



Freedom In Christ Church

Newsletter



The Essence of Growth

Teach Me: Love Unconditional Part 2

I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love. When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father's commandments and remain in his love. I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow! This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you slaves, because a master doesn't confide in his slaves. Now you are my friends, since I have told you everything the Father told me. You didn't choose me. I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce lasting fruit, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask for, using my name. This is my command: Love each other. John 15:9-17 Jesus spoke these words intimately to those who follow Him. This command is not for the world, but for those who have dedicated their lives to being followers of Christ. This command goes against everything the world will teach us. The world has a "what's in it for me" mentality. The world says, I will love you, if you love me." "I will do for you if you do for me." The world is conditioned to give and accept love upon condition. We aren't called to love like that. We are called to love with the same intensity, consistently and Freely. Jesus says, love each other in the same way I have loved you. There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for a friend. Jesus literally gave His life for us. The very breath in His lungs to save our souls. Our human capacity to love could never

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surpass such a great and wonderful act love. So how can we love in the way Jesus is commanding us to love? To lay down one's life for a friend is the greatest of all loves. To put others first. To prioritize the happiness and well-being of others above our own. Be a servant at heart. Lay down your own desires to show others the love of Christ that is inside of you. Jesus has called us friend. Such a sweet and intimate, endearing term. As His friends, He confides in us. He shares the private understanding between Himself and His Heavenly Father. He revealed the Kingdom's family secret to living a life of joy. He says remain in my love. To stay constant in a state of love. With every word we speak, with every action we do, let it be love. He says, obey this command as I have obeyed this same command from my father. If we could only wrap our heads around the intensity in which Christ actually loved us and everyone before us and those to come after us. There could never be a greater love. But! We are called to be a reflection, a mirror image of the same spirit that led Jesus to love us that way. and when we do Jesus promised we would be filled with joy, for all of our days. He tells us that when we live in love, we have the authority to use His name and ask for anything and His Father, our Father will provide. Faith works by love and love alone. The real moment of revelation comes when we fully grasp and understand that when we love like Jesus loved us, God will take care of you. Our Father will have your back. When we let go of that "what about me" mentality and trust God to take care of us, we will reap all of the gifts and benefits that we have been intended to receive all along. Trust Him. Do as He commands. Allow God to take care of your needs. His grace is sufficient for you. Jesus never said that this commandment would be easy. However, He did say, our reward is great. I encourage you to spend some time in prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to illuminate ways you can put someone else before yourself. Ask Him to teach you to love like Jesus. I pray the eyes of your spirit would be open to see in every way in which God is blessing you because of your obedience to obey His command.

Sister Leah Hockenberry



Is Everything That Happens to Me God's Will?

Some believers think so. They often base this on their understanding of Romans 8:28: "And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them." You can see why this verse by itself could be used to teach that everything that happens to us is God's will. However, when examined in context with the verses around it, we discover this verse has a very different meaning. Let's step back and read verse 28 with a couple of verses leading into it: "And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will. And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them" (Romans 8:26-28). This gives us a clearer view of what God really wants us to know about these verses. Regardless of what is happening to us in this world, the Holy Spirit is standing in prayer for us that the will of the Father be done in our lives. In fact, the Bible teaches that we can actually partner with the Holy Spirit in prayer and pray for our own lives and the lives of others (1 Timothy 2:1). Adversity is unavoidable. But God can and will turn our adversities to our good when we submit ourselves to His direction. The Apostle Paul said we have enemies which are not flesh and blood but are principalities, powers, rulers of darkness of this world, and spiritual wickedness in high places (Ephesians 6:12). When being attacked by the forces of darkness, Christians must not sit in complacency, but rather submit themselves to God and resist the devil (James 4:7). In short, Romans 8:28 is a reminder that regardless of what the enemy throws our way, God is on the throne and Jesus is Lord!

