

PROPHETIC PROTOTYPE

The Gospel's Ultimate Historic Witness as a Prototype of its Final Witness

JUST DAYS BEFORE JESUS entered into the climactic revelation of His love for sinners at Calvary, one of His followers poured forth upon Him a lavish love so pure in form that the Savior saw in this individual the very quality of love He longs to see in all His followers. In a single passionate act of moral beauty, the gospel's ultimate historic witness became a personified prototype of its final eschatological witness.

EXTRAVAGANT LOVE

Matthew 26:1-13—Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, that He said to His disciples, ²“You know that after two days is the Passover, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.” ³Then the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders of the people assembled at the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, ⁴and plotted to take Jesus by trickery and kill Him. ⁵But they said, “Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the people.” ⁶And when Jesus was in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, ⁷a woman came to Him having an alabaster flask of very costly fragrant oil, and she poured it on His head as He sat at the table. ⁸But when His disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, “Why this waste? ⁹For this fragrant oil might have been sold for much and given to the poor.” ¹⁰But when Jesus was aware of it, He said to them, “Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for Me. ¹¹For you have the poor with you always, but Me you do not have always. ¹²For in pouring this fragrant oil on My body, she did it for My burial. ¹³Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her.”

AN INGENIOUS AFTERTHOUGHT

The Desire of Ages, p. 560—The fragrant gift which Mary had thought to lavish upon the dead body of the Savior she poured upon His living form. At the burial its sweetness could only have pervaded the tomb; now it gladdened His heart with the assurance of her faith and love. . . . Mary, pouring out her love upon the Savior while He was conscious of her devotion, was anointing Him for the burial. And as He went down into the darkness of His great trial, He carried with Him the memory of that deed, an earnest of the love that would be His from His redeemed ones forever.

THE MORAL DYNAMIC OF THE GOSPEL: LOVE BEGETS LOVE

Luke 7:47, NLT—I tell you, her sins—and they are many—have been forgiven, so she has shown Me much love. But a person who is forgiven little shows only little love.

John 8:10-11—¹⁰When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, “Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?” ¹¹She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said to her, “Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.”

Galatians 5:5-6, KJV—⁵For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. ⁶For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

NOTE: Prototype: someone or something that serves to illustrate the typical qualities of a class; a model; an exemplar; a primitive form regarded as the basis of a group.

NOTE: Here Jesus clearly articulates the moral dynamic of the gospel. To the degree that I comprehend and embrace His pardoning love, precisely to that degree I will experience moral empowerment to love Him in return.

NOTE: “Worketh” is *energeo*, meaning to energize. We are Saved by Grace through Faith that is energized by the revelation and comprehension of God's love. Righteousness by faith=Love by trust.

2 Corinthians 5:14—The love of Christ compels us. . .

The Desire of Ages, p. 493—Nothing reaches so fully down to the deepest motives of conduct as a sense of the pardoning love of Christ.

The Desire of Ages, p. 478—The contemplation of the love of God manifested in His Son will stir the heart and arouse the powers of the soul like nothing else can.

Testimonies, vol. 2, p. 135—Love is power. Intellectual and moral strength are involved in this principle, and cannot be separated from it. . . Love cannot live without action, and every act increases, strengthens and extends it. Love will gain the victory.

THE GOSPEL'S FINAL WITNESS

Matthew 24:9-14—⁹Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. ¹⁰And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. ¹¹Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. ¹²And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. ¹³But he who endures [*hypomenō*] to the end shall be saved. ¹⁴And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

2 Timothy 3:1-5—Know this, that in the last days perilous times will come:

²For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, ⁴traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵having a form of godliness but denying its power.

Revelation 12:10-11—¹⁰Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. ¹¹And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

Revelation 14:12—Here is the patience [*hypomenō*] of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

Acts of The Apostles, p. 9— The church is God's appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world. From the beginning it has been God's plan that through His church shall be reflected to the world His fullness and His sufficiency. The members of the church, those whom He has called out of darkness into His marvelous light, are to show forth His glory. The church is the repository of the riches of the grace of Christ; and through the church will eventually be made manifest, even to "the principalities and powers in heavenly places," the final and full display of the love of God. Eph. 3:10.

NOTE: Jesus here foretold that during the end-time segment of human history, hatred will become a global and nationally enacted phenomenon, lawlessness will grow exponentially, and love will largely vanish from the earth. Then Jesus says that those who "endure to the end shall be saved." The grammatical flow here indicates that Jesus means those who endure, specifically, in love. Then He says, "And *this* gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all nations, then the end will come." What, then, is "*this* gospel" that will constitute the final witness to the world? It is the endurance of "love" in God's people in the midst of a world given over to selfishness and hate.

NOTE: Again, we see here that God's end-time people will be characterized by selfless love as a parallel witness to the love Jesus demonstrated on the cross.

NOTE: The key feature of God's end-time people is that their obedience to God's law will be actuated by the faith of Jesus.