

Session 11 Loving God by the Power of the Spirit (Jn. 14:15-24)

I. REVIEW: JESUS' COMMAND NOT TO ALLOW TROUBLE TO DOMINATE OUR HEART

- A. Jesus commanded the disciples not to let trouble dominate their hearts (14:1). There are human dynamics involved as seen in His command to “*let not...*” He responds by giving us peace (14:27).
¹“***Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God [a fact], believe also in Me [a command].***”
²⁷***My peace I give to you... Let not your heart be troubled... (Jn. 14:1, 27)***
- B. John 13-17 tells how to engage our troubled hearts to overcome grief, fear, shame, and betrayal. Jesus gives us line-upon-line insight into God’s heart and promises that anchor our hearts. The truths in John 13-17 equip us to respond to the end-time troubles highlighted in Matthew 24.
- C. In session one, I highlighted **7 reasons why they were troubled**: just moments before—Jesus exhorted them not to allow their hearts to be troubled on Thursday evening at the last supper (14:1), He spoke of *leaving them by death* (13:36), *Judas’ betrayal* (13:11), and *Peter denying Him* (13:38). On Tuesday, two days earlier, Jesus exhorted them **not to be troubled** (Mt. 24:6) in context to the intense pressures that He prophesied would come in Matthew 24 (and its parallel passages in Mark 13 and Luke 21). These pressures included *crisis in the culture* (wars, racial conflict, pestilences, betrayal, etc.), *persecution* (some would be killed, beaten, or imprisoned; Mt. 24:9; Lk. 21:12), *national crisis* destruction of Jerusalem; Lk. 21:20-24) and the *delay of God’s promises*.
⁶***You will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled...⁷For nation [ethnos] will rise against nation...there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes. (Mt. 24:6-7)***
- D. In session one, I highlighted **8 truths that He told them to believe** to equip them to not be troubled.
- E. In this session we focus on Jesus’ promise that the Spirit will empower us to love and obey God. John 14 is the most detailed passage related to walking out the first commandment. We are called to *participate in the family dynamics of the Trinity* as described in 14:7-27 and applied in 15:1-12. First, Jesus described His relationship to the Father as a Man (14:7-11). This is foundational to understanding how the redeemed are to relate to the Father by the Spirit (14:12-27).

II. OBEDIENT LOVE (JN. 14:15)

- A. Jesus connected prayer in 14:13-14 with the power to love and obey Him in 14:15-16.
¹²“***...the works that I do he will do also...¹³And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴If you ask anything in My name, I will do it. ¹⁵If you love Me, keep My commandments...¹⁶the Father...will give you another Helper...***”
(Jn. 14:12-16)
- B. Jesus emphasized twice that “He will do whatever we ask” in His name that the Father might be glorified (14:13-14). The greatest work of the Spirit is to empower people to love Jesus (14:15). We pray for miracles *from a place* of loving Jesus and *for the purpose* of seeing others love Jesus more.

