"Becoming A Love Machine" - 11:00 a.m. This Saturday 10.01.11 at 232 West 11th Street, NYC
"Becoming a Love Machine"
The Gospel of Jesus Christ / New York Style

A Conversation with the Word--Tony Romeo
"Love Never Fails"--Part 2
This Saturday morning, October 1, 2011, at 11:00 a.m.
Manhattan Church, 232 West 11th Street, NYC
In the heart of Greenwich Village

In 1976, there was a hit song made popular by an R&B Motown group who called themselves The Miracles. The song was titled "Love Machine." That one song was a multimillion-selling platinum single.

The opening line of that popular song starts off with "I'm just a love machine and I won't work for nobody but you." The Miracles pranced around in large-brimmed pink hats, and pink suits with polka-dots, and clapped their hands in an animated style as only the classic 1970s R&B groups could. I was going to add a link to the group singing, but I'm not that crazy.

There have been thousands, perhaps millions of songs written about love, few of which have anything to do with genuine love. The word love gets thrown around these days as if people actually understood what it means. With so many songs written about love, do you ever wonder why there is so little of it in our world?

In the book of Philippians, in a letter written to the church at Philippi, Paul writes the following:

"And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God." [Philippians 1:9-11 (NIV)]

In much of my work in the church (and even when driving my car on the FDR Drive in New York City), I find the same need for a deeper knowledge of love than one can find in a popular song. I need the love that passes all understanding.

Why is love for each other so elusive? Why is there so much fighting and misunderstanding in our families, in our churches, in our conversations? Why do we sit in judgment over others?

Dudley Weeks, Ph.D., in his book, The Eight Essential Steps to Conflict Resolution, suggests:

"Throughout the annals of human history, our species has found a wealth of ineffective
ways to perceive and deal with conflict. In both lore and fact, when there is conflict, people are killed, imprisoned, exiled, beaten upon, segregated, isolated simply because they differ with others over issues large and small. Today, after thousands of years of human history, we continue to see nations waging devastating and lengthy wars over conflicting ideologies, territory, pride and perceived national interest; we continue to see communities torn apart over factional strife and ethnic differences; and we continue to see families disintegrate over generational conflicts or spousal disagreements” (p. 4).

Does life for us have to be one continual argument, or can we learn a new way of living?

I wonder: Can we each become a "Love Machine”? Can we somehow be touched by the Spirit of God so deeply that when someone "pushes our buttons," instead of reacting with an ugly attitude, with gossip, with unkindness, we actually react with love?

This kind of love takes a miracle. A miracle that only God can provide. I need this kind of love in my own life. I've needed it for years. Both the church and the world are desperate for this kind of love.

This Saturday, October 1, at 11:00 a.m. at Manhattan Church, 232 West 11th Street, NYC, I will continue our topic, "Love Never Fails," which is found in 1 Corinthians 13. I believe the subject matter to be of such importance that we will be looking into it for weeks to come.

I hope you can join us at this service as it is designed to bring all of us closer to God's ideal for our lives and closer to each other.

"Your attitude" (now there is a loaded word) "should be the same as that of Christ Jesus. Who being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

"And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death--even death on a cross." [Philippians 2:6-8 (NIV)]

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." [John 13:34, 35.]

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May God richly bless you and give you the peace that passes all understanding.

I hope to see you soon.

Best regards,

Tony Romeo, Pastor
The Chapel At Union Square / Manhattan Church / REACH-NYC
P.S. Those who attend our small group fellowship at The Chapel At Union Square will be joining us for this series at Manhattan Church. No matter what your faith tradition, you will find a welcoming hand of friendship here.

Soon we will be learning more about the power of "small groups" as a venue where we can learn more about the love of God and how to love each other better. Think about starting a small group for prayer and fellowship in your apartment, community, local coffee-shop, or place of business.

*Individual and group Bible study sessions are always available. "Cafe Reach" will be reopening soon. For more information, write to: reachnyc.contact@gmail.com.*

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