

**“The Upward Call” (or “The Brimming-over Life”)
November 10, 2013**

When the Lord disciplines us He’s not simply “calling us out” (*i.e., bringing something to our attention*)—He’s “calling us UP” (*higher*).

Philippians 3:12-16- “Upward call” (v. 14)

Lit.- to be on top; to the brim; brimming over; reaching full potential

PROP- Jesus is calling us to the place of MATURE LOVE—to live the “brimming-over life.”

- Putting aside “childish things” (*completely cease from*) (1 Cor. 13:11)
 - *Self-focus; childish fears; tantrums; awkwardness; limitations*
- “Speaking the truth in love” (*alignment between what we say/do*) “we will grow up into Him” (Ephesians 4:15)

1. Mature love is FEARLESS

“There is no room in love for fear. Well-formed love banishes fear. Since fear is crippling, a fearful life...is one not yet fully formed in love.” (1 John 4:18 The Message)

- Fear is a spiritual attack (2 Tim. 1:7- “spirit of fear”), not simply an emotional reaction. “Fear brings torment” (1 John 4:18)
- Fear is a strategy that attacks our heart, causing our heart to “fail us” (Luke 21:26)—*stop breathing, cease, quit*
- We can “entertain” fearful thoughts—feed them, make them feel at home, become comfortable with (i.e., what we dwell on we dwell in)
- We can choose to refuse fear!
 - “Fear not”; “Let not your heart be troubled”
 - Psalm 23:4 *The Passion Translation*
- Fear HIDES—mature love SHINES
 - The more self-concerned and self-focused we are—the fewer people we impact—because all of our time and energy is consumed with ourselves
 - Judges 7:13-17- Gideon—who once hid in fear, confessing he was the weakest link of the weakest tribe—stood outside of the Midianite camp and “worshipped”- “*to boldly declare agreement with God*”
- Mature love brings us to a higher place of FAITH
 - Both faith & fear believe something’s going to happen
 - FEAR expects the worst
 - FAITH anticipates the best
 - “Through faith...we become valiant in battle” (Heb. 11:33,34)

FEARLESS LOVE causes us to stand up and stand out!

- (Isaiah 60) “Great darkness...arise and shine!”
- Acts 4- “Great persecution”—“Great power” (*“consider their threats & enable us to speak boldly and powerfully*)

2. Mature love is GENEROUS

The ultimate expression of the “brimming over” life is demonstrated in unquenchable **GENEROSITY**. “Putting aside childish things.” Moving from the childish attitude of “living to get” to the heart of one who “LIVES to GIVE.”

“You can always give without loving, but you can never love without giving.” – Amy Carmichael

- “Generous”- A nobility of spirit resulting in open-handedness and liberality
- Mature love moves us to give of ourselves; not just money.
- SEE 2 Corinthians 8:1-5
- Generosity of soul creates a continuous flow of provision, unstopped by the circumstances (SEE 2 Cor. 9:6-13)
- Flows from the revelation that “at all times” we will have “all we need”
- i.e., Arlene Updyke- despite chronic pain, served as a nurse in slums of Chicago; adoptive and foster mother—though she had none of her own; rescued a troubled 16 year old girl who was destined for the streets—rejected by two other adoptive families and then about to be sent to live on her own by the children & youth services; served in the neonatal unit, then the children’s psychiatric unit, then (when chronic pain resulted in early retirement) she went to minister to prisoners. She went home this past week. Now her rescued, adopted daughter is a dynamic believer and a licensed pastor in the prison system!

CONCLUSION

The limitless ripple effects of living a “brimming-over” life—responding to the upward call. Fearless. Generous.

Acts 8:2-4- Church is scattered (*what makes you sad or mad or scared—can actually get you moving*)

Acts 8:5-8- One young man, simply declaring & demonstrating the Good News, broke the “Gentile barrier”—resulting in a transformed city—“there was *much joy in that city!*”