

The High Calling

a bimonthly publication of The Francis Asbury Society

All Loves Excelling

By Stan Key

Theological presentations of the doctrine of entire sanctification can often leave the listener weary, confused, and doubtful. *Is it instantaneous or progressive? Imputed or imparted? Does it require one work of grace or two? ...or three? What is my part and what is God's? How much victory over sin is possible in this life? Can the blessing be lost?* These questions are, of course, important and, in their proper setting, should be discussed and debated. But how refreshing it is when someone cuts through the fog of theological obfuscation with a clear and certain word of truth. In a letter to Mr. Walter Churchey, John Wesley stated the matter succinctly: "Entire sanctification, or Christian perfection, is neither more nor less than pure love; love expelling sin, and governing both the heart and life of a child of God."



Elsewhere, in his "Plain Account of Christian Perfection," Wesley elaborated the matter more fully:

...if you look for anything more than love, you are looking wide of the mark, you are getting out of the royal way, and when you are asking others,

Continued on page 8

Holiness and Love

By Allan Coppedge



Allan Coppedge and his wife, Beth, served as missionaries with OMS in Medellin, Colombia, and then as Professor of Theology and Wesley Studies at Asbury Theological Seminary. He is currently working as an evangelist with The Francis Asbury Society. The Coppedges have four children.

This text is excerpted from *The God Who Is Triune* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2007: pp. 157-162). Used with permission.

God's love is related to his holiness in the first passage in Scripture that speaks about the holiness of God. "Who is like thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like thee, majestic in holiness... Thou hast led in thy *steadfast love* the people whom thou has redeemed, thou hast guided them by thy strength to thy holy abode" (Ex. 15:11, 13, italics added). In the midst of Israel's experience of deliverance from Egypt, God is identified as "majestic in holiness" and described as the One who leads his people in "steadfast love." The word translated "steadfast love" in the RSV is the Hebrew word *hesed*, which is one of the two major Hebrew words that describe the love of God. It is a covenant term and therefore a relational term whose meaning is one of the richest in Scripture. It refers to God's love but

also includes his grace, mercy, faithfulness and goodness, and therefore is translated variously as "steadfast love," "faithful love," "lovingkindness" and "mercy."...

The second Hebrew word that describes the love of God is the more common word for love, *ahab*. This word is first used in the book of Deuteronomy, when God has Moses review Israel's history.... In this theological review *ahab* is used to describe God's love for Israel (Deut. 4:37). God tells Israel that they "are a people holy to the Lord your God" and "a people for his own possession" (Deut. 7:6). We are reminded that God has made known that he wants a holy people because he is holy (Lev. 11:44-45). Then God explains his motivation for choosing Israel as his own people: "It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the Lord set his love upon you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples; but it is because the Lord loves you" (Deut. 7:78-8). From this passage it is evident that God's love is an expression of his holy character...

The third biblical word that describes the love of God is the Greek term *agape*. This is a unique word adopted by

Continued on page 2

India or Lydia?

By William E. Sangster (1900–1960)



In his classic book on the deeper Christian life entitled *The Pure in Heart*,[†] W. E. Sangster has a chapter devoted to the subject of love. Describing how God's saints have always been those who loved God utterly, he chooses the missionary to India and Persia, Henry Martyn (1781–1812), as an example to illustrate what the life of love looks like.

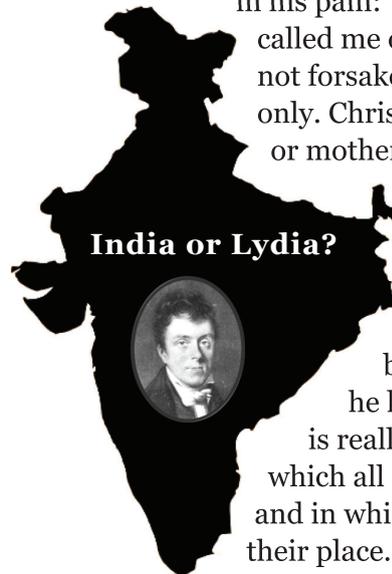
Henry Martyn has been called “the most heroic figure in the English Church since the time of Queen Elizabeth I” and no one familiar with the facts would think it wildly wrong. After a brilliant career at Cambridge, he heard the call to the Mission Field and tossed aside half a dozen possible careers to carry the gospel abroad. He said: “Here I am, Lord: send me to the ends of the earth; send me to the rough, the savage pagans of the wilderness; send me from all that is called comfort in earth; send me even to death itself if it be but in Thy service and in Thy kingdom.”

