

Harris Creek Baptist Church

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Series: Abide

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Transformed to Love

Harris Creek, how are we doing? Oh, I love what God is doing here. It's just like, I'm back there and I'm like, 'Man, this is just incredible that we get to be a part of this'. I know it's every single chair that we have on property is in the commons right now. Anybody, raise your hand if you're in college, yeah, wow, let's go, man. Hey, I just applaud you for being here, getting up in the morning, prioritizing being a part of and connected to a body of faith to be discipled there. That's right. [applause] What you hear, those claps are from people who've gone before you. I just, I didn't when I was in college, and I regret it. I'm so encouraged that you would prioritize, being a part and connected to a body of faith and in community here. I know there's a lot of you in the commons right now, thank you just for even being committed, not leaving. I know that some people do when that happens. Then just as a reminder to all of us, the 4:00 PM it's an amazing option for you. So, if you can make it to the 4:00, you can text your life group, say, 'Hey, would you join me at the 4:00?' There is room in 2024 at the 4:00.

So, speaking of college, Leo Buscaglia was a professor of sociology at the University of Southern California. And he's teaching this class, it's a new curriculum for him. And as he stands in front of the class, a little uncertain of the things that he's teaching, there was a young woman in the second row named Sandy. And Sandy was an active listener. And so as Leo taught, she would lean in, she had her pen and paper, she would write down things, she would respond

verbally to him, like, “oh, that's good”. And he found himself really stirred by this just delightful young woman, that when he would go and teach the class, he would just focus on her. He realized that he was a better professor, to everyone, if he just thought, ‘Hey, I'm just teaching Sandy today’. Because Sandy's listening, she's taking notes, she's interested, she's invested. He felt within him just a deep gratitude for this young woman that he didn't know.

The class was Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and when Monday came around, Sandy wasn't there. Wednesday came around, she still wasn't there. Friday came around, she wasn't there. And then when the new week came, Monday, and she wasn't there, Leo asked one of the peers, “Hey, where's Sandy? What happened to Sandy?” And they said, “Oh, you didn't hear?” And he was like, “No, what's up? What's going on?” And they go, “Oh, she jumped off the cliffs of the Pacific Palisades and took her life.” And he thought, “What? That young woman took her own life. Like, why in the world? What do we know? What happened?” And they said, “Well, she had talked to some people, left a note, and communicated that she just didn't feel loved. That she was going through life, and she just felt like no one loved her.” And he felt this deep sense of regret knowing that every week that he had a great appreciation for her. And he thought, how is it that this woman who was so delightful and so encouraging and so responsive didn't feel loved?

He thought, what is it about us that we offer this place of higher learning, location of academia to, you know, answer all the inquiries of college students everywhere, and yet they don't know how to love. He thought, I'm going to change this. Inspired by this young woman, he thought, I'm going to teach a class on how to love. He talked to the dean. He talked to the university board and said, “Can we teach a class here on how to love? I will do it.” And they approved it. They said, “What would you call it?” He said, “We're going to call it Love 1A.

So he began that class and people signed up for it. And here were some of the homework assignments. If you took his class, this is what you'd have to do. You had to reconcile with an enemy. You had to learn how to forgive. You had to answer needs around you, meet needs around you, with your own resources anonymously. You had to have a meal with someone who was very different than you, who looked different than you, and had a different background than you. You had to do acts of kindness for someone under six years old, and someone over 70 years old. And he's just teaching these students how to love. What is he doing? Like right about now, in the back of your head, it's like, oh, he's training them how to act as though they are followers of Jesus. That's what followers of Jesus do.

And the second semester, the students got there early to sign up for this class. It was completely full and it became the single most popular class at USC. And so, it grabbed the attention of other people around the world to say, "Why? What is going on in this class that everyone is so eager to sign up for it?" And this is the conclusion that they drew, it was the only class at USC where students would come in and leave different. That in the duration of the class, something changed in them. Something was transformed in them. They were taught, they learned how to love.