-Pastor John Pogue



Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore, the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

1 John 3:1 NKJV

He's a Good, Good Father

One of my all-time favorite scriptures is Hebrews 11:6, “But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” Now this is a very lengthy scripture and I will be focusing on just the second half of it. In fact, I prefer to break even the second half of this scripture down into some smaller more manageable pieces.

First let's look at “**he who comes to God**”. This seems simple enough. He who comes to God is anyone who is looking for him and wants to talk to him. This could be someone who is not yet saved but has heard about God and has questions they want to ask him or a request they want to bring before him. It also is referring to Believers who come to God in prayer.

Secondly, this person coming to God, “**must believe that He is**”. They must believe that He is what? Well, they must believe that He is God! That he is all powerful, all knowing and all present. The person has accepted that fact that our God is the Most High God; the One that is more than enough; the Master, Owner and Lord of All! There is no other like Him.

Thirdly, the person who comes to God must believe “that He is a rewarder”. This person believes that God not only hears them when they pray but that He is ready, willing and able to provide whatever the person is seeking help with. They believe that He cares and is interested in their life.

And the final portion of this scripture essentially says that He rewards “**those who diligently seek Him**”. Are you diligently seeking Him? Have you found a church to be rooted and grounded in? A place where the Pastor knows your name and you know his? Do you attend services regularly, pray and read God's Word? Are you seeking a relationship with your Creator?

These are all important questions that we must ask ourselves. It is difficult to have a relationship with someone that you do not know. Just in the same way that it would

be unusual to imagine being married to someone that you spend no time with. The same is true in having a relationship with your Heavenly Father. He makes it clear in this scripture that there are ground rules for being in covenant with him.

Those rules are:

1. Come to Him - Pray. Go to Church. Read His Word. Learn the truth about His Character.
2. Believe - That He is looking for access points into your life.
3. Believe that He is good and that He is a rewarder to those who faithfully seek fellowship with him.

In the seeking is where we find His true character revealed to us. Understanding His nature helps to activate your ability to believe Him for things. If you don't know that He is a good, good Father, who delights in spending time with His children and giving them good gifts, it will affect your ability to believe that He wants to see you healed, prosperous and delivered.

Rewarders reward. They do not punish us in a feeble attempt to teach us a lesson. No rewarders use the Word that was already sent to chasten and correct us. The world follows this system:

Justice - when you get what you deserve

Mercy - when you don't get what you deserve

This is the basis of the penial system as we know it. Jury trials and prisons were established to render Justice. Parole boards and judges were created to extend Mercy.

However, God's system is founded on new and better promises:

Grace- when you get what you don't deserve!

God offered His people **Grace** time and time again throughout the Bible. Those who remained faithful reaped the reward in the end. They found favor and were blessed even while others around may have been defeated.

Jesus said in John 10:10, "The thief does not come except to steal and to kill and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." I believe that this scripture clearly defines two job descriptions. The first one being the job description of satan - the thief, who steals and the second one belonging to Jesus, God and the Holy Spirit, who comes to give us abundant life. Abundant means better!

So as you examine things that may be happening in your life right now or things that have happened to you in the past, I encourage you to put on your spiritual glasses on so that you can truly recognize the author of the good things in your life and who is the author of the bad things in your life.

The Bible says that God is the same yesterday, today and forever. That means if He was ever once good He then is always good. Remember that God is always good and the devil is always bad and the two never switch places! Once you have this building block in your foundation you will be able to confidently rejoice in singing with us..." You're a good, good Father!! You are perfect in all of Your ways!"

