

John 14:10-15

10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. 11 Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. 12 Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. 13 I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it. 15 If you love me, you will keep my commandments. (NRSV).

The Scripture takes place in the middle of some dialogue. Jesus is teaching his disciples about their future glory and salvation. It is a very serious time; it takes place after the Last Supper when Jesus has finished washing the feet of his disciples. He is engaged in personal, heart to heart, conversation. The disciples are troubled because Jesus has talked about his death, betrayal, and Peter's denial. Jesus reassures the disciples to believe in God and to also believe in him. This is a major theme of Gospel of John - believe in both God and Jesus. Peter understands that Jesus is going to his death but he does not grasp everything that goes with that. The death of Christ is also the pathway to God. The death of Christ eliminates the religious barriers that prevented access to God. So, Jesus assures the disciples that they are safe with him. He tells them not to be troubled and promises the glory of salvation. There are many rooms in God's mansion and Jesus is going to make preparations for his people.

They do not fully understand what Jesus is talking about. Any human being would have a hard time understanding this. Thomas - candidly expresses ignorance "We do not know where you are going." Phillip contradicts what is taught in the Old Testament about no one being able to see God and says "Show us the Father." We know today that when we look at Jesus we see God. We know because we have the advantage of post resurrection knowledge. During the ministry of Jesus there are things that the disciples cannot possibly know due to human intellectual limitations. It is easy for us to look back with 2020 vision in the year 2020 (pun intended 2020 vision in 2020). We look back and see disciple weakness. It is easy for us to see weaknesses in biblical characters with a 2020 perspective. But understand this - their faith was not fully developed. Christian faith is not completely developed until after the death and resurrection of Jesus. We look back at pre-resurrection events with post-resurrection knowledge. We look back from a position of privileged knowledge.

This brings us to today's Scripture. Disciple uncertainty provides an opportunity for Jesus clarification. "Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?" These are the disciples. They believed and followed Jesus from the very beginning and still they do not fully understand. It is a wonder Jesus does not show some signs of frustration.

The contemporary lesson for us is the words of Christ. Jesus teaches us a profound lesson. "The one that believes will do the work that I do." I am going to repeat that for emphasis. "The one that believes will do the word that I do." Jesus has declared throughout his ministry that the work that he does is God's work. His action, all the things that he has done, is God's activity, not his own. Jesus is one with God, doing the work of God. The one that believes will do the work that Jesus does. We are one with Jesus. We too are to do the work of God as Jesus did. We are to what Jesus did. We are one with Jesus. God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and all of us

are all interconnected as we follow the role model of Jesus. Jesus develops the lesson further and this is very important. "If you love me you will keep my commandments." Once again this is important enough to repeat. "If you love me you will keep my commandments." Keeping all of the commandments of Jesus is hard to do. Of course we love Jesus. We should fully understand that this means we are to keep his commandments. Jesus is teaching if you don't keep his commandments then in reality you don't love Jesus.

One of the main things that Jesus does is settle the disparity between human doctrine and biblical doctrine. Jesus condemns the religious establishment for hypocrisy. Their doctrine was off centered from Old Testament scriptures. The religious leaders were out to kill Jesus because he challenged their doctrine which was based on what they wanted; it was not based on the scriptures. Moses was very clear and specific. **Deuteronomy 4:2** You must neither add anything to what I command you nor take away anything from it, but keep the commandments of the Lord your God (NRSV). This is Moses instruction to the nation of Israel in regards to what they are to do when they are in the Promised Land. The religious leaders ignored this Scripture. It is as important for us to keep the commandments of Jesus as it was important for Israel to keep the commandments of God. Pay attention to what Jesus said "The one that believes will do the work that I do...if you love me you will keep my commandments."

It is very important in today's society to understand the difference between human doctrine and biblical doctrine which is one reason why I encourage Bible study. If you study the Bible then you know if preaching is based on biblical doctrine. The people of Old Testament times got in trouble when they followed human wants and desires over the will of God. The religious establishment in New Testament times followed human doctrine instead of remaining faithful to the scriptures. Many of Jesus lessons are based on Old Testament scriptures. Follow the commandments of God. Love others, care for the widows, and the underprivileged. There are several lessons in the Old Testament where it teaches that immigrants are to have the same rights as citizens. If we believe in Jesus we will do the work of Jesus and if we love Jesus we will keep his commandments.