That was how he gave himself and, in that spirit, he prepared himself for India. Then something else happened. He fell deeply in love with a girl named Lydia. He told her of his love and that he was under orders from heaven

[†] *The Pure in Heart: A Study in Christian Sanctity*. New York: Abingdon, 1954. pp. 103–104.

for India. Would she go with him? Together, they could do great things for God. All his heart pleaded with her to go. She would not go. If he stayed in England, she would marry him. If he went to India, he must go alone. So the question hammered in his brain: “India or Lydia? Lydia or India?”

He chose aright. He went to India, and he went alone. He never knew that kind of affection again. He cried out in his pain: “My dear Lydia and my duty called me different ways. Yet God hath not forsaken me... I am born for God only. Christ is nearer to me than father, or mother, or sister” and (he might have added) than Lydia either.



That awful choice does not come to many Christians, but when it comes to the saint, he knows how to answer it. There is really only one love in his life, to which all other loves are subordinate and in which all other loves must find their place. It is the love of God.

God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us (Romans 5:5).

The Risk of Love

By C. S. Lewis

One of the most important books on love ever written is C. S. Lewis' *The Four Loves* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1960). After mentioning alternative ways to describe “love” (liking, affection, friendship, and eros), Lewis sets forth the dramatic and glorious contrast of the love described in the New Testament (agape, charity). This passage is taken from the chapter on “Charity,” p. 169.

To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything, and your heart will certainly be wrung and possibly be broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact, you must give your heart to no one, not even to an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements; lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket—safe, dark, motionless, airless—it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable. The alternative to tragedy, or at least to the risk of tragedy, is damnation. The only place outside Heaven where you can be perfectly safe from all the dangers and perturbations of love is Hell.

Holiness and Love *continued from page 1*

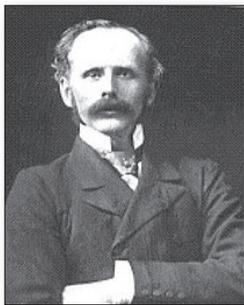
the New Testament writers to express the unconditional, self-giving love of God. It is distinct from *eros*, which relates a romantic and physical love, and which must possess its object. It differs further from *phileo*, which better describes friendship, companionship and family love. *Agape* is a supernatural love that has the special good and concern of the love object as its focus. It has an unconditionality and an other-centeredness about it that is distinct from the other words used for love in Greek. It is particularly used in the New Testament to describe the love of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and the kind of love God implants in the hearts of those who become his spiritual children....

So the pattern is that holy people best express the essential nature of God when they love unconditionally as God loves. The holiness of God... finds its fullest expression in love.

God is love... (I John 4:16).

The Greatest Thing in the World

By Henry Drummond (1851–1897)



Henry Drummond was a Scottish evangelist, writer, explorer, and lecturer in natural science. First published in 1887, this essay has been abridged and modified for use in *The High Calling* (taken from a tract from Forward Movement Publishers in Cincinnati, publication date unknown).

Everyone has asked himself the great question of antiquity: What is the *summum bonum*—the supreme good? You have life before

you. Once only you can live it. What is the noblest object of desire, the supreme gift to covet? We have been accustomed to be told that the greatest thing in the religious world is faith. That great word has been the key-note for centuries of popular religion; and we have easily learned to look upon it as the greatest thing in the world. Well, we are wrong. If we have been told that, we miss the mark. “The greatest... is love” (I Cor. 13:13). In I Corinthians 13, Paul has given us the most wonderful and original account extant of the *summum bonum*. We may divide it into three parts.

Love Contrasted (vv. 1–3)

Paul begins by contrasting love with other things that men in those days thought much of. He contrasts it with eloquence, prophecy, faith and amiable benevolence. Then he contrasts love with sacrifice and martyrdom. And I beg that little band of would-be missionaries listening to my voice to remember that though you give your bodies to be burned, and have not love, it profits nothing—nothing! You can take nothing greater to the heathen world than the impress and reflection of the love of God upon your own character. That is the universal language. It will take you years to speak in Chinese or in the dialects of India. From the day you land, that language of love, understood by all, will be pouring forth its unconscious eloquence. It is the *man* who is the missionary. It is not his *words*. His character is his message. In the heart of Africa, among the great lakes, I have come across black men and women who remembered the only white man they ever saw before—David Livingstone; and as you cross his footsteps in that dark continent, men’s faces light up as they speak of the kind Doctor who passed there years ago. They could not understand him; but they felt the love that beat in his heart.