Now this word 'love', has completely been hijacked by the world. Okay? We have dumbed this down to mean the pursuit of a temporary act of pleasure, or an emotion. If you were to Google, and don't, but if you were to Google "how to become a better lover", you're going to get tips, tricks, techniques, and toys that will show you how to experience a moment of fleeting pleasure here on the earth. Or Hollywood is going to tell you that love is this emotion. It's all about a feeling. It's all about what you *feel*. God, who is love, He is love. His very essence is love, He gets to define it the correct way, and when we define it biblically, it means *sacrifice*. That love is

you inconveniencing yourselves for the good of others. That's what true love is. And the irony is, that when you pursue love as the world tells you to, which all of us have, you will be left despairing, depressed, and even dysfunctional because you can become addicted to it. I just want to find that temporary moment of pleasure again. I just want to find that feeling again.

Relationship to relationship to relationship because I don't know how to feel alone! I need the companionship of someone else. I've got to feel the butterflies. And you jump all over the place. You listen to songs and watch movies to give you that feeling. When in reality, God, the creator of the heavens and the earth made you for sacrificial love.

So, if you've been with us, last week we started a series called Abide. It's a word that is foundational to what it means to live on this earth as a follower of Jesus, but it's very ethereal, very heady, very like, what does that mean? How do we take that and make it practical, and we taught out of John 15 last week verses 1 through 8. I'm going to be back in John 15 today starting in verse 9 and we're continuing to take this idea of who we are in Christ. What does it mean that we're transformed by his Holy Spirit? And it's not a do, but a be. What does it mean to abide? And we said, "Hey, that's really challenging to come up with applications there." And we said last week that when you abide, you bear fruit. And one of the fruit, we played Family Feud, and one of the fruit that was thrown out is, hey, Christians love. And we put that on the board. Well, the Holy Spirit through John today is going to really focus in on this word love. And it's actually the words of Jesus when he gathered with his disciples. What does it mean to love; a love that comes from abiding? And this is the subject, this is what I would title this message, that we've been transformed to love. And to say it in a different way, we've been transformed by love, to love. That God, in the way that He's loved us, He's transformed us, so that we would love others. And I have to take that thought and that idea that maybe you've heard before and say, "No, no,

no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no. You cannot go past go. You can't cross the starting line until you really understand this.” It's that important. It's that important. And so, transformed for sacrificial love.

It's going to connect to last week as we move through John 15 verses 9 through 17, we'll look at how sacrificial love comes through obedience. How sacrificial love offers joy. And then before you leave today, that you were recruited and made to love. And then I'm going to wrap up our time, assuming we have enough time, I'm going to wrap up our time, really tying last week and this week together. So, we'll go back to think about some of the things we touched on last week and this week and we'll try to tie it up. So, I'm in chapter 15, verse 9. Let's go.

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you.” This is huge. Jesus is saying, “Hey, as God, the Father, first person of the Trinity has loved me, the Son, second person of the Trinity, we've existed in community for eternity past, as He's loved me, I love you.” God loves you right now. He's crazy about you. More than your mama loves you, more than any human being has ever loved you. God loves you. Jesus loves you. And He says, **“Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands, and remain in his love.”**

And this sounds like an if-then statement. If you remain in, or if you keep my commands, then I will love you. I think that's how we read that. If you do what I've asked you to do, then you have my love. That's not what He's saying. I do not believe that's a right interpretation. I think He's saying “If you do what I've asked you to do, then you will love as you were created to love. As you remain in me, I'm going to love others appropriately through you.” Remain in my love.

Because what's His commands? He took 630 laws, and he summarized them in “Love God, love

people”. So, as you keep my commands, you will love appropriately. My first point, sacrificial love comes through obedience.

