

I DARE YOU TO BE LOVED BY GOD

PSALM 66:13-20 // JOHN 14:15-30

MONDAY 5/15/23

PSALM 66:13-20 //(16) Come and hear, all you who fear God, and I will tell what he has done for my soul.

JOHN 14:15-31// (15) “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. (16) And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper.

REFLECTION One day a lawyer came to listen to Jesus teach. After the teaching, he asked Jesus, “What is the greatest commandment of the Law?” Jesus answered with Matthew 22:37- 39, “(37) You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” In order to do this, we first need to accept we do not have that kind of love in us naturally. Jesus is saying we are to love like He loves, and to do that we need a Helper. We need to be reborn by and reconnected with the Spirit of God. 1 John 4:7 says, “Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God.” This is not to say that human beings are incapable of loving one another. However, when God’s Spirit of love is in us, our love for another is made profound and deep. The quality of Christian love is not focused on Eros love or a self-seeking need to be loved, nor is it to meet our lustful needs. No, agape love is a holy love from God. It comes from outside of us and remains in us. We are now shaped by a sacrificial love. We become vulnerable to each other and aware of other’s needs. This love is based on integrity, honesty and respect. When we obey Jesus’ commands, God’s love cures our love-starved souls.

PRAYER Thank you Lord Jesus for what you have done to my soul. You have brought me out from failed relationships into learning to love like you. Praise your holy name. In Jesus Name Amen.

TUESDAY 5/16/23

PSALM 66:13-20 // (13) I will come into your house with burnt offerings; I will pay you my vows, (14) those that my lips uttered and my mouth promised when I was in trouble.

JOHN 14:15-31// (18) “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. (19) Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. (20) In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.

REFLECTION I find one of the most tenderhearted Bible verses to be when Jesus says, “I will not leave you as orphans.” This promise is especially valid when we are dealing with broken relationships and struggling with everyday issues. The word “orphan” in Greek is translated to be “in a miserable state”. When we are deprived of healthy relationships, we need a true friend. Our best friend is Jesus who is our protector and helper. Like us, orphans are vulnerable to the dangers and deceptions that we are exposed to and are often unable to defend themselves. However, with Christ presiding over us with His Spirit, we can have courage. Jesus promises He will be with us in our hour of need. Let’s face it, we are weak in the flesh and sometimes distrust our own choices. What a wonderful life it is when we embrace the grace of the Spirit watching over us day after day.

PRAYER Lord Jesus thank you for being my friend. I need you to continue to watch over me and protect me from my bad choices. In Jesus Name Amen.

WEDNESDAY 5/17/23

PSALM 66:13-20// (15) I will offer to you burnt offerings of fatlings, with the smoke of the sacrifice of rams; I will make an offering of bulls and goats.

JOHN 14:15-31// (21) Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.” (22)

Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, “Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?” (23) Jesus answered him, “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.

REFLECTION When you love someone you naturally want to be with them. Look at verse 23. Jesus says, “we will come to him and make our home with him”. Once we have revived and accepted the Gospel, God’s wrath is no longer upon us. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit now have come to make their home in our minds and hearts. That should give us great pause. Take a moment and reflect

on this amazing declaration. Because we have faith, we have virtue and because we have virtue, we have freedom. Let’s be filled with confidence that God is pleased with us. Yet today, Jesus still warns all believers of fake doctrine that falsely claims people naturally love God. A person who is still imprisoned by their sin is cut off from God. God is the only source from which we can be regenerated to new life. It comes to us by Christ’s resurrection and His Spirit. We all, by our sinful nature, are alienated from God. We are infected with sin that fills us with doubt, skepticism and even hatred toward God.

PRAYER: Forgive me Father if I have not let you fully into my life. May my eyes and heart be open to you. In Jesus Name, Amen

THURSDAY 5/18/23

PSALM 66:13-20 //(17) I cried aloud to him, and he was extolled with my tongue.

JOHN 14:15-31// (24) Whoever does not love me does not keep my word. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father’s who sent me. (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, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you

REFLECTION Have you ever wondered what keeps your faith strong? Could it be the desire to be with God? We can be with God by reading His word, worshipping with other believers, and being in prayer. Let’s say, for a time you skip reading your Bibles and stop attending worship. If you do not sense something is missing in your life, you might not have a right relationship with Christ. Jesus teaches, “Whoever does not love me does not keep my words.” If you stop being with Him and do not trust Him, you might be worshipping another god. I once knew a minister who called me several months after he resigned to inform me he did not believe in God anymore. At first I was shocked, then I found out what he was teaching. To love Christ means we have a respect for Him. We naturally honor him with our time, our talents and our treasures. Jesus is warning us not to look upon the world’s false doctrines for the true meaning of life. If we look to them we will despise God’s holy covenant. In our world today we see secular people blind to God’s love and an ingratitude towards His Son. There are severe consequences for spiritual blindness.

PRAYER: In this instance Lord, distance does not make the heart grow fonder. I pray to stay and remain close to you and your word. May I never be far away from you. In Jesus Name, Amen



FRIDAY 5/19/23

PSALM 66:13-20 //(18) If I had cherished inequity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened. (19) But truly God has listened; he has given heed to the words of my prayer.

JOHN 14:15-31// (27) Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. (28) You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I will come to you.' If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. (29) And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe.

REFLECTION I imagine the Apostles, upon hearing Jesus' words, would be confused and saddened. They are supposed to be glad Jesus is leaving them, but they are not. These men have left behind jobs, businesses, fathers and mothers, and brothers and sisters to follow Jesus. There are two things happening here. Their human affection for Jesus is now mixed with their spiritual love for Him. They do not see how they could endure being separated from him. That is why Jesus is saying, "if you love me spiritually you would want me to return to the Father."

PRAYER Father, how hard it would have been to let you go, but I thank you for your loving wisdom of leaving the Holy Spirit to help me. In Jesus Name, Amen

SATURDAY 5/20/23

PSALM 66:13-20 // (20) Blessed be God, because he has not rejected my prayer or removed his steadfast love from me.

JOHN 14:15-31// (30) I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me, (31) but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us go from here.

REFLECTION Jesus is impressing upon the minds of the Apostles the need for His return to His Father. He is teaching them His life, death and resurrection is essential for the Kingdom to come. From now on, He comes to us in the Spirit, not in the flesh. If Jesus never died He would be over a thousand years old still teaching us in the flesh. Jesus is not just a Rabbi, but the sacrificial lamb who died to take upon Himself the curse of death. He died to take our sins away. He fortified their minds by saying He must go away, not because he was compelled to do so, but in order to obey the Father. They should rejoice at His return to His Father. The 'prince of darkness' has exercised his tyranny over the whole world.. Not until we are regenerated by the Spirit of Christ will this world be set free to praise God. He has truly sent us a Deliverer who sets us free to be rescued from the dreadful state of being in bondage to sin.

PRAYER Lord may I obey you as you obeyed your Father. I confess my pride and self-centeredness has kept me from receiving your grace. In Jesus Name, Amen



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