

How Love Is Dispersed

Romans 5:3-21 Most Christians I know want to grow more like Jesus daily. They want to be able to love as Jesus loved. The school of love, however, could be called the school of hard knocks. If all is going well in our lives, those who watch our lives will say, "It's easy for them to be loving because they have never had the problems I have experienced." It is when we go through hard knocks—tribulations, trials, testings and temptations—that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts. It is when our own human love has reached its limit that God steps in and disperses His love within our hearts to equip us to dispense His love to others. Experiencing the love of God is only possible for us when we become totally dependent upon Him. When we recognize that without Him we can do nothing, then we recognize also that without His love in our hearts we have no quality love to give to others.

When we were without strength, Christ died for us. And now when we are without strength to love another, Christ lives through us to dispense His love from our weak vessels to others. This passage in Romans shares the sequence that occurs that causes God's love to be manifested in and through us. First we go through one of these terrible "T's"—trials, tribulations, testings, temptations. How we respond during such times depends alone upon our dependency upon God in troubled times. If we respond with patience at such times, then experience is added to our lives and hope is birthed. People around cannot see the love God has shed abroad in our hearts, but they can see the patience and hope we display in troubled times. They may even ask us to share with them the reason we are at peace and have such hope.

The experience we gain through troubled times is invaluable because we then can look back at the hard-knock times in our lives and see how God revealed His love to us and gave us hope. We can share with others that God has no pets. He was

able to get us through a time of trouble, and He is also able to deliver them through their hard knocks. Through their hard times, God will give them a personal love story to tell. I guess this is why James tells us to rejoice when we experience all kinds of trials. During these times God is dispersing His sustaining love to us in our own hearts so we in return can dispense that sustaining love to others. Whatever you are going through today, I can say with all assurance after my fifty years as a Christian, that God's love will see you through this. He is faithful. God's love never fails.

Lord, I am human, and I hate pain and troubles, but one of your promises to me as a Christian is that I will experience suffering. Who wants it, and who needs it? The answer to this question I understand today. Others need to see You show Yourself strong on my behalf when I am at my weakest. Others need to see that Your grace and love are sufficient to carry me through whatever suffering I experience on this earth.

**READ: 1 Chronicles 28:1-29:30; Romans 5:3-21; Psalm 15:1-5;
Proverbs 19:18-19**