

# Ministering Grace

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The Ladies of Grace monthly newsletter  
February 2009-2010

## The Love of God by Mrs. Tanita Dobbins

When I first found out the subject I would be writing about would be "The Love of God," my first thought was, that will be easy. Then I realized, for me it would be a little more difficult than I had originally thought. I know God loves me, but how can I write about something I do not understand? Our love is not only conditional, it is changeable and fickle. We love based on feelings and emotions that can change from one moment to the next. That's a scary thought!

Can anyone really comprehend "unconditional" love? It seems the love that parents have for their children is as close to unconditional love as we can get without the help of God's love in our lives. We continue to love our children through good times and bad, and we don't stop loving them if they don't meet the expectations we may have. We make a choice to love our children even when we consider them unlovable; our love doesn't stop when we don't feel love for them. This is similar to God's love for us, but as we know, God's love goes beyond the limits of human definition to a point that it's hard for us to comprehend.

The Bible tells us that "God is Love" (1 John 4:8). But how can we even begin to understand that truth? There are many passages in the Bible that give us God's definition of love. The most well-known verse is 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." So one way God defines love is in the act of giving. However, what God gave (or should I say, "Whom" God gave) was not a mere gift-wrapped present; God sacrificed His only Son so that we, who put our faith in His Son, will not spend eternity separated from Him in Hell. This is an amazing love, because we are the ones who choose to be separated from God through our own sin, yet it's God who mends the separation through His intense personal sacrifice, and all we have to do is accept His gift.

Another great verse about God's love is found in Romans 5:8, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." In this verse and in John 3:16, we find no conditions placed on God's love for us. God doesn't say, "as soon as you clean up your act, I'll love you;" nor does He say, "I'll sacrifice my Son if you promise to love Me." In fact, in Romans 5:8 we find just the opposite. God wants us to know that His love is unconditional, so He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to die for us while we were still unlovable sinners. We didn't have to get clean, and we didn't have to make any promises to God before we could experience His love. His love for us has always existed; thereby, He did all the giving and sacrificing long before we were even aware that we needed His love.

God is love, and His love is very different from human love. God's love is unconditional, and it's not based on feelings or emotions. He doesn't love us because we're lovable or because we make Him feel good; He loves us because He is love. He created us to have a loving relationship with Him, and He sacrificed His own Son to restore that relationship.

I still do not fully understand the great truth of God's love but I do know that 1 John 4:7-11 tells us that God is the very definition of Love itself. God is love; true love only comes through a relationship with Him. We do not need to totally understand God's love - just to know that He does unconditionally love us.

## Meeting Schedule

"Where Jesus Walked - Lessons from the Holy Land"  
Meetings begin at 6:30 p.m. unless specified otherwise.

Next meeting: March 23, 2010

## A Little Humor by Mrs. Linda Fraker

Larry and I and Landon's family went to an auction for horse tack and horses, on October 31st. Landon bought a horse for \$20.00 (this was for Madison, who is currently seven) .

Madison knew she was not to get a horse until she was ten years old. So, come Sunday morning, while Madison and I were talking she stated, "Grandma, if I have a horse now, does that mean that I'll get another horse when I'm ten?"

## Don't Forget!

Contact one of our missionary wives this week to let her know we were thinking about her and praying for her!

Mrs. Virginia Harris - [vharris6@cogeco.ca](mailto:vharris6@cogeco.ca)  
Mrs. Lacey MacRae - [jmacsgirl08@gmail.com](mailto:jmacsgirl08@gmail.com)  
Mrs. Sherrie Lester - [shebearlester@yahoo.com.au](mailto:shebearlester@yahoo.com.au)  
Mrs. Megan Burns - [jsbaptisto@yahoo.com](mailto:jsbaptisto@yahoo.com)  
Mrs. Holly Williams - [justins.wife@hotmail.com](mailto:justins.wife@hotmail.com)  
Mrs. Michelle Shields - [shellyrae2505@aol.com](mailto:shellyrae2505@aol.com)

## Memory Verse 1 John 4:16

"And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."

## This month's issue:

- "The Love of God" by Mrs. Shannon Gill
- Book Review by Mrs. Tanita Dobbins
- "The Love of God" by Mrs. Tanita Dobbins

## Featuring:

- Exercise tips by Mrs. Joanna Reichle
- Missionary wives' email addresses for your correspondence convenience



## Where Jesus Walked

1 Peter 2:21 "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow in his steps."

## Welcome by Mrs. Bane



What a delight it was at the January meeting to make contact with five of our very own full-time ministry/missionary ladies. We actually got to see Holly Williams and Lacey MacRae via Skype, we spoke on the phone with Sherrie Lester and Beulah Rao, and got to have a live-and-in-person report from Megan Burns. I'm sure you will agree with me that it was wonderful to see faces and hear voices of people we love so dearly. My heart was so blessed, and I felt my heart swell

with pride! The Lord most definitely has His hand on these families. Let us all be faithful to uphold them in prayer.

The theme for Ladies of Grace this year is "Where Jesus Walked – Lessons From the Holy Land." I have enjoyed sharing some of the things the Lord taught me while we were in the Holy Land, and I hope it has been a blessing to you. As much as I have gladly shared each lesson with you that past few months, I am the most excited about tonight's lesson because it was this lesson the Lord used to lead me to choose our theme for this year. I cannot wait to share tonight's lesson!

