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Abide in Jesus' Love

John 15:9-17

God always wants us to deepen our relationship with Him. How can this happen? How can we deepen our relationship with Him? And with that, how does God deepen His relationship with us? Jesus began this discussion by telling His disciples to abide in Him (John 15:4). Without Jesus, we cannot do anything (15:5). He gives life to all. Without being connected to the source of life, there is no life. Jesus is the true vine. He is the true life. We are just branches. If we are separated from the vine we wither and die. The purpose of the branch is to bear fruit. We cannot fulfill our purpose without **being connected to Jesus**, the vine. Now Jesus goes another step deeper with His disciples to deepen their relationship with Him.

John 15:9 Jesus said, "*As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love*." Is there some difference between abiding in Jesus and abiding in His love? Does the love of God the Father for God the Son give us a clue? Let's look. **John 3:35** "***The Father loves the Son**, and has given all things into His hand*." Because the Father loves the Son with such great love, He has given all authority into the hands of the Son. Jesus has control of what is going on. For us that means we need to live trusting Jesus all the time. We may not understand what is going on, and that is alright. **Real love, abiding love trusts in the one loved.** This also means that when Jesus loves us, He gives us some responsibility. He does not give us all authority which is a good thing. Yet He does give us plenty of responsibility. As children of God, who abide in Jesus, we are responsible to do the right things. If you love Jesus, you will keep His commandments (14:15, 23). Just because we are retired, does not mean we are not responsible to use our God given gifts to serve and obey Jesus. Just because we are older and our bodies are falling apart, does not mean we are not responsible to God any longer. We are still responsible to be faithful to God, to do the right things and to serve Him, bearing fruit.

John 5:20 Jesus said, "*For **the Father loves the Son**, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel*." Because the Father loves the Son, the Father shows the Son all His works. The Son learns to do everything just like the Father. **Like Father, like Son!** This is our example to follow. As Jesus teaches us what He has learned from the Father, we are to learn to think and act like Him. The Father also shows the Son greater works. What are these greater works? It is sacrifice, the crucifixion. This is the greatest work of all to bring about our salvation. I still marvel at the faithfulness of Jesus, the obedience of Jesus and the sacrifice of Jesus for my sins.

John 10:17 Jesus said, "*Therefore **My Father loves Me**, because I lay down My life that I may take it again*." Because the Father loves the Son, Jesus will be obedient, even to death on the cross. Abiding in Jesus' love is always connected to obedience. Jesus said, "*He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me*" (John 14:21). We know that "*though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered*" (Hebrews 5:8). And I thought that I could learn obedience by being given everything I wanted. Well, that may be what most of the world thinks. When we get everything we want, we do not learn obedience, we become entitled, spoiled and demanding. **When we struggle and suffer while doing the right things, we learn obedience**. As a society we need to teach people to do the right things while they are suffering to help them learn obedience, instead of rescuing them all the time which teaches them to be irresponsible.

From these scriptures we learn that abiding in Jesus' love means **a deepening trust in Jesus,** the one we love. Knowing that Jesus will always do the right things. Abiding in Jesus' love means being responsible to **be more like Jesus**, faithful and obedient especially through suffering. Abiding in Jesus' love means **glorifying God through every sacrifice** we must go through.

Verse 10 Then Jesus said, "*If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love*." Obedience and love are intertwined. **Robotic obedience** is not what God is asking for. **Sporadic obedience** is not real commitment. This shows more of an attempt to manipulate God. **Our obedience to Christ should arise out of a heart filled with a deep affection for Jesus**. Why should followers of Jesus keep God's moral laws? We should keep them because we love Jesus. This apostle addressed this problem in his first letter. He wrote, "*If someone says*, '*I love God*,' *and hates his brother, he is a liar*; *for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen*?" (1 John 4:20). I always thought it was easier to love someone or something that we only imagine instead of those we can really see that are hard to love. But **real love for God is seen by God when we love those who are hard to love**. And people see and believe our real love for God when we keep the commandments of Jesus, especially when there is great sacrifice on our part. We know that Jesus lived in God's love because He kept the Father's commandments, even when it brought about His death. When we learn to keep Jesus' commandments when it is hard to do, then we will grow deeper in His love for us. This is the fact we are to know and believe. Let the facts of God's word influence our feelings.

Verse 11 Next Jesus said, "*These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full*." Jesus taught His disciples about

abiding in His love so that the joy of Jesus would live in them. **Real abiding joy in our lives comes from a life abiding in the love of Jesus**. What is real joy for Jesus? When a person understands the truth (Acts 2:28), when a person believes in Jesus (John 16:22), when a sinner repents (Luke 15:7, 10), when we pray prayers that God will answer (John 16:24), Jesus has great joy in all of these. Having the joy of Jesus will make our joy complete. The joy of God is not only found in the absence of struggles and strife, it is gladness, happiness and delight in doing the will of God, keeping His commands, loving others in the midst of persecution (Acts 13:49-52).

Verse 12 Jesus said, "*This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you*." Jesus' thought here begins and ends the same (15:17). He wants to get His point across to His disciples, **love one another**. Jesus set the standard. He never asked anyone to do something He would not do Himself. He wants us to love each other as He has loved us. We marvel at God's great love. He demonstrated His own love for us, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8). How much are we to love one another? We should be willing to give our lives for each other. We have a lot of growing to do.

Verse 13 Jesus said, "*Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends*." In Jesus' day the world was very prejudice. Everyone was racist. There were Jews and everyone else. There were Romans and everyone else. There were Greeks and everyone else. They loved their own but that is where their love ended. Would a Jew die for a Gentile? Never! Would a Roman die for a Jew? Never! They would rather see genocide happen. This is the thought of many people still today. Jesus and Christianity are to change all of this. Jesus died for everyone, Jew and Gentile, Roman and Greek. We are all created in God's image. **Jesus wants a greater love to dominate our lives**. We are to have a love for God that causes us to have a love for our enemies (Matthew 5:44).

Verses 14-15 Jesus said, "*You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you*." Usually, we talk about God or Jesus being our friend. If you mean that He loves you more than anyone else. You are right. We sing the song, "What a Friend we have in Jesus." I want you to notice something in this verse. **Jesus calls some people His friends if we meet His requirement**. We may call God our friend but does God consider us His friend? Why would God consider you a friend? Because you do whatever your Friend tells you to do. What if God told you to stop being jealous. Stop treating people mean. Stop calling people hurtful names. Stop spreading rumors. Stop talking behind people's backs. (Consider Proverbs

6:16-19; 1 Corinthians 13:4-6; James 3:10-16). What if you did not do what God commands. Are you His friend? You might think so but from Jesus' statement, you are not! Jesus said, "***You are My friends if you do whatever I command you***." You want Jesus to call you friend? Do what He commands you to do. Act the way He wants you to act. Treat people the way He treated people. Read the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). Read Jesus' statement about the Judgement in Matthew 25:31-46. When you treat people the way Jesus wants you to treat them, Jesus will call you a friend and **He will make His will known to you**. If God is not making things known to you, you may want to check if He still considers you a friend.

Verse 16 Jesus said, "*You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you*." Jesus is talking to His disciples. They will be doing what He has taught them once the Holy Spirit fills their lives. Jesus did choose these eleven men (Luke 6:12-16). God chooses sinful people to be saints for a purpose. We are to bear fruit. Fruit that remains is fruit from God, His will. The fruits given in scripture are **1**. sharing the gospel (Romans 1:13). **2**. Holiness (Romans 6:22). **3**. Financial giving (Romans 15:26-28). **4**. All good works (Colossians 1:10). **5**. Verbally giving thanks and praise to God (Hebrews 13:15) and **6**. Love (Galatians 5:22-23). Live these and your prayers will be answered.

Verse17 Jesus said, "*These things I command you, that you love one another*." The disciples are going to face some very challenging times. Jesus wants them to love each other and stay united. That calls for humbleness (1 Peter 5:5), putting others before ourselves (Philippians 2:3-4), going beyond what is expected (Matthew 5:41), caring for each other (1 Corinthians 12:25). Jesus said, "*By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another*" (John 13:35).

Questions to ask yourself: Is my relationship with God growing? Is God revealing His truths and will to me? Does Jesus consider me His friend? Am I loving people the way God wants me to love and treat them?

Actions to take: Proverb 3:5-12 Trust in the Lord. Acknowledge Him. Do not be wise in your own eyes. Honor God with your wealth. Accept the Lord's correction.

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