- C. When Jesus said to “ask anything” (14:13), He immediately focused them on the grace to love Him more (14:15). The ultimate “anything” we can ask for is the grace to walk in first commandment. The Father is glorified most by those who grow in the grace to walk in obedient love for Him.
- D. On Tuesday, Jesus defined loving God as the “first” command, thus identifying it as the highest priority to God—it is always the Spirit’s first agenda and the “first” calling for our life and ministry (Mt. 22:38); here Jesus applied that to loving Him (14:21, 23)—this is our greatest response to God.
³⁷*You shall love the LORD...*³⁸*This is the first and great commandment. (Mt. 22:37-38)*
- E. Jesus defined loving God as being deeply rooted in a spirit of obedience (14:15, 21, 23). He calls us to love God on God’s terms or by His definition of love. He is the most qualified to define love since the essence of His being is love (1 Jn. 4:16). There is no such thing as loving God without seeking to obey Him. The sentimental definitions of love in our culture that minimize obedience to Jesus are a deception. Prayer is no substitute for obedience since sin hinders our love for Him.
- F. We do not earn God’s love by obedience, but we express our love to God through it. Obedience to the will of God is foundational for answered prayer and evidence of our love for Jesus.
- G. Loving God is the controlling idea in the following verses in 14:15-28. Jesus linked loving God with obeying God five times in John 14—three times (14:15, 21, 23) He said it in a *positive* way, “If you love Me, keep My commandments.” Once (14:24) He said it in a *negative* way, “He who does not love Me does not keep My words.” Once (14:31), *He applied it to Himself*.”
¹⁵*If you love Me, keep My commandments...*²¹*He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me...*²³*If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word...*²⁴*He who does not love Me does not keep My words...*³¹*I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. (Jn. 14:15-31)*
- H. Serving Jesus faithfully and denying our lustful desires are “the theater” that God chose for us to express our love to Him. Jesus takes this personally. Some think of lust as only about immorality, but lusts include covetousness, anger, bitterness, retaliation, complaining, slander, and more.
- I. Each of us has a different struggle according to our own personality and life circumstances. Thus, we each have a different “*assignment*,” from which we offer our gift of obedient love to God. Our resistance of sinful lusts is often weak and flawed, but it is still valued and honored by the Lord. Weak love is still real love—it is genuine. Our love is not only real when it is mature.
- J. *Five expressions of loving God*—*purity* (refusing immorality, anger, slander), *humility* (refusing to be defensive and to draw attention to self), *generosity* (refusing covetousness), *gratitude* (trusting God and refusing to complain), and *diligence* (refusing to quit or not to keep His commitments)
- K. Affection-based obedience is the most reliable—compared to duty-based or fear-based obedience. The King in Song of Solomon described His Bride’s heart of loyal love as a “locked garden” (4:12). The Bride described herself as lovesick (5:8). “*We must be lovesick to be love safe.*”—Yo Herman
¹²*A garden locked is My sister, My bride, a spring locked, a fountain sealed. (Song 4:12; ESV)*
⁸*...O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my Beloved, that you tell Him I am lovesick! (Song 5:8)*

III. THE PREDOMINANCE OF THE FIRST COMMANDMENT IN GOD'S END-TIME PLANS

- A. John made a stunning prophetic declaration that the end-time Church will be a “prepared Bride” (Rev. 19:7). God’s ultimate purpose for creation is to provide an equally yoked Bride for Jesus. The greatest social miracle in history is the transformation of the end-time Church from spiritual compromise to be a prepared Bride. The Father is raising up a *prepared Bride for His worthy Son*.
7...for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. (Rev. 19:7)
- B. The book of Revelation is about the most glorious love story ever imagined in which Jesus releases His judgments against the Antichrist’s empire—while orchestrating the greatest revival (“the billion soul harvest;” 7:9), the supernatural transformation of the end-time Church from a Laodicean spirit of compromise to a prepared Bride (19:7), and the deliverance and salvation of all Israel (12:13-17), followed by Jesus filling the whole earth with God’s glory in the millennial kingdom (20:4-6).
14The woman [remnant of Israel] was given two wings...that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for [3½ years]...from the presence of the serpent. (Rev. 12:14)
14“...I will allure her [Israel], will bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfort to her.
15...she shall sing there...16you will call Me ‘My Husband’... 19I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and...in lovingkindness and mercy.” (Hos. 2:14-19)
- C. Jesus’ plan in the book of Revelation is so glorious that it results in the end-time Church loving Him—more than physical life (12:11)—the saints overcome Satan by loving Jesus even unto death.
11And they overcame him [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. (Rev. 12:11)
- D. Revelation 22:17 is one of the most informative and significant prophecies describing what truths and activities the Spirit will powerfully emphasize in the generation the Lord returns. The body of Christ will love Jesus as their Bridegroom King as they walk in their identity as a cherished Bride.
17The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come!”...20“I am coming quickly...” (Rev. 22:17, 20)
- E. For the first time the Spirit will universally emphasize the Church’s identity as Jesus’ Bride. As sons of God, we are in the position to experience **God’s throne** as heirs of His power (Rev. 3:21; cf. Rom. 8:17). As the Bride, we are in the position to experience **God’s heart** (affections).
- F. The Church can pray, “Come, Lord Jesus, as a Bridegroom!” in three different ways:
1. ***Come NEAR US in intimacy*** (individual breakthrough of our heart in God).
 2. ***Come TO US in revival*** (regional or national breakthrough of the Spirit in revival).
 3. ***Come FOR US in the sky*** (historical breakthrough of the second coming of Jesus).
- G. ***Bridegroom revival:*** Jesus will come to His people as a Bridegroom who want Him with all their heart. The end-time “*Bridegroom revival*” will be far more invasive than any revival in history. Jesus will reveal and impart His love in an unprecedented way that will transform the Church.
- H. The Spirit is raising up His messengers who will reveal the cherishing heart of Jesus and who will call others to define loving Jesus as God’s highest priority. They will make encountering Jesus’ heart and walking in the first commandment the primary focus of their life and ministry.

