

Our Part, His Part – John 14:15-17

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John 14:15-17. We're in the midst of a long monologue by Jesus, at the last supper, where he now speaks to several issues at the same time. Love, obedience, and the Holy Spirit. Some of them our part, the things we're responsible for, and others his; the things he does. "Our Part, His Part."

And I pray God uses it, *all* the parts, to spur you on and change your life all the more. "Don't let this fall on deaf ears."

John 14:15-17 – [15] "*If you love me* [Jesus said], *you will keep my commandments*. [16] *And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever,* [17] *even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.* (ESV)

Let's start with . . .

OUR PART

V15. It's only one sentence, but it leads to three main thoughts.

1. Love always leads to obedience (v15)

Love for *Jesus*, that is. Affection for Jesus. Devotion to Jesus.

Not love generally. Not love as a nebulous concept; or love without an object. Not even love for God *generally* as some people say it. Trying to pacify as many religions as they possibly can.

It's love for a person. Love for Jesus. Explicitly. "*If you love me*," Jesus said. V15.

And it always leads to obedience. [15] "*If you love me, you will keep my commandments.*" You will.

Love for God's Son, always leads to . . .

• Obedience to God's Son

Always. Like baseball and hot dogs. The 4th of July and fireworks. The more you love Jesus, the more you'll obey him. The more you'll please him. Honor him. Keep his commandments.

Like his commandment to believe in the first place; believe the Gospel. We don't normally think of it that way, but it's true. Believing is an act of obedience.

Mark 1:15 – *The time is fulfilled* [Jesus said], *and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel*. It's a command. So believing is an act of obedience.

And Jesus says here, it stems from love. "*If you love me*, you'll believe and keep believing.

Same for living for him. If you love God's Son, you'll live for God's Son. Like Paul says in **2 Corinthians 5** – *The love of Christ controls us* [his love for us and our love for him] . . . *that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised*. (14-15) Love for Jesus leads to living for Jesus. An act of obedience.

And perhaps the most famous command of all is The Great Commission. *Go and make disciples*, Jesus said. (Mt 28:19) Go and make followers and learners just like yourself.

And we do. We believe in Jesus, we live for Jesus, and we go for Jesus. All because we love him. Because love always leads to obedience. [15] "*If you love me, you will keep my commandments.*"

Obedience to God's Son and . . .

• Obedience to God's Word

Love always leads to *biblical* obedience. *Everything* Jesus conveyed. Directly and indirectly. From the *heart* of God via the Spirit of God. Old and New Testaments both. The principles of the Law to the admonitions of prophets. The wisdom of the Psalms to the writings of the Apostles.

Contrary to the heretical teaching of some, the Old Testament is not irrelevant. We can't just dismiss it and ignore it. Because without the Old Testament, the New Testament doesn't make sense. And without the New, the Old is incomplete.

In fact, the Old Testament was *written* for our sake according to the New. (Romans 15:4) Written to show us how to live, how God works, who he is, and what he's done to establish his kingdom. Eventually sending his Son to purchase our redemption so we could be part of it.

It's all there, it's all God's Word, and it's all to be obeyed. And we will, if we love Jesus. Love always leads to obedience.

• Because love is obedience (2 John 6)

And obedience is love. In addition to the Gospel of John and the book of Revelation, the Apostle John also wrote three epistles. Three letters. Two of them to the church at large, and the third to a particular man *in* one of the early churches.

And after reminding us to love one another, he says in **2 John 6a** – *And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments*. That we obey what Jesus says. That we do what he wants. That *is* love, he says. Love *is* obedience.

So of course love always leads to it. Without it, without obedience to God's Son and God's Word, there *is* no love.

Which leads us to the second point.

2. No obedience, no love

If love always leads to obedience, and there's a *lack* of obedience, there's a lack of love. The proof is in the pudding. The proof is in your life. Your practices. Your habits. Your interactions. The things you do and don't do. The things you think and don't think.

If the life you live is contrary to God's Word and God's Son, you don't *love* God's Word and God's Son. You don't.

Or, if your obedience is piddly, fleeting, occasional; your *love* is piddly and fleeting. No matter how much lip service you pay to it.

Because Jesus said, “*If you love me, you will keep my commandments.*” (15) You will. There won’t be any question. And any *lapses* in your obedience will be quickly confessed. And greater and greater measures taken to prevent them.

Because obedience always reveals our love. No obedience, no love.

• **And therefore no blessing (John 14:21, 23)**

No *love* for Jesus, no blessing from Jesus. Because obedience always *brings* blessing. Obedience to God’s Son and God’s Word. Look down at v21.

After addressing a few other issues, Jesus returns to the topic at hand and says – [21] *Whoever has my commandments and keeps them [obeys them], he it is who loves me. [Obedience proves our love. Same idea] And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.” As in, show myself strong to him. Reveal myself to him.*

All of which is a blessing. To be loved by God the Father and God the Son, and see Jesus, both now and at his return, is a massive blessing. The result of obedience.

And v23 indicates the same – [23] *Jesus answered him [one of the Apostles], “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. As in, take up residence with him. Live with him. Another blessing of biblical proportions. If anyone loves me. (23a)*

No love, no obedience. No obedience, no blessing. No blessing of God’s goodness and grace in our lives, no blessing of mercy and protection, and no blessing of assurance and peace.

3. So make sure you love Jesus

Make sure. And I’m not talking about a sappy or romantic type of love. That’s heretical. Or at the other end of the spectrum, a platonic love that’s void of feeling or emotion. Neither of those are what Jesus is talking about.