The theme for tonight is "The Love of God," and it is reflected in the articles in *Ministering Grace*. My prayer is that as Ladies of Grace is dismissed this evening, you will KNOW that you are loved by God! I am going to do my best tonight to convince you of that very fact – that God loves YOU! Yes, He loves everyone, but He really, really, really loves YOU!

Preacher and I had a conversation just last night about the fact that even before we were born, God knew all about us: knew what we look like, what our favorite color would be, what our personality would be, etc. The Bible actually says that nothing about us is hidden from God – He knows everything about me and STILL LOVES ME! If that isn't love, I don't know what is. I hope you will take a minute to read Psalm 139 and revel in the display of God's love as it relates to our creation.

The Bible is full of passages and verses that tell of the love of Christ for us. As you do your daily Bible reading, I hope you will deliberately be aware of all the love notes (with your name on them) that God has stuck between the pages of His Word. Let's cherish those precious words that were written with us in mind.

I hope you will enjoy Ladies of Grace tonight. I love you very much, and I pray for you often. As I type this greeting for the newsletter, I am in prayer for you, asking God to bless you abundantly, to be real to you, and to help you to recognize that you are soooooooooooooooooooooo loved by God!

Mrs. Bane

## Balanced Health

Exercise, by Mrs. Joanna Reichle

We all know that regular exercise is good for us; however, I find exercising to be one of those things in life that I have to make happen. Following are a few things that help me:

**Scheduled Time** – For me, the best time is to get up early before the rest of my family is up and going.

**Simple Workout** – I do a simple walking DVD; that way, I don't have to leave my house to go to a gym or make excuses about weather conditions.

**10-Minute Minimum** – If I make myself exercise for at least 10 minutes, I find that I somehow gain the tenacity to keep going and finish.

## The Love of God

by Mrs. Shannon Gill

When thinking about the love of God, one might immediately think about salvation; however, God's love is even more than that. God's love continues to grow for us as we strive to be better Christians. God has no limit as to how much He loves us or we love Him.

God's love is so serene that it should be a comfort to us all the time. God's love should make us feel and think that our God is great and our life is wonderful. With that being said, as humans, we all have our days of feeling as if no one loves us. When we feel like this, we need to think about how much God loves us and all that He does for us.

The word "love" is a very comforting word. It means "a deep and tender feeling of affection for, or attachment or devotion to, a person or persons." When thinking of the love of God, one cannot help but think of John 3:16 which says, "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." What a great example of the definition for the word love!

In order to have the love of God, one must be saved. According to I John 4:19, "We love him, because he first loved us." God's love cannot be measured, nor is it unending. He demonstrates His love to us in so many ways on a daily basis. Here are just a few: families, friends, health, jobs, etc. Every day we see the love of God exhibited and perfected in our lives. I John 2:5 says, "But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him." What are we doing to show the love of God to others so that they are able to see what a great God we serve?

## Book Review

by Mrs. Tanita Dobbins

Is it too late for us to have great marriages? Am I too old to change? Dr. Jack Schaap answers the age-old questions in *12 Myths of Marriage*.

*Twelve Myths of Marriage* addresses from Dr. Schaap's counseling sessions the false beliefs that have cheapened the quality of marriage. This book looks at excuses that many people use for why their marriage does not live up to their expectations. The author's hope is that at least one of these truths will be used to revolutionize our marriages for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ.

One of the best attributes of the book is that it approaches marriage from easy-to-follow guidelines. In one chapter in particular the author writes, "A great marriage is built on great principles and great procedures, not necessarily on great people. Marriages are successful when they follow divine laws. What is a correct way to build a marriage? Whatever works for a husband and wife. What works for them is good for their marriage."

As Christian women we know the importance of daily working on our marriages and doing all we can to make our marriages what God wants them to be. We can't change our husbands (it's not our job to); it's our job to help them be the best they can be for the Lord. As wives that is our commitment to our husbands, to learn what they need and do whatever necessary to build a strong marriage. God wants to give everyone the best marriage he or she can ever have. Dr. Schaap takes us step by step through each chapter, showing us as a couple how we can achieve fulfillment in our marriage by incorporating great Biblical principles to build a great marriage.

I love that the author said, "The legacy that each couple can leave is unique. That uniqueness is why no couple should compare themselves to another couple. No two marriages can leave the same legacy. They have different combinations of a husband and wife and children and opportunities." Oh yes! We do not have to be like any other couple. We can just be us - whatever works for a husband and wife. Who doesn't want that!

Lastly, Dr. Schaap teaches on the twelfth myth of marriage: *It is too late for us to have a great marriage*. Some marriages seem to be unsalvageable, but the truth is - whether or not you think you can have a great marriage, you are right. It is too late to salvage a marriage when one spouse determines that it is too late. A marriage is as great as a couple wants it to be. Each marriage is in the hand of the couple, and they may do with it what they will. A couple can crush the life out of it and just give up. The other option is for a couple to open their hands and see that they have a living marriage.

I recommend the *12 Myths of Marriage*; don't skip it. Whether you are in the beginning chapter, middle, or the last chapter of your marriage, you can glean so much good information from this book. *12 Myths of Marriage* is an excellent book for a husband and wife to read and recommit to what they committed to do when they said, "I do" at the wedding altar.