

Jesus Is Love – 03/13/11

Matthew 16:13-18

13 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"

14 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

15 "But what about you?" he asked. "*Who do you say I am?*"

16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

17 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven.

18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on *this rock* (the revelation of who Jesus is) *I will build my church*, and *the gates of hell will not overcome it*.

The revelation of "Who Jesus Is" is the foundation upon which the church is built and the gates of hell WILL NOT OVERCOME YOU!

Your personal revelation of "WHO JESUS IS TO YOU" will determine whether the outcome of your life is created by Jesus or if that plan is overcome and dominated by the "gates of hell."

JESUS IS LOVE

- Our entire lives are governed by what we "believe," not what we desire.
- The most important "belief" you can establish is "What you believe about God"!

I John 4:16-19

16 And we have *KNOWN, BELIEVED and come to TRUST THE LOVE that God has toward us*. GOD IS LOVE and he that dwells in love, dwells in God and God in him.

17 It is *through this understanding* that love has attained its perfection in us, enabling us to be bold, have perfect or absolute confidence and fearlessness on the day of judgment, for we realize that our life in this world is actually his life lived in and through us!

18 There is absolutely *no fear in love!* Perfect love casts out fear. If a man fears, there is something imperfect in his understanding of love. *There is no fear in love (dread does not exist), but full grown, complete and perfect love turns fear out of the doors and expels every trace of terror!* *For fear brings with it the thought of punishment and is tormenting and so he who is afraid (of punishment from God) has not reached the full maturity of love and has not yet grown into love's complete perfection.*

19 **WE LOVE HIM, BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED US!**

Most of us "believe" that God loves us and desires to help and bless us based upon our performance, religious observances and how we feel about ourselves, not on the basis of the nature of God, which is love.

If you are afraid of God or expect punishment from Him, you don't yet understand "Who He Is" and "How much he loves you."

Example: Young child brought into this room, will feel fear and look for their parents, and if he or she finds them RUN TO THEM!

- Religion has taught us to run from God.

I John 4:16 - And we have KNOWN, BELIEVED and come to **TRUST THE LOVE** that God has toward us. GOD IS LOVE and he that dwells in love, dwells in God and God in him.

Understanding “His Love” is the foundation that you base every decision you make upon.

If “God’s Love” isn’t governing your life and beliefs, then fear is!

Until you let “Who God is” and not the actions, choices, and decisions of another person define who you are, what you believe about yourself, what you will do, and how you will feel, you have sentenced yourself to a lifetime of pain and fear.

Any decision made out of fear will produce more fear, torment, sorrow, and pain. Only by “Believing God’s Love” will peace come.

Example:

- We often make “Inner Vows” to compensate for fear, pain, and rejection that we experience in life.
- Those “Inner Vows” become the “Fear” foundation from which we make decisions that devastate our lives.
- There are harmless ones like “I’ll never eat liver again,” and then there are those that cause pain and devastation in our lives, because they govern our choices.
- **The outcome of our lives is based simply on the decisions that we make over a lifetime, and what governs those decisions is where we must focus our attention.**

Example:

- No one will ever hurt me again – Result – Alone and Fear of Rejection (Walls of Isolation)
- I’ll never treat my children the way I was treated – Result – Fear of Discipline
- No one will ever control me again – Result – You become a fear-based control freak.
- “Inner Vows” are actually acts of protection or responses to “Love not Experienced and Believed.”
- When “Inner Vows” become the basis for decisions we are laying a track that will lead to more sorrow, pain, and rejection.
- **We will constantly expect to experience a good outcome, while our belief system is setting us up for a bad outcome. The resulting disappointment will create a devastating emotional condition.**

II Corinthians 6:11-13

11 Oh, dear Corinthian friends! We have spoken honestly with you. Our hearts are open to you; I can’t tell you how much I long for you to enter this wide-open, spacious life.

12 If there is a problem between us, it is not because of a lack of love on our part, but because you have *withheld your love from us*; we didn’t fence you in; *the smallness you feel comes from within you*. Your lives aren’t small, but you’re living them in a small way.

13 I am talking now as I would to my own children. *Open your hearts to us; open up your lives. Live openly and expansively!*

Until you believe God’s love for you, you cannot open your hearts to others.

Believe His love and move into the life He has planned for you!

II Chronicles 20:18-19

18 Jehoshaphat bowed with his face to the ground, and all the people of Judah and Jerusalem fell down in worship before the LORD.

19 Then some Levites stood up and praised the LORD, the God of Israel, with very loud voices.