

Living in the Light of the Gospel of John  
#5  
John 13,14,15



Have you ever thought about the full extent of the love of Jesus Christ? In John 13:1 we read, “Having loved His own who were in the world He now showed them the full extent of His love.”(New International Version) Jesus goes on and says in John 15:13, “Greater love has no one than this, that He lay down his life for His friends.”(NIV) That is what Jesus did. While we were filled with sin, He died for us, taking our sins upon Himself. This love of Christ is beyond measure. How are you going to respond to this full extent of His love? Are you going to betray Him through your actions like Judas did or are you going to give Him the worship He deserves by sharing His love with others?

Jesus shows us that the full extent of love comes from humbly serving others. Knowing “that the Father had put all things under His power, and that He had come from God and was returning to God; so He got up from the meal, took off His outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around His waist. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash His disciples feet.”(John 13:3-5 NIV) “Then He said, Do you understand what I have done to you? You address Me as ‘Teacher’ and ‘Master’, and rightly so. That is what I am. So if I, the Master and Teacher, washed your feet, you must now wash each other’s, feet. I’ve laid down a pattern for you”.(John 13:12,13 The Message Bible) Jesus is showing us through His direct actions of love revealed in washing the feet of others that love involves performing humbling acts and meeting the needs of others.

The human tendency is for us to want others to serve us but Jesus points out how wrong that is. After showing that Judas is going to betray Him Jesus declares, “A new commandment 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 NIV) Love is the badge of discipleship. Love is not just a warm feeling but decisive acts of compassion. It involves helping when it is not convenient. Love is giving when it hurts. It is absorbing hurts without fighting back. Such love is only possible through the power of the Living God who is Love. A God who manifests Himself through Jesus Christ and now tells us to “Love one another.”

The love Christ has for us is further manifested by His deep concern for us in our times of distress and hopelessness. That is why He tells us, “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, trust also in Me.”(John 14:1 NIV) This love,

hope and help that Jesus provides is not limited to just the here and now. It is a love that extends into eternity. In John 14:2-4 we see Jesus explaining that He is preparing a place for us in heaven and will come back to take us to be with Him. Oh what a joy it is to know that when I am facing trials, tribulations and troubles coming at me from every direction that God has everything under control. As 1 John 4:16 says, “God is Love.” Knowing that God is love, and that He has everything under control gives me real peace. But that is not all. While you and I were yet sinners He sent His Son Jesus Christ who came, died in behalf of our sins, rose from the dead, and now tells us in the midst of our troubles, “Don’t let this throw you. You trust God, don’t you? Trust Me.”(John 14:1 The Message Bible) Trusting in God and in His Son Jesus Christ is the key to a life of peace, power and purpose.

I know that when I am broadsided by something that I didn’t expect, a trouble out of no where, I am tempted to fall into the dark pits of loneliness and despair. How I must live in the midst of these words of Jesus in such times of darkness and confusion when He says, “I am the way and the truth and the life.”(John 14:6 NIV) By remembering that Jesus is the way, and living life at those moments of despair in the light of this truth, I will be an overcomer I must also remember not only will He bring me through this trouble but also He is the way to God the Father Himself. Remember Jesus has said, “I am the Road, also the Truth also the Life. No one gets to the Father apart from Me. If you really knew Me, you would know My Father as well.(John 14:6,7 TMB) Jesus is the visible tangible image of God the Father. He makes that very clear when He says, “Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in Me? The Words that I say to you are not just My own. Rather, it is the Father, living in Me, who is doing His work. Believe Me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves.”(John 14:10,11 NIV)

So what does all this really mean to you and me in the midst of our pain and disappointments? It means that we are not alone and powerless in this hostile world. Remember Jesus said in verse 1; “do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in Me.”(NIV) Now He tells us, “I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in My name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask Me for anything in My name, and I will do it.”(John 14:12,13 NIV) Wow what a promise. What do these verses mean to you? They mean to me that now that Jesus has returned to the Father and the Holy Spirit has been sent (John 16:7) that I can expect God to do great and mighty things through me if I will only believe. In fact Jesus said even greater things will be done. Look at the great things Jesus did, such as healing,

deliverance and even the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Jesus said, “You may ask me for anything in My name, and I will do it.”(Vs. 13) Of course you will be asking for that in accordance with the will of the Son of God because a request made in the Son’s name is treated by God the Father as if the Son made it Himself.

This is not a magic formula that Jesus has given us. It is the proclamation of the result of the relationship of love between Jesus and those who put their faith in Him. In verse 15 Jesus farther clarifies this love relationship by declaring, “If you love Me, show it by doing what I’ve told you.”(TMB) You are not being honest to yourself or anyone else by saying that Jesus is the love of your life and then not obeying Him. To help you in your relationship of love with Him what promises does He make in John 14:16 and 18? What assurance does this give you?

