

## God's Love Is Both Corporate and Individual (Devotional)

Have you ever found yourself feeling that God loves people as a group, but not *yourself* as an individual? Have you ever found yourself at some low point in your life saying, "God doesn't really love *me!*" Unfortunately, this type of human love in which a love for the group is proclaimed but no love for the individual actually exists is actually quite prevalent, particularly among those in the entertainment industry. Many musical performers and actors and actresses from Hollywood preach love, peace, harmony and why can't we all just get along for humanity as a whole, and yet they have the highest rates of divorce and broken relationships. John Lennon wrote and sang *All You Need Is Love* and *Give Peace a Chance*, and yet he left his first wife, Cynthia; he was estranged from his oldest son, Julian; and his long time business partner, song collaborator and former best friend and best man at his first wedding, Paul McCartney, were hardly on speaking terms as they were engaged in an ongoing lawsuit at the time of John Lennon's untimely death. A philanthropist may give his money and/or time to help humanity but then turn around and treat individual men and women as if they were dirt. He supposedly loves all of mankind, yet not a single man can be found whom he likes.

Charles Dickens, one of my all time personal favorite authors, paints a marvelous and humorous picture of such a person in the character of a woman and mother called Mrs. Jellyby, one of his memorable characters in his wonderful novel *Bleak House*. Mrs. Jellyby is found working on starting a new philanthropic project at "Borriboola-Gha, on the left bank of the Niger," as it is described by Dickens. This project in which Mrs. Jellyby finds herself embroiled engages her attention to the extent that in the very first scene in which she is brought to life by Dickens, one of her children is found getting his head stuck tightly within a railing while another one of her children tumbles down the stairs. But in spite of the chaos revolving around her in which her own children are in dire need of her assistance, she never notices what is taking place and she is totally oblivious to her surroundings. Dickens tells us her eyes seem "to look a long way off. As if . . . they could see nothing nearer than Africa!" Mrs. Jellyby loves the idea of serving mankind corporately, but she fails to serve even her own, dear children individually who are right under her feet with their own problems.

When circumstances seem to conspire against us, when we cannot understand what God is doing, when we do not feel His presence as we pass through the fiery trial, we have a tendency to question God's love for us, and we have a tendency to feel self-pity. We even begin to doubt whether or not the Apostle Paul knew what he was saying when he wrote in Romans 8:28, "***We know that in everything God works for good with those who love Him, who are called according to His purpose.***" The next time you start feeling down, please remember that we have been told by God in His word several times, "***I will never fail you nor forsake you***" (Hebrews 13:5).