*Do not fret because of those who are evil or be envious of those who do wrong; for like the grass they will soon wither, like green plants they will soon die away. Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. Take delight in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord; trust in Him and He will do this: He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn, your vindication like the noonday sun. Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for Him; do not fret when people succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes. Refrain from anger and turn from wrath; do not fret, it leads only to evil. For those who are evil will be destroyed, but those who hope in the Lord will inherit the land. A little while, and the wicked will be no more; though you look for them, they will not be found. But the meek will inherit the land and enjoy peace and prosperity. The salvation of the righteous comes from the Lord; He is their stronghold in time of trouble. The Lord helps them and delivers them; He delivers them from the wicked and saves them, because they take refuge in Him.*

Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40

*But I say to you who are listening: Love your enemies; do good to those who hate you; bless those who curse you; pray for those who mistreat you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who asks of you, and if anyone takes away what is yours, do not ask for it back again. Do to others as you would have them do to you. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. If you lend to those from whom you expect to receive payment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. Instead, love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Highest, for He Himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap, for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.* Luke 6:27-38

*Apparently, the president Wilson once received a call in the middle of the night from a civil servant who informed him that one of his appointees had just died.*

*The caller said: “While I’m sure we are all saddened by this news, I would like to know if I can take his place.”*

*There was a pause at the other end of the line before the president replied: “It’s all right with me, if it’s all right with the undertaker.”*

The Third Law of Motion

1. It was either in the seventh or the eighth grade when I learned about the Newton’s *“3rd law of motion.”* This law simply says: *“For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.”* We may not think about this, but we use *“the 3rd law of motion”* every day and in every form of movement we make in life. The principle of the *“law of motion”* applies not only to a physical form of movement, but also to a spiritual one. In our spiritual life we find this law not only to exist but being essential in our understanding of God and our relationship with Him. Apostle John in what we refer to as *“the gospel in capsule”* writes: “*For God so loved the world**that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”*What John basically says is thatunless God loves us first, we are unable to respond with love to Him, or anybody else in fact, because, on our own we truly do not know what love is. We might think we do, but we do not. Only because He loves us we know what love is and we may love back.

2. We live in the world of violence, neglect, and abuse, there is not any doubt about this. At the same time, over and over again we may also hear that many of those who committed crimes, were themselves the victims of the abuse, the neglect and even the criminal offences, while growing up as children. The vicious circle of such circumstances apparently never ends, and if it does, it happens only in extremely rare situations. In reality, the abuse begets abuse, the neglect begets neglect, and the violence begets violence. Just like the law of physic says: *“Every action result in an equal reaction.”* Unless something dramatic happens to those who were abused, they most likely will turn out to be the abusers themselves. Abused people seem to be incapable of change on their own and by themselves. True love, however, is capable of producing love and we have been introduced to that love by God, God who loves us no matter what our life’s circumstances. God’s love will always produce love, and it is wonderfully encapsulated by Apostle John.

3. Somewhere in my readings I came across the statement that says: “*God’s love is the love that will not let us go, will not let us down, and will not let us off.”* It seems to me to be a great commentary on what John meant when he wrote 3:16. Even when we believe we did everything possible to love our children after some reflection may however also admit to occasionally neglect them. As a pastor I was struck by another pastor’s confession indicating neglect of his son and his needs. That pastor wrote: *“my son told me that he often observed me interacting with the church members during home visits and how kind and comforting I was, but upon returning back to the car I had nothing left to him and acted almost as an indifferent man.”* His confession might have sound like a tragic and sad story, but I could relate to this. I was actually glad to work in the hospice located about 45 minutes from my home, as well as to travel from Antigo to home for about the same time, because driving back alone in the vehicle, I was able to have time to unwind after the emotional drain I often experienced. Visiting with some, especially those who feel depressed, down, or dying is quite draining, the *“battery”* eventuallygoes dead and there is no more power left, the time to recharge it is truly necessary. Sometimes even the most loving parents may find themselves as that pastor. It is not because we do not want to care and to love others, but we often have exhausted the level of love at our disposal.