Love Analyzed (vv. 4–7)

In three very short verses, Paul gives us an amazing analysis of what this supreme thing is. Love is like light. As you have seen a man of science take a beam of light and pass it through a crystal prism, as you have seen it come out on the other side of the prism broken up into its component colors—red, blue, yellow, violet, orange, and all the colors of the rainbow—so Paul passes this thing, love, through the magnificent prism of his inspired intellect, and it comes out on the other side broken up into its elements. In these few words, we have what one might call the Spectrum of Love.

- Patience—“Love suffers long.”
- Kindness—“And is kind.”
- Generosity—“Love does not envy.”
- Humility—“Love does not boast, it is not puffed up.”
- Courtesy—“It is not rude, it does not behave itself unseemly.”
- Unselfishness—“Love does not insist on its own way.”
- Good temper—“It is not irritable or easily provoked.”
- Guilelessness—“Love thinks no evil.”
- Sincerity—“Love does not rejoice at wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth.”



But these are only elements. Just as light is more than the sum of its ingredients, so love is more than all its elements. How then are we to have this transcendent living whole conveyed into our souls? We brace our wills to secure it. We try to copy those who have it. We lay down rules about it. We watch. We pray. But these things alone will not bring love into our nature. Love is an *effect*. And only as we fulfil the right condition can we have the effect produced. Shall I tell you what the *cause* is? In I John 4:19, we read these words: “We love because he first loved us.” Look at that word “because.” It is the *cause* of which I have spoken. “*Because* he first loved us,” the effect follows that we love, we love him, we love all men. We cannot help it. Love begets love. There is no mystery about it. We love others, we love everybody, we love our enemies, because he first loved us.

Love Defended (vv. 8–13)

Now what is Paul’s reason for singling out love as the supreme possession? It is a very remarkable reason. In a single word it is this: it *lasts*. “Love never ends” (v. 8).

Continued on page 6

Agape and Eros

By Anders Nygren (1890–1978)



Anders Nygren was a Swedish Lutheran theologian. This text is excerpted from *Agape and Eros: A Study of the Christian Idea of Love* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1932. pp. 23, 164–165, 171).

Christian love is essentially Agape. But among the other views that have confronted Agape, far and away the most important is the rival idea of love, which finds its most perfect

expression in the Platonic doctrine of Eros. When the Christian idea of Agape makes its entry into the great world, it finds this other outlook in possession of the field of religion and ethics; the pagan world was thoroughly impregnated with the idea of Eros. The meeting of Agape and Eros was Christianity's hour of destiny. Agape was

the reversal of all the values of antiquity... Here then, we have the problem, which in various forms has occupied the whole of Christian history ever since: the problem of Eros and Agape.

We are concerned with two opposite attitudes to life. At every point, Eros and Agape appear to be as different as they well could be. There is, however, one point at which they meet: they are both seeking to answer the same question. Both Eros and Agape claim to answer the question of the relation of man to the Divine. They both attack the problem of man's ethical life. It is possible to speak of Eros-religion and Agape-religion, Eros-ethics and Agape-ethics.

Eros...

- » A desire of good for the self
- » Man's effort to ascend
- » Man's way to God
- » Man's achievement, the endeavor of man to achieve salvation
- » Egocentric love, a form of self-assertion of the highest, noblest, sublimest kind
- » Seeks to gain its life, a life Divine, immortal
- » Primarily human love and God is the object of Eros
- » When it is applied to God, is a love fashioned after the pattern of human love
- » Determined by and dependent on the quality of its object, its beauty and value; hence it is not spontaneous, but "caused," called forth by the value of its object
- » Recognizes value in its object, and therefore loves it

Agape...