To *love* Jesus is to make sure your religion isn’t head knowledge alone. Or a series of rituals where you just go through the motions. Or a copycat exercise just because your family or friends believe.

Make sure you *give* yourself to him. Make sure you serve him; lay down your life for him. Make sure you devote yourself to him; dedicated and determined; steadfast and unshakable. Make sure you rejoice in him and long for his return.

Make sure. Because that’s love. And that kind of love always leads to obedience, and obedience, blessing. (**Summary**)

That’s our part.

Then, in v16-17, he switches to . . .

HIS PART

Not that the two are unrelated. Quite the opposite. Indicated by the word, “and.” To say that God *helps* us in our love. He helps us in our obedience.

[15] “*If you love me, you will keep my commandments.* [16] And [indicating a connection] *I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper [in addition to me], to be with you forever [unlike Jesus who returned to heaven], [17] even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.*

Here’s the fourth thought:

4. God has given us his Spirit to help (v16-17)

Love and obedience are so *crucial*, that God has given us his Spirit to help us. To stir up our love and obedience in the first place, and spur us on to even *greater* love and good works.

God has given us a Helper, in addition to Jesus himself, to assist us in life and godliness. Someone to help us live for the Son and glorify the Father.

And that someone, is . . .

• **The Holy Spirit**

Like Jesus said in v25-26 – [25] “*These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. [26] But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name [as in, according to my will and with my support], he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.* He’s a *holy* helper.

Holy, because he’s perfectly righteous and uniquely transcendent. Meaning he’s set apart from all other spiritual beings in the universe, and far above them. Set apart in power and status. That’s the idea of holiness. It means perfectly righteous and uniquely set apart.

In fact, he’s the third person of the Trinity. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Equal in every way, of the same essence, and fully God himself. Just like the Father and Son.

And don’t let the different names for him in the Bible confuse you. Sometimes he’s referred to as just *the Spirit*, while other times he’s *the Spirit of God*, the *Spirit of Christ* (Romans 8:9), or the *Helper*. But *most* often he’s called the *Holy Spirit*.

Not only that, he’s . . .

• **The Spirit of Truth**

God has given us the Holy Spirit of Truth to help us.

V16 – *I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever [I’ll come back to that], [17] even the Spirit of truth.* The one who helps us by revealing, and recalling, and discerning all that’s true and good. Like we saw in v26 – *he will teach you all things [Jesus said] and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.*

He reveals all truth and recalls all truth, so that we can love all truth and obey all truth.

What’s more, he helps us by . . .

• **Dwelling within us**

At least those who know him and see him. V17. The Father gives us his Spirit, *even the Spirit of truth, whom the world [those who don’t believe] cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.*

God helps us in our love and obedience, by actually giving us his Spirit to dwell within us. Not just *with* us, at our side, but within us. In our heart. Our soul. The core of our being.

How good is that? The very presence of the living God, dwelling within us. Taking up residence. Making his home. Establishing our bodies as his temple.

But it's only for those who believe; believe in Jesus. Unlike the *world* who doesn't. And therefore *can't* receive the Spirit.

For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? (2 Corinthians 6:14) Holiness with sin? None! Not at the spiritual level.

Unbelievers neither "see" him with the eyes of their heart, or know him in their *heart* of hearts. Because God doesn't *give* the Spirit to them. He withholds that blessing.

But for those who do believe, those who *love* the Lord, he gives the Spirit fully. To dwell *within* them. Within you. Within me. So that we know him personally. (17b)

And praise God, he remains . . .

- **Forever and ever**

God has given us his Spirit for good. *I will ask the Father [v16], and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever.* With us and in us. Never to leave us or forsake us.

That's how God can say such a thing; God the Father; *I will never leave you nor forsake you.* (Hebrews 13:5) Because his Spirit, *one* with him as the third person of the Trinity, takes up residence and stays forever. The moment we repent and believe. To once again, help us love and obey his *Son* forever and ever.

5. So make sure you listen to him

Make sure you listen to the Spirit. Instead of ignoring him, instead of treating him like a stranger, get to know him and conduct your *life* with him.

Or as Paul says it, *walk* by the Spirit. (Galatians 5:16) *Not according to the flesh*, your sin nature, but *the Spirit*. (Romans 8:4) According to *his* nature. His *holiness*.

Instead of grieving or quenching him – by indulging in sin, or disregarding him, or failing to acknowledge his help – take notice of him. Talk with him. Consult him.

And especially lean in and listen when he's nudging you. Or pressing you. Or bringing Scripture to mind. Even putting a song in your heart. Oh how we need to listen!

I've come to realize that the songs he brings to mind when I'm tempted to sin, are his way of shouting at me. In a glorified way of course, but shouting. It happens so frequently I've come to expect it. A song, out of the blue.

And it's in those moments that I have a choice to make: either listen, or rebel. Listen, or sin. Listen, or disobey. And if I disobey, I fail to love. I fail to love the one who saved me, and asked for the Spirit in the first place.

So make sure you listen, make sure you love, and make sure you obey. And thereby enjoy the blessing and benefit of the Holy Spirit all the more. Our part, and his.

Prayer – Lord Jesus, we love you, we worship you, and we praise you. Please forgive us of our piddly love. Forgive us for our occasional love. Forgive us of our sin. Father, overwhelm our hearts with the presence of your Spirit, and spur us on to obey. Fall fresh on us, even now, and change us from one degree of glory to another.

You Are Loved