Sister Lisa Pogue

KIDZ KORNER

AS WE ENTER THE NEW YEAR AND A NEW WORLD, IT IS MORE IMPORTANT NOW MORE THAN EVER TO MAKE SURE WE ARE EQUIPPING OUR CHILDREN FOR ALL OF THE CHALLENGES THAT LAY AHEAD. IT IS, HAS ALWAYS BEEN, AND WILL ALWAYS BE OUR MISSION TO HELP OUR CHILDREN KNOW GOD INTIMATELY AS FATHER, FRIEND, AND ALMIGHTY GOD. THE APOSTLE PAUL SAID THAT THERE IS INFINITE VALUE IN KNOWING JESUS! INFINITE! WE KNOW GOD THROUGH THE VEHICLE OF RELATIONSHIP. WE WANT OUR CHILDREN TO NOT ONLY KNOW ABOUT GOD, BUT RATHER TO KNOW HIM AND EXPERIENCE HIM! THIS IS TRULY THE ULTIMATE DELIGHT OF THE HUMAN SOUL! THIS MONTH, OUR SUNDAY MORNING KIDZ IGNITING CLASS IS LEARNING ALL ABOUT WHO JESUS IS, WHY HE CAME, AND WHAT HE DID WHEN HE CAME TO OUR PLANET. WE ARE COMING TO TRULY SEE THAT JESUS IS THE WAY, THE LIFE, AND THE TRUTH! JUST LAST WEEK, DURING WORSHIP, THE SWEET PRESENCE OF GOD FELL ON ALL OF US! THE CHILDREN AND MYSELF WERE CRYING TEARS OF JOY AND BLISS BECAUSE OF THE OVERWHELMING PRESENCE OF GOD! WHAT A BEAUTIFUL THING! OUR WEDNESDAY NIGHT CLASS IS LEARNING ABOUT THE "SWEET LIFE." JOHN 10:10 SAYS, "THE THIEF COMES TO STEAL, KILL, AND DESTROY, BUT I HAVE COME THAT THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE LIFE AND LIFE MORE ABUNDANTLY. THIS ABUNDANT LIFE THAT JESUS IS OFFERING US CALLED "ZOE" WHICH IS A GREEK WORD TRANSLATED "THE GOD KIND OF LIFE." GOD WANTS HIS CHILDREN TO EXPERIENCE LIFE THE WAY HE ORIGINALLY INTENDED FOR IT

TO BE! JESUS LAID DOWN HIS LIFE FOR US SO THAT WE COULD KNOW GOD INTIMATELY, AND REAP THE BENEFITS OF BEING CLOSE TO GOD! AT FREEDOM IN CHRIST CHURCH, WE HAVE A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING THAT WE ARE FAMILY. WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER! WE ARE HERE TO SUPPORT PARENTS IN RAISING THEIR CHILDREN, TEACH GOD'S WORD, AND LEAD THEM INTO A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD THAT PRODUCES REAL TANGIBLE EXPERIENCES WITH HIM, AND THE ABUNDANT LIFE THAT JESUS PROMISED US!

-PASTOR DANE POGUE

AS FREEDOM IN CHRIST CHURCH CONTINUES TO GROW, SO DOES KIDZ IGNITING, PRAISE THE LORD! WE ARE BUILDING A TEAM OF SUPPORT STAFF FOR BOTH KIDZ IGNITING AND OUR BABY SPARKZ. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN JOINING THIS INCREDIBLE TEAM, CONTACT PASTOR DANE OR SISTER INAYAH.



Test Your Knowledge

1. Who are the only three angels mentioned by name in the Bible?
2. True or False? There are 49 different foods mentioned in the Bible.
3. ____ and ____ are the only nuts mentioned in the Bible



WAYS TO GIVE:

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GIVE, AND YOU WILL RECEIVE. YOUR GIFT WILL RETURN TO YOU IN FULL-PRESSED DOWN, SHAKEN TOGETHER TO MAKE ROOM FOR MORE, RUNNING OVER, AND POURED INTO YOUR LAP. THE AMOUNT YOU GIVE WILL DETERMINE THE AMOUNT YOU GET BACK.

LUKE 6:38

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Upcoming events

Pantry of Hope
Food and loose change Sunday
First Sunday of every month



Answers

1. Gabriel, Michael, and Lucifer
2. True
3. Almonds and pistachios

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