

IS THE WORLD DRAINING AWAY YOUR LOVE?

By Nino Boezio

Negativity is a persistent problem today. We trust people less. We are suspicious. We are on guard and afraid.

We beat down those in positions of leadership because we fear that if we don't, they will take advantage of us or simply ignore our needs. We criticize in order to make sure issues we consider important are given proper attention. We are skeptical of a person's competence and ethics. Instead of giving someone the benefit of the doubt as working for our best interests, we take the opposite side. After a while, negativity becomes a permanent aspect in our pattern of thinking.

Being surrounded by negativity affects our ability to love. It spills over into other parts of our life. I recall a policeman who said his marriage was always suffering, until he left the police force. He allowed the negativity that surrounded him in his job daily, to be brought home.

Sometimes our ability to love is hampered by our unwillingness to take a loss. Love occasionally does involve sacrifice and a willingness to take some risk. It involves trust and commitment. Our world isn't a safe place so we do need to be careful as to who we trust. But we must become careful not to be hardened to the point where we don't care about anyone other than ourselves.

It is always instructional to watch young children. They will often express love and trust which is unconditional. In many cases, they haven't been tainted by the negativity of the world yet. Jesus set forth the attitude of children as a shining example to His disciples: *Luke 18:16 (NKJV) But Jesus called them {the disciples} to Him and said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God."*

Unfortunately this negativity also becomes transmitted to the way we see God. 'God is out to get us. He punishes. He criticizes. We never do anything right. He doesn't care. He doesn't love.' This way of thinking has also trickled down to us through the centuries, as many who claimed to represent God (such as religious leaders), exhibited similar characteristics, and we therefore viewed God in the same way.

We need to understand and comprehend God's love. Jesus pointed to God's love as a crucial starting point that also spills over into everything else. God sacrificed His Son Jesus Christ to demonstrate His love for us. Jesus also came to show us God from a different angle that included His love. We shouldn't get caught up in the world's cycle of negativity and its' often distorted view of love.