



ABIDE Weekly Devotions: Week Five

By Zo Azubuike

“I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love. When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father’s commandments and remain in his love. I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow!” **John 15:9-11 NLT**

God is delighted in us living a life that is bountiful with joy. Jesus gives us a beautiful invitation in this passage of scripture... He asks us to remain in the Father’s love. However, if we don’t know the heart of God, it’s easy to misunderstand the relationship between His commandments and His love. So often, believers and nonbelievers alike look at God’s holy and just attributes and define them with the wrong mindset. Somehow we mistakenly define those

attributes by painting a picture of a mean God sitting on His throne looking down on us, continually shaking His head, as He tallies up all the times we miss the mark on keeping His commandments. We fail to view His commandments as an attribute of His unconditional love for us. Instead, it's a never ending list of do's and don'ts. This perspective then yields itself to an impression that suggests God is not that interested in us enjoying life.

This scripture helps us clarify a few things:

First, God's love and His commandments do go hand in hand. The provision of His commandments is a direct reflection of His abundant love for us. Secondly, God is not about a "list of do's and don'ts". His commandments are not intended to have us miss out on an enjoyable and fun life. Rather, His commandments provide purpose that lead to experiencing an abundance of joy in life. Jesus said "I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy." He said this knowing that the joy found in Him is the only joy that truly satisfies. When we abide in His love by obeying His commands, we set in motion God's sovereign principles that always have our best interests at heart. When these principles are at work in our lives, it opens the door to a life that is characterized with joy that is fully complete in Him.

This revelation allows us to approach His commandments with delight, knowing that *He has called us to a life of obedience for our own benefit, and to be able to live in the fullness of His love.*

