

May 19 (Baptism): Love: Not Left as Orphans (John 14:15-24)

Next Week: The Greatest Remaining (I Cor. 13)

Intro: There is a circle of love in this passage as well as elsewhere in the Bible. We are told that God loves us and that he loves us first—before we are even capable of love. We are told that we are to love God and that God will love us as we love him.

Love produces obedience

The Father will give you another Counselor

**I. LOVE Turns Band of Disciples into a Family: *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 (John 14:23).***

A. **The TWELVE:** They have spent three truly amazing years with Jesus. They have heard his teaching, seen his life, and come to the conclusion that he is the Promised One, God's Messiah. They are gathered in the Upper Room (**PIC of Upper Room**). Jesus has washed their feet. He is now preparing them for his departure from this world.

1. These original disciples have begun to see life itself in their connection with Jesus. They are so immersed in the relationship with him that they cannot picture themselves without him. They are distressed beyond words at the thought of his departure. They are upset and uncertain.

2. Jesus has become the center of their world. He is the rabbi, and they are the students. He is the master, and they are the servants. Jesus speaks to them out of this context. He is very aware that he is their leader, their teacher, and their Savior. They are very aware that life has become centered in Jesus of Nazareth. Even before his death and resurrection, Jesus is the Messiah to them, the Savior of the World.

B. **THE CHURCH:** We who trust in Jesus today experience this same bond of love that makes us family.

1. We discover and experience the love of God in Christ Jesus. We become anchored in the goodness and love of God as the first tenet of our existence.

2. We see the love of Christ for us demonstrated in the cross and in the empty tomb. We read his teachings, study his life and behavior, and develop a deep respect and abiding love for this man from Galilee.

3. We experience the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives, guiding us and instructing us. We know the continuing love of God for us through the Spirit.

4. We share this love with one another. We come together in common cause for the good news of God's love and salvation. We share a common heritage in Christ and a common destiny. We become brothers and sisters who love each other deeply. We become devoted both to the Savior who is the head of the church and to the band of believers who are our church in this world.

C. **THE KINGDOM OF GOD:** *To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom...* I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom... (Revelation 1:5-6, 9).

1. Those early disciples experienced the preaching of the Kingdom. They realized that the Kingdom of God was among them and within them, that the Kingdom of God had come to them in the presence of King Jesus. They quickly developed a new cosmology based on Jesus as the Messiah.

2. We who are part of the Church of Jesus Christ have entered into this Kingdom as well. We have "seen" the kingdom through being born again (John 3:3). We can never go back to how it was before.

3. Placing our faith in Jesus Christ as Savior completely reorients the world for us. We become part of the FAMILY of FAITH and the FAMILY of GOD.

**II. LOVE CREATES SECURITY EVEN IN TRANSITION: *I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you (John 14:18).***

A. **We fear abandonment.** We are worried that our parents will get a divorce. We are worried that our spouse will leave us. We are worried that our family will reject us, that our friends will desert us. The TWELVE are worried that Jesus will go away, and they will see him no more, that they will be left without direction and without his companionship.

B. **The "Orphan":** "A child whose parents are both dead or who has been abandoned, especially one not adopted by another family."

The Greek word here is *orphanos* which means bereft of parents, a guardian, or a teacher. It is the word from which we get the English word “orphan.” And it is translated in the KJV as “comfortless.” “I will not leave you comfortless.”

1. A life without parents. No father or mother give you protection and provision and instruction, comfort and love.

2. A life without adoption. This is another dimension of being an orphan. Even if your biological parents are gone, you do not have to remain an orphan. You can be adopted.

a. The biblical idea of adoption is not really about being young. It is about the legal rights that you gain. It is about the economic and social stability that adoption provides a person.

b. When Paul talks about adoption of believers into the family of God, this is the point. We become legal heirs to the fortune that God has for us.

3. A life without love. I think this is what John is really pointing to.

a. Think of a child roaming the streets of Lima, Peru, or Caracas, Venezuela, or Mexico City. I have seen them there, street urchins who ply their tricks and trades, who come like a flood for whatever you will give them. **(PICS of ORPHANS around world)**

\*\*\*Did you know that Sunday School began for the children living in the streets of London? Robert Raikes became concerned about the children who were poor, roaming the streets, and receiving no education. He started Sunday School for them.

b. When an orphan enters into a loving relationship, he or she is no longer really an “orphan.” This is what Jesus is pointing to with his disciples. They are the children of God. They have the Comforter, who is the Holy Spirit. They belong to God, and he is not leaving them as orphans in the world.

**III. LOVE PRODUCES THE BEST OBEDIENCE: *If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching*** (John 14:23).

A. This is a consistent theme in his teaching.

1. **If we love Jesus, we will obey. John 14:15, “If you love me, you will obey what I command.”**

2. **If we obey, this is evidence of our love. John 14:21: “Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me.”**

3. **If we obey, we remain in his love. John 15:10: “If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love.”**

B. OBEDIENCE and LOVE ARE INSEPARABLE.

1. We are the ones who divide up faith and works. In the teachings of Jesus they go together.

2. We want to debate whether a lover can disobey or whether one who disobeys can love. It is a worthy debate, but Jesus is clear: These two, love and obedience, go together.

C. What are the commands of Jesus: *Whoever has my commands and obeys them...* (John 14:21).

1. **The GREAT COMMANDMENT: Love God and love neighbor (Matthew 22:37).** We should never forget this truth that is reinforced by James, Paul, Peter, and John in their letters.

2. **The NEW COMMANDMENT: *A new commandment 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*** (John 13:34-35).

a. This new commandment is fundamental to the teaching of Jesus

b. It is fundamental to the character of every individual in Christ and to the character and nature of his church in our life together.

c. It is fundamental to our witness in the world. We cannot speak the words of the gospel without the authentication of our love for one another. Absent that love, we are disconnected from the vine and impotent in our witness.