- » Self-giving
- » Comes down from above
- » God's way to man
- » A free gift, a salvation that is the work of Divine love
- » Unselfish love, which "seeketh not its own," and freely spends itself
- » Lives by God's life, and therefore dares to "lose it"
- » Primarily God's own love, for God is Agape
- » When it appears in man, is a love that takes its form from God's own love
- » Sovereign and independent with regard to its object, and is poured out on "the evil and the good;" hence it is spontaneous, "uncaused," and bestows itself on those who are not worthy of it
- » Loves, and creates value in its object

To summarize, it is clear that the matter resolves itself into this: Eros and Agape stand as direct opposites at every point. Eros begins with self-love and lays great stress on love to God as the final satisfaction of the needs of the

self.... Agape is the precise opposite. Agape-love to God lacks entirely the egocentric note and is identical with the complete abandonment of self. And there is one form of love for which Agape has no place: self-love.

Undoing the Work of Sin

By Dennis F. Kinlaw



Dennis F. Kinlaw is the founder of The Francis Asbury Society. This text is taken from his book, *The Mind of Christ (Anderson: Francis Asbury Press, 1998: pp. 101–102).*

Self-interest is the supreme characteristic of a sinful person. It has been said that sinfulness is to be “curved inward upon oneself.” Conversely, the purpose of the redemption offered by Christ

is to undo our distorted orientation— to turn us outward, so that we are not interested in ourselves but in the well-being of others. When we understand sin in these terms, we begin to break down the traditional dichotomy between evangelism and Christian social action. After all, the Christian life is not an “either/or” proposition: “Either I enrich my own relationship with Christ, or I go out and show others who Christ is, through my selfless service.” Outwardness is all there is to the gospel. The essence of Christian living is making oneself a servant as Christ is a servant.

It is no accident that John Wesley became a paragon of Christian social action. He engaged in prison reform, slave emancipation, hospital work, and other activities that modern evangelicals sometimes disparage as the concerns of “the social gospel” (as if it were different

Sanctified Sanity

By R. David Rightmire



In David Rightmire’s book on the life and teaching of Samuel Logan Brengle (1860–1936)[†], we find page after page explaining how love is the essence of the deeper work of sanctifying grace. In a passage entitled “Relational Dimensions of Christian Perfection,” Rightmire succinctly summarizes Brengle’s belief.

It is clear that Brengle understood holiness in relational terms – as perfect love. Thus, the purpose of redemption is the restoration of

such love: “When sin came man was estranged from God and filled with selfishness. Salvation is restoration to love. Holiness is restoration to perfect love through the baptism of the Spirit, which destroys everything that is against love.” In reflecting on his own experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, he described such in terms of God’s gift of a “clean heart,” when “a heaven of love... came into my heart.” Brengle elaborated further on this restored love and its effects:

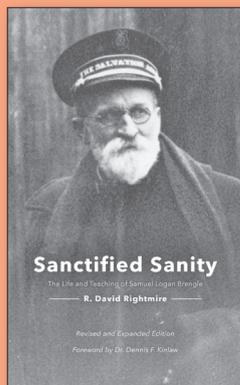
Do you want to know what holiness is? It is pure love. Do you want to know what the baptism of

[†] Sanctified Sanity: The Life and Teaching of Samuel Logan Brengle. Wilmore, KY: The Francis Asbury Society, 2014. pp. 112f.

from the gospel of Christ). These activities were a normal consequence of Wesley’s message about the necessity of entering into the Christ-life.

Self-interest is well demonstrated by the question, “What’s in it for me?” Jesus never strived to get something for himself. The Gospels relate no instance in which Jesus’ self-interest was his first consideration. Imagine the scene when Jairus asked Jesus to heal his daughter. Suppose Jesus had said, “Yes, I could do that. I could go home with you and lay my hands on your daughter, and she would get well. *But what’s in it for me?*” My mentioning such an idea must offend you, because that attitude is utterly antithetical to what Jesus represented. He came to lay down his life for his sheep (John 10:15). He did not come to protect himself; rather, he came to spend himself.

The Old Testament lifestyle may have been expressed by the statement, “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Lev. 19:18). But Jesus expressed the New Testament lifestyle like this: “Love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends” (John 15:12–13). Jesus changed the pattern of personal priorities when he became the Shepherd who sacrificed himself for his sheep.



