions

was “did you feel powerful when your mouth was running off?” His answer was “yes”. So we talked about what that really was. We also talked about how powerful it was to be able to stay in control of himself and his mouth. Now that was true power! Little boys are into power, this was very appealing to him.

Loving well and taking captive every thought are not one off events. They are embarking on a lifestyle of intentional and repeated forgiveness and intentional and repeated loving well. Believing that forgiveness trumps bitterness and that an open free heart is more powerful than a bitter closed one. Choosing to battle for our own hearts by loving well.

2 Cor 10:5 Eph 6:10-18 Rom 12:2

There is no doubt that loving some people is a whole lot easier than loving some others, some we will have to very intentionally ‘take captive every thought’ and intentionally love, telling ourselves ‘I will love well here.’ ‘I will not default to negative destructive, seemingly powerful emotions.’”I will forgive wholeheartedly.’” I will not let any actions of someone else cause me to lose heart.’ We should Never allow someone else so much power that their poor actions determine the state of my heart. Your personal heart freedom IS worth the battle, but you do have to recognise that there is a battle for it and you will have to fight to keep your heart free.

The well known prophet [Bob Jones](#) had a death experience at the gate of heaven. What stood out to me as I read [his testimony](#) about this was the question Jesus was asking people. Did you learn to love?

So I want to leave you with this same question, **have you learnt to love?** And I also want to ask you what are you going to do in order to make you a person who is known as someone who loves well? What can you begin to do and what can you stop doing?

May you find Jesus profoundly close as you take this journey of increasingly finding your heart and being able to naturally & normally love well.

Testimony: “After hearing this I thought I was fine, not holding grudges against anybody. But when I came to speaking out forgiveness to people I knew, I found I was holding on to lots of hurt from years and years ago, I honestly didn’t even know it was there. Wow I’m glad I checked, think I’m gonna go ring me some friends.”
Thanks

eBooklet:

This eBooklet is available by making a suggested donation to All4Him the Tabernacle. If you haven’t done this then please go to www.All4Him.org/book/ebooks

Thanks so much..

This is just a tiny amount but it is a way to honor this labour of love. Once you have made a donation toward any eBooklet this entitles you to download and keep any future versions or updates of the same eBooklet.

About the Author:

Mark Goatley is an apostolic missionary, as an Australian he has lived in Germany, Russia and the United States, as well as travelling to many other countries. Mark has been involved in pastoral work, he has been a member of Wycliffe Bible translators and now he along with his wife Helen are the founders of an international organisation All4Him the Tabernacle www.All4Him.org which has now overseen the establishment of ‘Tabernacles’ set apart places specifically for meeting with experiencing and hearing from God in at least 5 nations. See www.All4him.org/Tabernacle

This eBook is based on a previous ebook called Bitterness and Anger
The real secret power.