- I. Jesus' last words to the Church are seen in His messages to the 7 churches of Asia (Rev. 2-3). He gave a strong correction to three churches—Ephesus, Sardis, Laodicea—for having drifted into spiritual dullness and compromise. He corrected these three churches for neglecting His primary message to love Him with all their heart. He honored how the church in Ephesus served Him but insisted that they repent and return to loving Him as they did in their (Rev. 2:4).
⁴...I have this against you, that you have left your first love. (Rev. 2:4)
- J. On Friday, six days before Passover (the following Thursday night; Jn 12:1)— Jesus honored Mary's expression of love for Him by pouring costly perfume on Him (Jn. 12:2-8; Mk. 14:3-9).
¹Then, six days [Friday] before the Passover...³Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus...and the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil... (Jn. 12:1-3)
³...she [Mary] broke the flask and poured it on His head...⁹Wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her. (Mk. 14:3, 9)
- K. On Tuesday, Jesus spoke of the King preparing a wedding for His son (Mt. 22:1). Later that day, Jesus spoke on the end times presenting Himself as Bridegroom, King, and Judge in Matthew 24-25. Jesus is a King with power, a Bridegroom with desire for relationship, and a Judge with zeal to remove everything that hinders love. He emphasized cultivating the “oil of intimacy” (Mt. 25:1-13).
²The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, ³and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding...⁸The wedding is ready... (Mt. 22:2-8)
¹Then the kingdom...shall be likened to ten virgins who...went out to meet the bridegroom...
⁴the wise took oil ... ⁶At midnight a cry was heard: “Behold, the bridegroom is coming...”
⁹The wise answered saying, “...go to those who sell, and buy [oil] for yourselves.” (Mt. 25:1-9)
- L. We must interpret the 150 chapters on the end times through the lens of a Bridegroom, King, and Judge and His lovesick Bride who is prepared for the eschatological wedding day. We cannot rightly interpret Jesus' end-time message in Matthew 24-25 without growing in our love for Jesus.
- M. Jesus' last prophetic declaration over Israel was, “You shall love the Lord” (Mt. 22:37). Moses prophesied Israel would love God with all their heart in the end times (Deut. 30:1-6).
⁶The Lord...will circumcise your heart...to love the Lord...with all your heart. (Deut. 30:6)
- N. We are to enjoy God by the Spirit as our “home.” Believers will find their “home” in God by living in union with God in obedient love as vessels of His power and presence. Our spiritual capacity to receive and return God's love increases as we increase in our obedient love.
²¹...he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him ...²³We will come to him and make Our home with him. (Jn. 14:21, 23)
²⁰...If anyone...opens the door, I will come...and dine with him, and he with Me. (Rev. 3:20)
1. The Father loves the life choices of His children and enjoys His relationship with them. This results in believers having an enlarged capacity to feel and experience the Father's love.
 2. The Father loves all redemptively (Jn. 3:16) but enjoys the relationship of those who obey.