

The One Who Loves Me October 18, 2020

John 14:21-24

21 “They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.” 22 Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, “Lord, how is it that you will reveal yourself to us, and not to the world?” 23 Jesus answered him, “Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. 24 Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine, but is from the Father who sent me” (NRSV).

The sermon this week follows up from last week which was based on John 14:10-15 which takes place on the night Jesus was betrayed, after the Last Supper, and after he had washed the feet of his disciples. Jesus had told his disciples about his death, denial, and betrayal. The disciples were troubled by this news but Jesus reassured them by saying “The one that believes will do the work that I do...if you love me you will keep my commandments.” The believer will do the ministry of Jesus and keep the commandments. This is a very important lesson. It is so important I will repeat it. I want to make sure we understand this so I will emphasize it. Believers will not sit idle; they will do the work of Jesus. Those who love Jesus will keep the commandments; they will obey the words of Christ.

This brings us to today’s Scripture where Jesus repeats the lesson. It is so important that Jesus Christ himself repeats the lesson in order to make sure that the disciples get it. You can tell the importance by its emphasis. “They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me...those who love me will keep my word.” We live in a secular world where we pattern our behaviors after the secular influences then we have our Sunday worship and think everything is OK. However, Jesus teaches that it is not enough to have the word you also must obey the teaching of Jesus. Knowledge by itself is not enough, you must have obedience. You have to have the commands and obey them. Then you are identified as one who loves Jesus. We all confess we love Jesus. Everyone here loves Jesus. But to love Jesus means you will obey all the things he taught.

We all know we are saved by grace not by the work that we do. No one is perfect; no one can earn their salvation, something else is needed. So, we are saved by grace. Jesus came to save us, to give to us the saving grace of God. Many people in society take this for granted and think “All I have to do is confess and I’m in and I win.” Then they just return to the same life of vice. There are multiple New Testament lessons where faith requires action, obedience, and faithfulness. It is not that you are saved by doing the work. You follow the word and do the ministry of Jesus because you are saved. The question is have you received Jesus?

In the Old Testament God rescued the people with the blood of the lamb. God’s rescue plan for Israel to escape from Egypt was a lamb that was sacrificed. In the New Testament John the Baptist sees Jesus and proclaims “Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29 NRSV). Jesus is the Lamb of God. What he does is take away our sins. We can’t take that for granted and say “OK, I got Jesus” and then go out and sin again.

Many years ago I was talking with a guest minister while we were out visiting and preparing for revival. We left one house and he asked “Are they Christians?” I thought “yeah, they come to church.” Well, coming to church doesn’t make you a Christian. There is a disparity between those who claim to be Christian and those that are devoted to Christ. Not everyone

actually wants Jesus. So the real question is “Have you received Jesus as your Savior?” I take this opportunity to point out that a lot of people in mainstream society like to emphasize “personal Savior” but the Bible does not teach that. The Bible teaches us that Jesus is the Savior of the world.

I want to make sure we understand what receiving is. If I offer to you a gift, I put the gift in my hand, reach out my hand, and offer it to you. Offering the gift to you is not the same thing as receiving the gift. Just believing that the gift is offered is not the same thing as actually receiving the gift. The gift is offered to everyone but not everyone receives it. Do not take this special gift for granted. Make the effort to reach out and receive the gift. Make sure you receive Jesus. Tell God you are a sinner and believe in what the Bible teaches about Jesus being the Son of God. The goal of each gospel is to confirm the divine status of Jesus who died on the cross for our sins and was resurrected. Take a step beyond believing, go through the barriers of resistance, and open your heart to receive Jesus.

Jesus said in **Matthew 7:21** Not everyone who says to me “Lord, Lord” will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven” (NRSV). It is those who have the commandments of Jesus and keep them. They are the ones who love Jesus. It is those who love Jesus that keep the word. When the world is full of disappointments and setbacks, when other people are down and out, when sadness and depression kicks in, those who love Jesus are lifted up. Those who love Jesus are not exempt from personal attacks, trauma, and heartache. They experience accidents and evil like everyone else does, but they also experience restoration and peace. The gift is offered to everyone but the one who loves Jesus it is the one who receives him.