Sanctified Sanity

The Life and Teaching of Samuel Logan Brengle

Revised and Expanded Edition,
Foreword by Dennis F. Kinlaw

By R. David Rightmire

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the Holy Ghost is? It is not a happy sensation that passes away in a night. It is a baptism of love that “brings every thought into captivity to the Lord Jesus” (II Corinthians 10:5); that “casts out all fear” (I John 4:18); that burns up doubt and unbelief.... that makes one hate uncleanness, lying, and deceit.... that makes Heaven and Hell eternal realities; that makes one patient and gentle.... that

Continued on page 7

Of Love and Kidneys: A True Story

By Quentin Scholtz



Quentin Scholtz is a retired United Methodist pastor from the KY conference. He is a “servant to servants” through a ministry to India.

Many years ago, when I was a student at Duke Divinity School, while walking down a hallway one day, out of the blue a Voice asked me a question: “Quentin, when you pray for someone who is hurting, would you be willing to take their suffering and pain into your own body so that they might be healed?” To be honest, I didn’t know how to answer. I kept on walking, but the moment was unforgettable.

Many years later, I found myself visiting with a lady in the church I pastored. She had just lost both of her kidneys and was now adjusting to life on dialysis. Though her faith was solid and her spirit strong, it wasn’t clear whether she would live or die. Then, out of the blue, I heard the Voice again: “Quentin, would you donate a kidney to her?” Before I could fully absorb the impact of the question, the Voice continued: “I will not love you anymore if you do nor will I love you any less if you don’t.”

I had to pray a lot about this, I can tell you that! I was almost 60 years old and my mind was suddenly flooded with *What if* questions, such as this: *What if* my son (who has the same blood type) needed a kidney and I had already donated it? He works for the FBI and is often in harm’s way. *What if* the transplant doesn’t work? *What if* my remaining kidney fails? What if...

I discussed this with my wife, Becky. We prayed together. She assured me of her unconditional support but let me know that the decision was mine. After more prayer, I knew I had to at least make the offer. At the close of the following mid-week service, Becky and I approached our friend and shared our decision. Though she was touched by our offer she was skeptical because blood matches in these types of things are very rare. Others in the past had made similar offers to her but all had been rejected. “Let’s give it a try anyway,” I said.

Two weeks after my blood work I received notice that we were a perfect match! But then there were others tests to further confirm that it could work: a CAT scan, an MRI, an interview with a psychologist and then a social worker, etc. Although I was told that typically a man my age would be rejected for such a procedure, I was ultimately given final clearance.

On August 19, 2009, one of my kidneys was removed and given to our dear friend. It has now been over 6 years,

and not once has she had to return to dialysis! Her new kidney is working like a charm. Each year, on the date of our surgeries, we celebrate the gift of life together. She tells people that “Quentin saved my life.” Of course, that’s not quite true, but I find great joy in what God has done!

At some point in this amazing story, my memory recalled that incident in the seminary hallway so many years earlier. “Quentin, would you be willing to take someone else’s suffering and pain into your own body so that they might be healed?” I’m slowly learning more about agape-love: that love that considers the well-being of others as more important than our own. My friend thinks that she owes *me* a debt of gratitude. But the real debt is what I owe to her!

We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters. If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion—how can God’s love be in that person? Dear children, let’s not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions. Our actions will show that we belong to the truth, so we will be confident when we stand before God (I John 3:16–19).

The Greatest Thing in the World *continued from page 3*

Prophecies will fail, tongues will cease, and knowledge will vanish away, but love endures forever. The immortal soul must give itself to something that is immortal. And the only immortal things are these: “So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love” (v. 13). Covet therefore that everlasting gift, that one thing it is certain is going to stand, that one coinage that will be current in the universe when all the other coinages of all the nations of the world shall be useless.

In Matthew 25:31–46, where the Judgment Day is depicted for us in the imagery of One seated upon a throne and dividing the sheep from the goats, the test of a man then is not, “How have I believed?” but “How have I loved?” The final test is not religiousness, but love; not what I have done, not what I have believed, not what I have achieved, but how I have discharged the common charities of life. Sins of commission in that awful indictment are not even referred to. By what we have not done, by sins of *omission*, we are judged. It could not be otherwise. For the withholding of love is the negation of the spirit of Christ, the proof that we never knew him, that for us he lived in vain.