“The Friend, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send at My request, will make everything plain to you. He will remind you of all the things I have told you. I’m leaving you well and whole. That is My parting gift to you. Peace. I don’t leave you the way you’re used to being left-feeling abandoned, bereft. So don’t be upset. Don’t be distraught.”(John 14:26,27 TMB) Jesus has sent the Holy Spirit to work into our lives a deep and lasting peace. This peace is the quiet assurance that no matter what the circumstance might be, God is in control and He will work all things for the good of those who love Him. The end result of believing that is peace.

If only we will listen and believe it when Jesus tells us, “Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”(John 14:27 NIV) We can have this peace because the intimate relationship between God the Father and Jesus is now being extended to each and every one of us. He expresses this intimacy by declaring, “I am the Vine, you are the branches. When you’re joined with Me and I with you, the relation intimate and organic, the harvest is sure to be abundant. Separated, you can’t produce a thing. Anyone who separates from Me is deadwood, gathered up and thrown on the bonfire. But if you make yourselves at home with Me and My words are at home in you, you can be sure that whatever you ask will be listened to and acted upon.”(John 15:5,7 TMB) What do these verses mean to you? Remember this intimate relationship is possible, “if you remain in Me (Jesus) and My words remain in you.”(Verse 7 NIV) “As the Father has loved Me, so I have loved you. Now remain in My love. If you obey My commands, you will remain in My love, just as I have obeyed My Father’s commands and remain in His love.”(John 15:9,10 NIV)

The end result of this intimate relationship is joy. Such joy is not possible though if we do not remain in Christ. That means relaxing at this moment in His love and letting His peace that passes all understanding sweep over us. “I’ve told

you these things for a purpose: that My joy might be your joy, and your joy wholly matures. This is My command: Love one another the way I loved you. This is the very best way to Love. Put your life on the line for your friends. You are My friends when you do the things I command you.(John 15:11-14 The Message Bible)

Why did Jesus choose us as His friends? He tells us, “I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit-fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in My name. This is My command: Love each other.”(John 15:16,17 NIV) This fruit involves the fruits of the Spirit found in Gal.5:22,23 and the fruit of lives changed as the Holy Spirit works through us.

If we are going to bear fruit, have joy and experience peace we must win the battle of the mind. The mind is the gateway to our spiritual nature. That is why 2 Cor.10:5 says, “we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”(NIV) Romans 12:2 declares, “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”(NIV) If this transformation of the mind doesn’t take place the crazy tapes of negativism, bitterness and hopelessness will take over the mind and every promise of Christ will be ignored. As this happens the full extent of His love spoken of in John 13:1 will not be acknowledged. When Jesus says in John 13:34, “A new commandment I give you: Love one another, “the listener must strive to make the thoughts of the mind obedient to what Jesus has said, until love results. Instead of meditating on the flaming arrows consisting of the lies and hopelessness of the evil one, take up the shield of faith as Eph.6:16 says. And do what verses 17&18 declare and “take up the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.”(NIV)

A mind focusing on Jesus and filled with the Spirit of Truth is a mind, which opens the heart to the fullness of God’s promises and purpose. “Summing it all up, friends, I’d say you’ll do best by filling your minds and meditating on things true, noble, reputable, authentic, compelling, gracious-the best, not the worst; the beautiful, not the ugly; things to praise, not things to curse.”(Phil.4:8 The Message Bible) As you do this you will be free to live God’s way and let the fruit of the Spirit of His love flow through you. “But what happens when we live God’s way? He brings gifts into our lives, much the same way that fruit appears in an orchard-things like affection for others, exuberance about life, serenity. We develop a willingness to stick with things, a sense of compassion in the heart, and conviction that a basic holiness permeates things and people. We find ourselves involved in loyal commitments, not needing to force our way in life, able to marshal and direct

our energies wisely.”(Gal.5:22,23 The Message Bible) As this happen we will be letting the light of Jesus’ love shine through us in the midst of a hostile world.

As God does His special works of love through you do not be surprised if the world hates you. Jesus said, “If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated Me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.”(John 15:18,19 NIV) As we reach out through the love of Jesus Christ defending the rights of the poor and homeless, it isn’t long and the rich and powerful who would love to drive them out of downtown, end up hating us. Instead of returning that hate, how we must strive to let the love of Jesus shine through us. Jesus said, “They will treat you this way because of My name, for they do not know the One who sent Me.”(John 15:21 NIV) So when you are hated for doing good don’t give up. Remember Jesus has promised, “When the counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth who goes out from the Father, He will testify about Me. And you also must testify.”(John 15:26,27 NIV)

Jesus is calling each of us into a deeper relationship with Him. This relationship commands us to love one another as we demonstrate our love for Him by living lives of obedience to His Word. Everyday He gives us so many opportunities to obey His commands to reach out to those in need of His love. As we strive to do this remember we are not alone. Jesus is with us and He has sent His comforter the Holy Spirit to strengthen and enable us to be His instruments of love. Continue to abide in His love remembering He is the Vine and we are the branches. In this abiding relationship we shall find love, joy and peace far beyond anything the world has to offer.

This next week please join me in reading John 16,17,18 as we strive to live in the light and love of our Risen Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

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