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2026-05-13 Wednesday Bible Study Guide

Not Alone: The Spirit-Filled Way of Love and Obedience

John 14:15-21

OPENING THOUGHTS:

1. When you hear the word obedience, what comes to mind?
2. Do you tend to associate obedience more with love or with control? Why?

John 14:15-21 (NRSVUE)

15 “If you love me, you will keep[a] my commandments. 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate,[b] to be with you forever. 17 This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him because he abides with you, and he will be[c] in[d] you.

18 “I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. 19 In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. 20 On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. 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.”

Footnotes:

[a] 15 Other ancient authorities read me, keep

[b] 16 Or Helper or Comforter

[c] 17 Other ancient authorities read he is

[d] 17 Or among

1. Jesus connects love and obedience in verses 15 and 21.

Do you tend to see these as separate ideas or connected? Why?

2. What are some unhealthy or harmful ways people have experienced “obedience”?

How is Jesus’ vision of obedience different?

3. In your own words, what do you think Jesus means by:

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments”?

4. What commandments of Jesus come to mind most clearly?

Which are easiest—and hardest—for you to live out?

The Promise of the Spirit (Paraclete)

5. Jesus promises “another Advocate” (Helper).

Why do you think the disciples needed this promise?

6. What does it mean that the Holy Spirit is with us and in us?

How is that different from simply believing ideas about God?

7. Why might the “world” struggle to recognize or receive the Spirit?

What might that look like today?

Not Alone

8. Jesus says, “I will not leave you orphaned.”

What emotions or fears might that statement speak to?

9. When have you experienced a season of feeling spiritually alone?

How does this promise from Jesus speak into that experience?

10. Jesus says, “Because I live, you also will live.”

What kind of “life” do you think He is referring to?

Union with Christ (Abiding in Him)

11. In verse 20, Jesus describes a deep connection:

“I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.”

What do you think this means practically for daily life?

12. What helps you stay connected (abide) in Christ?

What tends to “dry you out” spiritually?

13. How does the Holy Spirit help us live out love and obedience?

Matthew 22:34-40 (NRSVUE)

34 When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, 35 and one of them, an expert in the law, asked him a question to test him. 36 “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” 37 He said to him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the greatest and first commandment. 39 And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

14. Why do you think Jesus summarizes the entire law with love?

How does that reshape how we think about obedience?

Application & Reflection

- 15. Where in your life right now is Jesus inviting you into deeper obedience?**
- 16. Where might the Holy Spirit be prompting you to trust more deeply?**
- 17. What would it look like for you to “step into the water” rather than stay at a distance?**
- 18. How can we, as a church community, better live out love and obedience together?**
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Closing Thought:

We don't obey to earn love.

We obey because we are loved, and the Spirit helps us live that out.