

Passionate Love

Many years ago, my family was visiting some friends of ours. Our daughter, Susan, was about five years old at the time, and our friends had a son the same age. Susan and Eric enjoyed each other's company, and were great friends. One evening, as we prepared to leave, Susan came down stairs with a little paddleball toy that she said Eric had given her. It was clear from Eric's face that he did not want Susan to take his toy. Eric's mother, being the perfect hostess, said to Eric: "Now you let Susan have your toy and I'll get you another one." Neither my wife nor I wanted Susan to take Eric's toy. It was then that my wife gave the perfect response: "Well Susan, if you take Eric's toy, the next time that he comes over to our house, I know that you will want to let Eric pick out one of your toys to take home." Susan looked at her mother and then at Eric, and gave Eric the paddleball toy back with a smile saying: "Here Eric, this is your toy; you keep it." Susan wanted that toy, but she analyzed and calculated the situation and decided that it was not worth it. I think that Susan acted out that day the way many of us would - interested primarily in ourselves and constantly calculating the cost of helping someone else.

In dramatic contrast is the prostitute described in Luke 7:36-50. She crashes a dinner party that Jesus is attending. In complete humbleness, she kneels at Jesus' very dirty feet. She is overcome with passion and tears pour from her eyes. The cleanest thing that she has to dry Jesus' feet is her hair. When she has done this, she anoints His feet with very expensive ointment that it probably took all that she had to buy. She made a complete emotional and physical and financial commitment to her Lord. There was no analyzing or calculating the worth of her actions versus their benefit to her. She merely wanted to give Jesus the gift of her love.

Jesus tells us "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is what the prostitute was doing at the dinner party. She was passionate in her love of God. She was extravagant in her love of God. She was totally uncalculating in her love of God. This is how Jesus calls us to live our lives, in an

extravagant, passionate love of God.

It would be interesting if each of us put aside all the world's subtle motives on our giving and if, for one day, we could give our love away in the purely sacrificial way of this woman in Luke. That is Christ's challenge to us, to be less controlled and more wildly extravagant in our love of God. Let us give away our love passionately.

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