4. I came across an illustration where a father says to his son: *“I love you when you are good,”* and the young boy responding by stating: *“I love you all the time, Daddy.”* That’s what God’s love is. It will not let us go. We may be tired, exhausted, searching for something special from others, but our God loves us where we are, who we are and what we are. His love is the love that indeed never *“Let us go.”* There is a powerful story written by a Danish poet and storyteller, Hans Christian Andersen. As a child I read this story in the collection of his writing. It is called *“The Traveling Companion.”* It is a story of a young traveler, poor John, joined by another traveler in his journey, one that brought John not only a companionship but also comfort through a simple presence of somebody else. As the story goes, John’s companion also helps John to eventually marry a princess. Although this story might belong to the *“they lived happily ever after”* type of a tale, the message of it is profound, because in the end, when they reach their destination, the *“traveling companion”* disappears, proving only a temporary presence in John’s life, while God stays with us not only until we reach our destination, but well beyond, into what we call the *“eternity.”*

5. One of the greatest fears we might have as human beings, is the fear of being let down, deserted, or alienated. Many a time before I said that as the species we were not created to a solitary life, and not many people possess the ability to live a life of a hermit. We are the creatures of the community. In the nightmares people often find themselves running but unable to reach the destination. They try to climb the stairs, but their legs are like the lead, heavy and fastened to the ground, and they can barely crawl much less climb the stairs. I sometimes wake up from a dream where I tried to stop the car I’ve driven but my breaks fail to stop it. Sigmund Freud said that *“every dream is a wish,”* but by the same token every dream represents something true and something real within us. I did have nightmares, as the ones I just indicated and I am certain that most, if not all of us have had them, even if not exactly the same, but similar. It is such a relief to wake up from such nightmares to find we are safe and sound. With God embracing us we may always rely on His presence and on His ways of protecting us from our nightmares, those we dream as well as those in the real life.

6. Yes, we sometimes feel lost and unable to make a move. We may experience to be left alone, alienated, let down by other people, ones we counted on, and in result we may feel as if something terrible is happening. When these happen, we are often left with the scars in our heart, in our mind and sometimes even on our body. But God’s love promises not to leave us and not to desert us. God’s love promises not to abandon us. God’s love responds in the way of the *“Third Law of Motion.”* God’s love raises us up, strengthens us, leads us into moving forward. Have you ever wondered how were you able to lift yourself up from certain difficult moments you experienced in life? It was God’s love that lifts us up, even when we believe we did it on our own. In reality the only action that helps us in the most difficult moments in life is the love of God. The same applies to the experiences where the burden becomes too heavy for us to lift, when we cannot walk, or feel as we are in the *“quick sand*” trap, unable to move our feet. In those experiences we need not the laws of the physics to help us, but we need God’s love to embrace us.

7. Even if somehow we got entangled by sin, or after being exposed to sin, which raised our doubt of God’s protection, when we maybe even became convinced we are unable to carry our burdens anymore and must to give in, we need to remember what Paul wrote to the Romans 8:38-39: *“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* What he simply tells us is that God will never let us go but will always love us and will always be waiting for us to come to Him for a true comfort. Just as the Father in the *“prodigal son”* parable did, because true comfort comes only through and from Him. When John wrote that *“God so loved the world that He have His only and one Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life,”* he basically said that we too have been called by God to experience something amazing, while we were strangers, God lifted us up, lit us up and redeemed us.

8. We often refer to John’s Gospel as the *“Gospel of Love,”* while chapter 13 of Paul’s *“First Letter to the Corinthians”* is referred to as the *“Ode to Love.”* These are important and powerful Scriptures for they clearly show how God loves us. The message of Jesus’ death and resurrection identifies Christianity as the expression of true love which begun not because of our wisdom, our philosophy, or our ideology, but is of God’s creation, flowing from Him as the pure and perfect love. We have witnessed God’s love in our lives. He has made us a part of His plan of salvation and when we accepted Him, we became responsible for our own actions. Being a Christian requires loving the lost and being a Christian resembles the running in a relay race. Each athlete runs at their own pace and own distance, but they all must hand over the little stick to the next runner, so the race might get to the finish line. If God is to reach the world with His love, He needs us, and it starts with the love He offered to you and me. The greatest indication of that love, we as Christians may reflect, is in our passion for the world, world which without God’s influence moves towards its total annihilation and destruction. Christ was filled with an incredible, tremendous passion for us, and He has chosen us to continue His passion in our ministry to the world.