



**A
LETTER
FROM YOUR
PASTOR:
JUNE 2023**

by Lee Shipp

GIVE ME THE FEET

When you bow before God, where are you? At His feet! A.W. Tozer said that "our great weakness is that not only are we not going on to know Christ in rich intimacy of acquaintance but we're not even talking about it. We don't even hear about it. It doesn't get into our magazines. It doesn't get into our books. It doesn't get onto our radios. It's not found in our churches - this yearning, this longing to know Him in increasing measure."

When my spiritual life becomes defined by the *routine* of the spiritual: the routine of Bible study, attending Sunday School, or faithfulness to the Prayer Meeting - when that becomes the focus, then I have lost the worshipping heart! If the Bible study, the Sunday School, or the Prayer Meeting are no longer a means by which I can walk in rich intimacy with God, then I have exchanged the love of God for the practice of religion. I have often wondered if God is walking in our churches saying, "Where are you?" And the silent replies would be, "God, I am buried in Bible Study. God, I am busy working in the ministry. God, I am over here, out in the streets evangelizing for you!" And God would still say, "Where are you? Where is our relationship? Where is our fellowship? This is all that I want!"

God is not looking for the active life; He is looking for the worshipping heart, "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him" (2 Chronicles 16:9).

From the beginning of time to now, God is searching; He is looking. He is walking through the earth looking into every one of us, into our souls! He is not looking at our lifted hands or the noises our voices make, as though He is fooled by our outward actions. God observes our hearts and is attentive to the cry of our souls. He is aware when our body language betrays our hearts. However, when our hearts can express affection for God through outward demonstrations: bowing, lifting of the hands, voices raised in singing and shouting, and declarations of praise, then this is

received by the Lord as worship. But make no mistake, God is looking into our hearts.

This seeking God wants to be with you! Do you get it? All that is required is that you want Him from the heart! You can bring God nothing else, just the worshipping heart; nothing else is going to impress Him, not your tithes, fasting, or religion! Your aspiration to have fellowship with God is what He most desires. The motivation of God in redemption and adoption was to be our Father, not our boss.

The great heart of our heavenly Father is filled with love! What does He want? Jesus told us when we pray say "Our Father ..." This is what God wants us to understand! As our Father, He wants to be strong for us because we are weak. He wants us to come to Him with the faith of a child. That is all. God is not looking for the strong. God is not counting on those who have come through seminary, confident in their doctrines, carrying their credentials, and trained to take on the world. God is not looking for a man who has memorized the scriptures and can answer every question! God wants weak people. God is looking for those who need a Father! God wants the feeble, so that He may be strong for them. Paul fainted for this God! Paul counted everything that distracted him from knowing Jesus Christ as dung. He refused to let anything interfere with this one goal he had. He would not let missions, preaching, or church issues interfere with knowing Christ. Paul would forgo this world, its fame, and accolades to have Jesus Christ!

GOD WANTS TO BE YOUR FATHER

Did you ever wonder why God has a bride, or why God reveals Himself as a Father? Why does God want to be the "LOVER" of my soul? Why do we sing, "Jesus, lover of my soul ..." Why does God keep all my tears in His bottle? Why does God engrave me on the palms of His hands? Why does God number my hair? Why did God write the Song of Solomon? So dead religious men could not define love with God. Jesus doesn't show up in our churches because He loves praise; He shows up because He loves us. Jesus does not show up in our prayer meetings because He loves prayer; He shows up because He loves us. Do we love the Lord?

God does not have many friends. We want the Lord when our babies are sick. We want the Lord when a loved one has been diagnosed with an incurable disease. We want the Lord when the job is on the line. We want the Lord when our finances are failing. We want the Lord at the wedding, but not the reception. In other words, we like the fact that there is a God who will help us, but few are friends who seek to spend time with Him daily. Few are the lovers who lie awake at night - love-sick for God, astounded with His beauty. Few are those who consider the treasures of this world as dung compared to knowing Jesus.

GOD DOES NOT HAVE MANY FRIENDS

Many are those who want Him in their homes and like having Him near, but how many are like Mary who kisses His feet? There is a legacy with the worshipper that is not found in the preacher, the teacher, the singer, or the elder. Jesus asked Peter, "Do you love me more than these things?" The same could be asked of us. Do you love Jesus, period? Not for the things He can give you or the life He can bless you with, but simply for Him. Will you bear His reproach? *"Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come. By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name"* (Hebrews 13:13-15). What does this mean to bear His reproach? We give Jesus our hearts and our love and He gives us His reproach. What exactly does this mean? It means that if you love the reproach of Jesus then you will surely love the best of Jesus! This is what it means - it means that the most difficult thing about Jesus is beautiful to you.

"And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little" (Luke 7:44-47).

This woman loved Him so much. She loved His reproach. She did not stop kissing His feet. A woman's glory is her hair (1 Corinthians 11:15). Feet are the least honorable part of man. Mary took her glory and wiped the dirt from His feet. She cherished His feet! If we could only worship so well. If you get the feet, you get all of Him. While the Pharisees are rebuking her with such waste, such inappropriate behavior, accusing her of being showy, she just continued to kiss His feet. Their rebukes faded with the touch and forgiveness of Jesus.

What are you most proud of? What is your glory? Is it your image? Then take your image and put it on display for God! Lay it at His feet. Is it your wealth? Pour it upon Jesus! And do it in front of the world. Let them see you giving your glory to His feet! After all, where was Jesus killed? Outside the city! That's right ... not in a hospital, not in a private cathedral but in front of the whole world, that is where God demonstrated His love for you.

Your body language says more about your love than your words do. How you act before God reveals the

affections of your heart. Men bowing before the Lord is a very powerful demonstration of giving honor to God; children are impacted by this type of devotion. The woman could have told Jesus she loved Him. After all, many people did that. However, this is the only passage where Jesus says someone demonstrated their love on Him. Not even the disciples washed His feet.

It is risky to show love for God. Like the story in Luke, the religious will rebuke you; however, Jesus will receive your love. If you will be intimate and joined to Jesus, you must leave the camp: the camp of Pentecostals, the camp of Baptists, the camp of Methodists, and the camp of Religion. Those camps do not define you; Jesus does. Camps will rob your liberty, for they will want you to blend in with the rest of the herd; they will not want you to be extravagant, this will embarrass their way of worship; therefore, leave the camp and be a fool for Christ.

Jesus left the camp. He left the camp of the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Lawyers, and the Scribes. That is why prostitutes could touch Him and kiss His feet. That is why Jesus could openly confess His love for the sinners in front of the religious who could not understand this way of Godly love.

My passion in life is Jesus Christ. Nothing and no one fulfills my longing for meaning and joy as this one person. My hunger and fascination for Jesus are all consuming and beyond any explanation of delight! My fervor for His glory is not misplaced, I cherish His feet! I long for people to make fun of me and consider my worship to be wasteful. Give me the feet. I would rather bow before God than be raised up by men. I would rather Jesus look at me and speak to those who don't understand my love and say, "Seest thou this man? He hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of his head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this man hath not ceased to kiss my feet. Wherefore I say unto thee, his sins, which are many, are forgiven; for he loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little."