

## **Love, Obedience, & Faithfulness Can't Be Separated**

### **John 14:15-24 & Gal.5:22-25**

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#### **I. Historical Background and Biblica Context**

Jesus continues to prepare His disciples for His impending death on the Cross. He offered them profound teachings about heaven, His unique role, the coming of the Holy Spirit, and the relationship between love and obedience. This chapter provides insights and promises for every believer. Chapter 14 continues to offer them comfort (us) and He also promises them the coming of a Helper and Comforter (Holy Spirit) V.15-24. We see what's the proof of genuine love for Christ should look like. We will grow to know Christ more intimately by obeying Him.

The church is built on relationships: our relationship with God and our relationship with one another. The two are connected, Just as God has forgiven us, we are expected to do the same for others. Forgiveness and love aren't options- they are commands. Indeed, love is very important for the believers because Jesus spoke of it several times to His disciples. Without Love, how can we be obedient and have faith?

#### **II. Lesson: Love, Obedience & Faithfulness Can't Be Separated.**

##### **1. John 14:15. "If you love me, you will obey what I command".**

As our love grows for Jesus, our obedience should also grow. Anyone who wants to really know God and to walk with Him, must obey Him. This may sound like a strong statement, but without us obeying His commandments, we can't fully walk in the Blessing and enjoy that sweet communion with Him, without obeying Him. If we walk with Him and follow the direction and leading of the Holy Spirit, then we will enjoy the close relationship that we desire and will receive the benefits of that relationship.

Jesus calls us His friends, *if we do what he commands*. This thought can be overwhelming to think that a Holy God desires to be a friend to anyone, who is willing to come to Him and obey His commands. The command is found in verse 12: "Love each other as He has loved". Because he is Lord and Master, we owe Him our obedience, most of all it shows our love for Him. Not only are we demonstrating love, but we are demonstrating our faith or trust in Jesus (Ps.145:13c).

**Obedience to God proves our love for Him** (1 Jn.5:2-3) and it demonstrate faithfulness to Him (1Jn.2:3-6), it glorifies Him to the world (1 Pt.2:12). It also opens avenues of blessings (Jn.13:17). In verse 21 Jesus says, “he who has my commandments and keeps them is the one who loves me; V.23: If anyone loves Me, he will keep my word... & V.24: He who does not love Me does not keep my words...” Love motivates us to obey Him. Let us keep in mind that Biblical love is not just feeling the warm fuzzies for someone. Biblical love is a self-sacrificing, caring commitment that seeks the highest good of the one loved. If we love Christ, the highest good we seek for Him is to glorify Him. Jesus glorified the Father by obeying all the Father had commanded Him (Jn.15:10; 17:4).

Faith is necessary to please God (Heb.11:6) and if our faith is genuine, we will live a lifestyle characterized by righteousness, modeling the example set for us by Jesus Christ. We will obey His commands not because we must, but because we want to, because of our love for Him. Faith comes from the heart (Rom.10:10). God sent His one and only Son to die for us when were His enemies (Rom.5:8-9). Our gratitude for redemption should be obedient to his commands. We are enabled to obey once we believed in Christ, we are saved and remade (2 Cor. 5:17).

When we obey the Lord, we live a life of joy, without shame and confidence of our eternal hope. Our obedience is a part of our assurance that we truly know God (1 Jn.2:3).

God is glorified in our obedience. Jesus said in Matthews 5:16, the plan is for others to see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. The Bible often tells us that God rewards obedience as in James 1:22-25 and they are blessed Ps.119:1-2.

To obey Christ’s commandments, we first must have them. We can’t obey what we don’t know or understand. To have Christ’s commandments we need to be in the Word consistently. When we study the Word, we will discover what we thought was right is wrong and what we thought was wrong is right (Is.5:20-21).

Obedience is not a matter of lip service, but rather doing what He commands, not just outwardly, but from the heart. In Mark 7:6, Jesus condemned the Pharisees, who knew the Scriptures well, and honored God with their lips, while their hearts were far from Him. God looks on our hearts. Also, we can’t pick and choose which commands we obey, based on our individual preferences.

In verse 23, Jesus promised that if we love Him and keep His Word, both He and the Father will come and make their home in them. The question we must

ask ourselves is how suitable is our hearts for their home? We'll never lose God's indwelling us, but we do lose the sense of His nearness when we sin. If we treasure His presence, we'll be careful to walk in obedience. Sin always promises short term pleasure, but it yields long term pain. Obedience may require short term pain or self-denial, but it yields long term benefits: (a) God will love us; (b) Jesus will reveal Himself to us; (c) we'll enjoy a relationship with God that the world cannot know. We get to have a deeper experience of knowing our Lord and Savior because of our desire to love and obey. Paul prays in Eph.3:17-19: that Christ will make his home in our hearts through faith. He prayed that we may have our roots and foundation in love, so all of God's people may have the power to understand how deep Christ 'love is. If you believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead (Rom.10:9), you already know His love. We just need to desire to go deeper or have a more intimate relationship with Him. He came to take away our sins and people who keep on sinning don't know Christ, and they never seen him (1 Jn.3:5-6). When we make it our goal to get to know the Word and obey God day by day, He will show you who He is and guide you on the path which he has for each of us (Ps.119:133; Ps. 119:105).

## 2. **Galatians 5:22-25.**

Galatians 5 contains the contrast between a life lived through the flesh and a life lived through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Fruit of the flesh (Gal.5:19-21) comes from not following God's commands. Everything that leads you from God's path of life will lead to the path of death.

As described in verses 22-23 the fruit that we as believers produce grows because of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. As we grow, all the characteristics of Christ, will be manifested but just like physical fruit it needs to be nurtured.

Believers demonstrate that they are walking in the power of the Holy Spirit when they are serving others in love. They do not desire to act on what the flesh desire. Gal.24 says: "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If anyone wants to follow Christ, they must deny themselves and take up his cross (flesh) and follow Him (Mk.8:34). We say "no" to our old way of life and live a surrendered life to the Lord (Rom.6:13). To obtain that type of life we must pray and ask God to help us to become like Him (Eph.3:16-19).

When we are filled with the loving Nature of the Lord Jesus, we obey His commandments. We can't produce this kind of fruit unless we abide in Christ (Jn.5:17). Only with the help of the Holy Spirit can we be authentic in love which leads to joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

gentleness, and self-control. We are to stay connected to the One who is Love (1Co.13:4-8 & 1 Jn.4:7-12).

What good is faith if it is not obedient to God? Or what good is hope if it is not directed towards God will? And what is love if it doesn't obey God? Love, obedience and faith can't be separated because each one leads to the other. As Stephanie taught last week, Love is the catalyst or engine that drives the believer on the path that leads to life.

Those who belong to Christ have nailed their passions and desires to the Cross and put on new clothes (Col.3). God has given us the Holy Sprit to lead and teach us the right way to Love, to obey and keep the faith, even in this world of confusion.

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### III. **Conclusion.**

If the Christian life looks like it is impossible to live, we must remember that we are not called to live it by ourselves. Think of ourselves as the train on a track; the train can't move on its own power; it is relying on the engine (Holy Spirit) where it gets the ability to move. So, we are to walk or be led by the Spirit, which means to be connected to the divine power of God and move, wherever He leads. By this we are showing our love, obedience and faith (trust) in God.

- a) **John 13:34-35.** "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" (NIV).
- b) **John 14:23-24.** "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him" (NIV).

Application: Coming to church is good, singing in the choir is good, being an officer in the church is good and doing all the religious things are good. But it is an obedient heart that God loves. 1 Sam. 15:22: But Samuel replied: Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much in obeying the voice of the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice...