

The Heart of Christ – the message of the Upper Room Discourse (John 13-17)

“...having loved His own who were in the world, He love them to the end”(John 13:1.)

The Comforting Savior In the provision of Christ – Precious Promises (Part 3) John 14:25-31

John 14:28-31

28 You heard that I said to you, ‘I go away, and I will come to you.’ If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. 29 Now I have told you before it happens, so that when it happens, you may believe. 30 I will not speak much more with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in Me; 31 but so that the world may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me. Get up, let us go from here.

The life of Jesus truly is remarkable. As the God-man, Emmanuel, a name that means “God with us” – Jesus entered into this world most amazingly. The infinite and eternal Son of God, became flesh, was made human and He who had only dwelt in the blissful glories of heaven, face to face with the Father, now had dwelt, pitched His tent among humanity, to live with, abide with and interact with humanity as a man. From the time of His first recorded miracle of turning water into wine at the wedding there in Cana of Galilee, to the feeding of 5000 men, to the calming of the storm, to the raising of Lazarus from the dead after four days of decay, Jesus did things recognized by all as things that only God can do (John 3:2). In addition to all this, Jesus Himself claimed deity, He claimed to be God in many and varied ways. From His use of the Old Testament name for the Lord, calling Himself “I am” – the same “I am” that spoke to Moses from the burning bush;

- I am the bread of Life...(John 6:35)
- I am the light of the world... (John 8:12)
- I am the door/gate... (John 10:9)
- I am the Good Shepherd...(John 10:11)
- I am the Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25)
- I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:6)
- I am the true Vine (John 15:1)
- Before Abraham was born, I am (John 8:58)

All of these “I am” statements can be shown as intentional means by which Jesus was establishing His equality with the eternal, self-sufficient One, the LORD. And even in John 10:30 Jesus unequivocally states, **“I and the Father are One.”**

Now I know most of you here have no problems with the deity of Jesus Christ. As best as our minds can comprehend, we understand that Jesus is eternal God that has become forever united in human flesh. But Jesus did not come to this earth to establish His deity. It is important and necessary that our Savior be both man and God, and Jesus did demonstrate His divinity, but Jesus did not come simply to prove that. But on the other side, Jesus did not come to this earth to prove that He was human. Indeed He did become man. From Mary’s giving birth, to the

† The Heart of Christ ~ the message of the Upper Room Discourse (John 13-17)

“...having loved His own who were in the world, He love them to the end”(John 13:1.)

experience of the disciple and even to the acknowledgement of His enemies, Jesus was regarded as a man (John 10:33).

So then, we are right in asking the question, why did Jesus, the Son of God, come to this earth, taking on the form of man? We might quickly and not inappropriately answer, “To be the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world according to John 1:29. And this is the clear testimony of Scripture for we read also in 1 passages like 1 Timothy 1:15 –

It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners...

There can be no arguing this – Jesus came to provide a sinful, rebellious humanity; men, women and children who either actively or passively neglect or forsake their Creator to the end that all such souls that sin, according to the word of the Lord as recorded in Ezekiel 18:4, will die - will be eternally separated from the blissful presence of God to endure the eternal torments of hell.

In the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, we find then this solution for our sin; the cure for the disease of our iniquities, the remedy for our varied trespasses against God. By coming to the Lord Jesus Christ, confessing yourself to be a sinner; acknowledging before God your need for the work of His Son on the cross to be applied to you, to be applied to your account, we are told in the Scriptures that all such persons who call upon the glorious name of the Lord in this manner will be saved. [pause] But can it be rightly and biblically said that this then ends the purpose or reason why Jesus came to earth. Did Jesus come only to be our Savior – delivering us from the penalty of our sins? Did Jesus come only to be our Substitute, dying on the cross in our place? Could it be that there is something else? Can I dare stand before you this morning and claim that Jesus came to do more than this? [pause]

Oh, yes my friends...Jesus came to do more than this? The death of Jesus on the cross for sins; His offering Himself as our sin sacrifice is not the end of the purpose of Jesus, nor was it the final goal of Jesus. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross as the only sufficient payment for our sins was not designed to make us now neutral before God. The cross was God’s means to an even more glorious end; to an even greater blessing. And what is that blessing? You see, the death of Christ on the cross is indeed His giving His life in the place of His people. And the resurrection of Christ is indeed the proof that not only was His death on the cross acceptable to the Father as the only sin sacrifice, but the resurrection of Jesus would also be the proof that everything Jesus had taught His disciples, that everything He promised His disciples would come to pass. And just what are some of these teachings? Beloved, Jesus has promised the indwelling presence and power of the Holy Spirit in John 14:16-17; He has promised the always active influence of both Himself and the Father in the life of the believer in John 14:18-24. Jesus has promised that He Himself is the source of true peace, peace, that includes the dual experience of having been made right with God by the death of Jesus for sin and of having the experience of the working of God in one’s life.

And last week we noted that it is the promised peace of John 14:27 that ought to allow the believer not to be troubled or fearful because he can now see things from Jesus’ perspective, that His death was not the end of anything, but the beginning of everything. That the death of Christ

The Heart of Christ ~ the message of the Upper Room Discourse (John 13-17)

“...having loved His own who were in the world, He love them to the end”(John 13:1.)

would lead to His return to the Father and His return to the Father would simply hasten the time of His return, but before He returns, He will see to it that the Holy Spirit would come, which He did on the day of Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2. And in John 14:28 we read those words, **“If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because I go to the Father...”** Jesus once again calls believers to the question of the extent of their love for Him. Do we seek the highest good and glory of Jesus in all things? Do we see in the death and resurrection of Jesus the heart of Jesus to be back from where He came, which was in the eternal, blissful presence of God? Oh yes indeed. But how did Jesus, the man, demonstrate Himself worthy, reveal Himself ready, manifest Himself as prepared or fit to return to the Father? Beloved, Jesus, the man, demonstrated Himself not only divine, but perfectly human by being obedient to God the Father in everything. [pause] Look at verse 31 quickly. Here we read the words, **“but so that the world may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me.”** In other words, Jesus states that genuine love for God is demonstrated to all by obedience to the commands of God [repeat]. This is what I would have us consider this morning. For I submit to you that in addition to Jesus coming in order to be the sin sacrifice for His people, He also came to demonstrate and be the Example of how obedience to the Word of God expresses genuine love for God. In other words, if we would truly love God, we will greatly delight in obeying His Word and doing so in an open, public, for all to see manner. And to the degree we are obedient to the Word of God, we reveal the extent and intensity of our own love for God. How much did Jesus love the Father? Enough to be dead to sin and continually alive to God. And this then serves as our standard, the measure of our own professed love to God...are we obedient.

To drive this idea home, I would like to point out two things from our text that are true of Jesus that ultimately are to be true of all those who claim to love God, who profess to know Jesus as Lord and Savior. Jesus demonstrated His love for God by obedience; and this obedience to God can be shown through His sanctification and through His submission. And so, if we would follow after Christ, we must also follow His example of sanctification and submission. Let us consider these two pursuits as revealed in the life, in the humanity of Jesus as an example for us and then let us consider how these things are to be and can be true of us. Let us then consider this first point...

I. We must follow Christ's example of sanctification (John 14:29-30)

29 Now I have told you before it happens, so that when it happens, you may believe. 30 I will not speak much more with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in Me;

Our text begins with Jesus telling His disciples why He has been teaching them about His pending death and departure along with the promises just mentioned...so that when these things come to pass, their faith would increase. When the disciples saw the fulfillment of the predictions of Jesus, their faith would be strengthened and they would believe all the more fervently that Jesus was indeed Lord and Savior. Beloved, does this not all serve to remind us how blessed a gift are the Scriptures? We hold before the very words of God to man – this is God speaking to you. God is speaking to us in and through these words. We have the very predictions of Jesus along with the proofs of those predictions coming to pass. Jesus spoke these things beforehand so that we might, like the disciples, might believe, that by reading them our faith might increase

The Heart of Christ ~ the message of the Upper Room Discourse (John 13-17)

“...having loved His own who were in the world, He love them to the end”(John 13:1.)

and as our faith increases, so our lives become more and more conformed to Jesus, as we live more and more like Jesus.

Beginning then in verse 30 we see Jesus acknowledging the shortness of the time He has left because something dark and sinister is on its way. For we read there in verse 30, **“for the ruler of this world is coming.”** Here we see Jesus acknowledging that the world does lie in the power of Satan. Now Satan is not the rightful ruler, but was permitted by God to be the price of the power of the air, the one who is even now at work in the sons of disobedience (Ephesians 2:2). In just a few more hours or perhaps minutes, Satan, having entered Judas; Satan having influenced both the Jewish leadership as well as the Roman government, would come and arrest Him, then try Him, mock Him, beat Him, nail Him to a cross and kill Him. The ruler of this world was coming to do all that he could, the “best” he could to bury Jesus and keep Him buried.

But then Jesus adds an unusual statement, a telling statement saying, **“and he [Satan] has nothing in Me.”** It is from this statement that I would have you consider the sanctification of Jesus. This phrase is a Hebrew idiom, a Jewish way of saying that someone has no legal claim or case against another. We know that from the book of Job, Satan does occupy himself by **“roaming about on the earth and walking around on it”** (Job 1:7) looking for opportunities to make the righteous stumble or fall. Even 1 Peter 5:8 reminds us that the devil **“prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”** And the Scriptures are clear that when the Son of God became the Son of Man, Satan took every opportunity to bring Him down, even prompting Herod to try to kill Him when He was born. In Matthew 4 and Luke 4 it is recorded of the devil’s tempting Jesus to sin at the beginning of His ministry. And when the devil could not tempt Jesus then, the text of Luke 4:13 says, **“When the devil had finished every temptation, he left Him until an opportune time.”** Throughout the ministry of Jesus, the devil sought Jesus’ downfall by antagonizing Him through the words and attitudes of the religious leaders, through the pressures of demanding crowds, through any and all means. And yet what was the result of all the attacks of Satan to make Jesus fail and fall into sin? As the author of Hebrews testifies in 4:15, Jesus was **“One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.”**

The words **“he has nothing in Me”** have to do with the coming of Satan to carry out his wicked scheme to put the Son of Man to death. These words remind us of our Lord’s sinless perfection. Satan has no legitimate grounds upon which he may demand the punishment of the Son. What we are being told here is that the one who was currently the ruler over men, the devil, had found in Jesus a man whom he could not rule, not even in the slightest thing. Beloved, Jesus never gave the enemy a foothold in His life. Jesus never sinned, nor could He sin. But as Satan, through the mob and religious leaders, was about to bring his charge against Jesus, Jesus could confidently state, **“he has nothing in Me”**; He has no charge to make, there is no evil, no unrighteousness in Me. Jesus, the Son of Man, the one who took on flesh and blood, made like us in every way, did not sin. His life was one of constant sanctification, of continually setting Himself apart from sin, so that He might live in the flesh always for God. This is the first example of Christ concerning His obedience...He sought to live always and only for the Father and Jesus did so perfectly, so that He could say, the devil **“has nothing in Me.”**

Now then, how does this apply to us? Let us remember that Jesus has already called the disciples to follow and obey His example. In John 14:15 He had said, **“If you love Me, you will keep (or follow) My commandments.”** Beloved, we are called to live our lives in such a

The Heart of Christ – the message of the Upper Room Discourse (John 13-17)

“...having loved His own who were in the world, He love them to the end”(John 13:1.)

manner that it might be said of us that the devil “has nothing” in us. But how can this be? For Jesus was perfect. Jesus never sinned. There was nothing in Jesus life that could be regarded as disobedience to the Father. Then we have ourselves. We are not perfect. We always sin. And so how could it ever be said of us that the devil has nothing in us?

Oh how great is the wisdom, the plan and the grace of God! Let us never forget that our sin, “O the bliss of this glorious thought, our sin not in part, but in whole was nailed to the cross and we bear it no more!” Let us turn to Romans 6 for a moment. Remember that I have said so much of the letters in the New Testament are simply expansions of the theme we find in John 13-17, the Upper Room Discourse. Now, according to Romans 6, those who have placed their faith in the work of Jesus on the cross declares that we are dead to sin, and according to verse 4 **“we have been buried with Jesus through baptism into death so that as Christ was raised from the death through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life”** (Romans 6:4).

Now then, what is this newness of life? Beloved, this newness of life is living now even as Jesus lived. And how did Jesus live. Let us read verse 11, **“Even so, consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.”** This is how Jesus lived...sanctified, set apart...dead to sin but alive to God. And now, if we know that our sins have been nailed to the cross and buried...we are to live sanctified lives...dead to sin and alive to God. We do not have to continue in sin any longer.

Now let me be clear...I am not saying we will not sin...but we don't have to continue in sin. When Jesus took our sins to the cross and buried them and we have come to recognize this truth by faith, we no longer desire sin to rule our lives, but rather we desire the Savior to rule our lives. But we still have a problem. We sin don't we? But beloved, the in the grace of God, even when we sin, we have the opportunity to demonstrate obedience to God. Isn't that amazing...even when we sin, we have a means of being obedient. How is this? You know it well. In 1 John 1:9 we read, **“If we confess our sin...”** if we acknowledge and agree with God that our actions, our attitudes, the way we might have spoken to a spouse or a child, that little exaggeration we might have made to impress another, the expression of pride, that harboring of anger, that relishing of envy is a violation of the commands of Jesus...then God is what - - - **“faithful and righteous to forgive us our sin and cleans us from all unrighteousness.”** Beloved, it is not the individual sins that we commit that causes problems in our relationship to God...those sins have been paid for if we are in Christ. The problem is when we fail to confess, to agree with God with the grievous nature of actions or attitudes and fail then to repent and be changed by God.

So then, even in our sinning, God has graciously granted us a means to be obedient. And as Romans 6:1-2 remind us, this by no means gives us the right to sin all the more, simply because we can be obedient after we sin. For remember, we are to follow the example of Jesus, who was dead to sin and alive to God and therefore could say that Satan had nothing in Him. And here is another glorious truth...if we are in Christ and being in Christ means that we confess our sins and repent and seek this sanctification of being dead to sin and alive to God...then the words of Romans 8:33 become all the more grand, asking, **“Who will bring a charge against God's elect?”** That is, who can claim to have something in, or something on one of God's children who although they sin, have trusted in Jesus' payment for their sin and who in obedience confess and repent of their sins? The answer, no one....they are sanctified, set apart for God's

† The Heart of Christ ~ the message of the Upper Room Discourse (John 13-17)

"...having loved His own who were in the world, He love them to the end"(John 13:1.)

use and it can be said of them that the devil has nothing in them. So then, to be our example, Jesus demonstrated His love for God through the obedience of sanctification.

II. We must follow Christ's example of submission (John 14:31)

31 but so that the world may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me. Get up, let us go from here.

And in addition to this obedience of sanctification, we find in John 14:31 the obedience of submission. Let us read the text again.

Here we learn that Jesus believed, that Jesus taught, that Jesus knew that obeying the Word of God in every area of His life would demonstrate not simply to the disciples; and not just to the Jewish nation, but to all kinds of people, Jews and Gentiles the extent of His love for the Father. To put it in the form of a question, "How did Jesus demonstrate His love, His pursuit of the highest good and glory of the Father?" He did so by doing, **"exactly as the Father commanded"** Him. Jesus submitted Himself to the expressly revealed will of God.

Moving back for just a moment...note that this sentence has two parts. The first part expresses the purpose for the submission of Christ, that the world, all peoples, may know...or experience the truth that Jesus loves, that He seeks the highest good and glory of the Father...by submission to the word of God. Beloved, one of the greatest evangelistic tools we have; one of the greatest means granted to the believer is that he would simply obey the word of God increasingly in all areas of His life. If it was the pursuit and desire of Jesus to express to the world, to express publicly, openly and plainly His great love for the Father, ought we not to follow His example and pursue the same course?

But just how is this course of expressing love for the Father best manifested? Here we come to the second part of the sentence. This is accomplished by submission, by Jesus having done exactly as the Father commanded Him. And let me just zero in on this word "exactly". This word is not actually in the Greek text itself, but is implied. We might read it this way, "that even as the Father does, so I do - without deviation; without justifying some variation because it is more convenient; without personal self-interest. Oh how often do we seek to tweak one of God's commands? How easily we allow ourselves to bless the Lord with one breath and then curse our brothers or sisters in Christ with the next? How quickly do we rationalize that serving God in the church is okay, that fellowshiping with believers on Sunday is just fine, that digging into the Scriptures is appropriate during the time of worship, but do not expect such things at other times?

I love this verse...because it reminds us that openly praising and loving God is not just a Sunday thing...it is not to be something that only other believers see. One of the key reasons why Jesus sought to keep the whole of God's commands at all times in His life was to inspire the world as to what real love is, what real love does and what real love looks like. I thought these words from Spurgeon's Morning and Evening were fitting,

"A Christian...should so shine in his life, that a person could not live with him a week without knowing the gospel. His conversation should be such that all who are about him should clearly perceive whose he is, and whom he serves; and should see the image of Jesus reflected in his daily actions."

† The Heart of Christ – the message of the Upper Room Discourse (John 13-17)

“...having loved His own who were in the world, He love them to the end”(John 13:1.)

I dare say that no one could live with Jesus for even an hour without knowing the gospel. That the behavior and words of Jesus were such that all who were around Him clearly perceived whose He was, and Whom He served; and saw the image of God reflected in His daily actions. This was accomplished in Jesus life by His carefully submitting to the will of the Father. This can be accomplished in us by following His example, being careful to submit to the Word of God.

And so, let me close by asking you, are there areas of your life you are aware of this morning that are not in submission to the word of God? What are they? How is your prayer life, for the word of God calls us to pray unceasingly (1 Thessalonians 5:17). How is your thought life, because the word of God tells us to dwell on those things that are excellent and worthy of praise (Philippians 4:8)? How does your behavior, the way you live your life day by day reflect the goodness and glory of God, for the word of God exhorts, “Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles (unbelievers), so that in the thing win which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation” (1 Peter 2:12). Can it be said of you that you clearly reflect Jesus in your daily actions?

Remember that Jesus said, **“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments”** (John 14:15). In other words, we most readily express our love to the Father by being submissive to the words of Christ and by pursuing the sanctification of Christ, being dead to sin and alive to God, even as Christ expressed His love for the Father by being submissive to His commands and being sanctified, or set apart for God’s purpose. May each of us desire and pursue the example of Christ...to be to Christ, what Christ was to the Father, holy and obedient, thus proving our love to Christ and also then our love to the Father. This is in part why Jesus came...to be our example that we might follow in His footsteps. And then, as a bonus, such a pursuit results in revealing the love of God to the world, to the praise and glory of His name!

Soli Deo Gloria

Copyright © 2008 Edward K. Godfrey. This message is the sole property of the copyright holder and may be copied only in its entirety for circulation freely without charge. All copies of this message must contain the above copyright notice. This message may not be copied in part (except for small quotations used with citation of source), edited, revised, copied for resale or incorporated in any commercial publications, recordings, broadcasts, performances, displays or other products offered for sale, without the written permission of the copyright holder. Requests for permission should be made in writing and addressed to Edward K. Godfrey, Pastor, Hope Community Bible Church, and 2300 South 13th Street, Rogers, AR 72758.

The Heart of Christ – the Message of the Upper Room Discourse – John 13-17
The Comforting Savior – in the provision of Christ – Precious Promises (John 14:25-31)
September 7, 2008