The Expulsive Power of a New Affection

By Thomas Chalmers (1780–1847)



Thomas Chalmers was a minister, professor of theology, and political economist. He has been called “Scotland’s greatest 19th century churchman.”†

There are two ways in which a practical moralist may attempt to displace from the human heart its love of the world: either by a demonstration of the world’s vanity so that the heart will withdraw its affection from such an unworthy object; or, by setting forth

another object as more worthy of its attachment so that the old affection is exchanged for a new one. My purpose is to show that the first method is altogether incompetent and ineffectual while the latter method alone will suffice for the rescue and recovery of the heart from that wrong affection that domineers over it.

Trying to eradicate love of the world by preaching against the ills of the world will never ultimately succeed. Love for this world can only be conquered when it is replaced by the far greater power of the affection of the Gospel. It is not enough to dissipate the charms of this world by preaching against them. We must set forth

† This sermon has been abridged and modified for use in *The High Calling*. The full text can be found at <http://manna.mycpanel.princeton.edu/rubberdoc/c8618ef3f4a7b5424f710c5fb61ef281.pdf>.

another affection whose charms are powerful enough to dispossess the charms of this world. It is not enough to understand the worthlessness of the world; one must value the worth of the things of God. The heart cannot be prevailed upon to part with the world by a simple act of resignation. The way to disengage the heart from the positive love of one great and ascendant object (the world) is to fasten it in positive love for another (God). It is not by exposing the worthlessness of the former but by addressing to the mental eye the worth and excellence of the latter that all old things are to be done away and all things are to become new.

The love of God and the love of the world are two affections, not merely in a state of rivalry, but enmity—and that so irreconcilable that they cannot dwell together in the same bosom. Thus the only way to dispossess the heart of an old affection is by the expulsive power of a new one. Rather than loving this world, the Gospel calls us to love him who made the world. And once our hearts are brought under the mastery of one great and predominant affection, they are then delivered from the tyranny of their former desires by the only way in which deliverance is possible. There is no other way to keep the love of the world out of our hearts than by keeping the love of God in them!

Sanctified Sanity *continued from page 5*

brings one into perfect and unbroken sympathy with the Lord Jesus Christ in His toil and travail to bring a lost and rebel world back to God (Helps to Holiness, pp. ix–x).

Brengle maintained further that “the human heart must have some supreme affection,” and those who love God with all their heart have experienced holiness. Evidences of perfect love include: “obedience, patience under tribulation, peace like a river—perfect peace, abounding joy – not raptures, deliverance from sin—(the) expulsive power of a new affection, freedom from fear—fear being cast out, and a glorious sense of fellowship and communion with God.” Holiness is, for Brengle, a divinely enabled response to God’s love in Christ:

....He has loved us out of our sins, and He would love us into holiness.... Holiness is love made perfect – love so filling the heart and mind and soul that sin is expelled and the great Lover is enthroned in peace and purity and power where sin had reigned (At the Center of the Circle, pp. 1–2).

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

By Charles Wesley

Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heaven to earth come down;
Fix in us thy humble dwelling;
All thy faithful mercies crown!
Jesus, Thou art all compassion,
Pure unbounded love Thou art;
Visit us with Thy salvation;
Enter every trembling heart.

Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit,
Into every troubled breast!
Let us all in Thee inherit;
Let us find that second rest.
Take away our bent to sinning;
Alpha and Omega be;
End of faith, as its Beginning,
Set our hearts at liberty.

All Loves Excelling continued from page 1

“Have you received this or that blessing?” if you mean anything but more love, you mean wrong; you are leading them out of the way, and putting them upon a false scent. ...you are to aim at nothing more, but more of that love described in the thirteenth of the Corinthians. You can go no higher than this, till you are carried into Abraham’s bosom (Works, XI. p. 430).

This issue of *The High Calling* is dedicated to the topic of love (*agape*). The articles are certainly not intended to give an exhaustive statement about the meaning and practice of love! Rather, these are humbly offered as a stimulus to warm your heart, instruct your head, and motivate your hands and feet concerning the most important characteristic of our faith. “Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love” (I John 4:8).



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The Potter’s House
...Until Christ is formed in you
(Galatians 4:19).

We love because he first loved us (I John 4:19).

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The High Calling is a bimonthly publication of The Francis Asbury Society to serve as a link between FAS and its constituents, building loyalty and awareness so that the teaching and experience of Christian holiness may continue to be lived and proclaimed throughout the world.

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In This Issue:
– Holiness and Love
– The Greatest Thing in the World
– Agape or Eros
– Undoing the Work of Sin
– Of Love and Kidneys
– The Explosive Power of New Affection

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