1. *Sacrificial Love Comes Through Obedience.*

Obedience is one of those words that feels like a drill sergeant. Like, hup, two, three, four, hup, go! Do them! Get down and give me fifty! Go over there! Get! You know. And it's like, wow, like God's a drill sergeant telling me what to do, barking orders. And even as we were preparing this message and sermon prep, we talked through that like, doesn't that sound like a drill sergeant? And someone just made the observation. Yeah, but why do drill sergeants do that? Why do commander in chiefs give orders? Because when you're out in the war and there are bullets buzzing down by your head and there are explosions and there are people dying, you listening to instruction matters. It's going to save your life. Get down! Stop! Duck! Go over there! It's going to save your life. And so, a god who loves you is going to say, “Hey, this is the pathway to life.” And you and I are in the process of learning to trust Him or not.

In the same way that, listen, my parenting strategy right now, really simply clarified. I've got an 11-year-old, a 15-year-old, and a 16-year-old. And it's like, I want you guys to trust your mom and I. Because the whole world is going to try to get you to go a direction at some point, and you're going to look around and say, “Who can I trust?” And I want you to see us listening to the Creator of the heavens and the earth saying, “Hey, if you do that. It's going to lead to death. It doesn't seem like it. It doesn't feel like it. And everybody's telling you differently, but if you go there, it's going to lead to death.” Right? And so, we've got an important message here on sex. And you snort that, smoke that, drink that, vape that. We've got a message here that that's where addiction lies. It's a game of trust. And you and I are learning to trust God like that. And all of us

are in different places with that. When you're all by yourself and your flesh says, "Hey, you should do this." And you really want to, and it's available to you, that's the moment you say, "Well, do I trust God or not?" And when you feel really lonely, you know, and all you got to do is call him. Do I trust God or not?

He says, "**If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love.**" It sounds almost mystical, but He's just simply saying "You are the hands and feet of Jesus Christ." And as you stay connected to Jesus and you do what Jesus asks you to do, then you are a conduit of His love. This word conduit, it's like Jesus is the faucet. And the faucet is turning on and it's just running love. Love is coming out. And then you say, "I want to be a part of Jesus." And you take a hose, and you connect that hose to that faucet, and now that love that was pouring out is flowing through you. And God directs it wherever He wants it to go. Who does He want to love? And he puts you in classrooms, and in buildings, and in offices, and in banks, and in coffee shops, and in neighborhoods, and in carpool lines, because He's got people that He wants to love there through you. And that's how they are going to know that you are a friend of God, a disciple of God, because He says in John 13 verse 35, "**By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.**"

This is our identification. This is what we do. Let's go back into the text because the promise of this is amazing. It's joy. It's not do, it's not grind, it's not 'suck it up soldier'. Listen, "**I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.**"

Does God want you to be happy? Happy is too low of a bar for God. God wants you to have a complete sustaining joy that in any situation or circumstance, you're able to tap into that in a way that doesn't even make sense to the world. They're like, "What is wrong with then? What a

weirdo!” Nah, I just belong to another kingdom. No, I'm going to die one day, it's crazy, I'm going to die and I'm going to be rewarded for the good that I did here. I believe it. The love that I did here in His name, I'm going to be rewarded for it. Absolutely, I'm a weirdo. I don't belong here. I don't belong. I've got a sustaining joy. **“My command is this, love each other as I have loved you.”** How has He loved us?

“Greater love”, verse 13, **“Greater love has no one than this; to lay down one's life for one's friends.”** The highest sacrifice. We're talking about sacrificial love. You inconveniencing yourself for the good of others. The greatest sacrifice that anyone can make is to say, you can say, I'm going to give up my money. I'm going to give up my car. I'm going to give up my house. I'm going to give up my comfort. I'm going to give up my prerogative. Jesus said, “I gave up my life for you. So that you don't have to die. So that you can be with God forever. To adopt you as sons and daughters into this kingdom; that I'm no longer going to count your sins against you. I suffered for them on the cross.”

And He says, **“You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.”** Jesus said, disciples, come here, come here, come here, “Hey, I've been with God for eternity past. Learned a lot. And all of the things that I've learned from Him, I'm telling you so that you know them. That doesn't happen for servants. Servants, it's like, hey, you do this for a paycheck. No, I don't know you nothing. No, you don't need to know the plan. You don't need to know where this goes. You don't need to know about the IPO. If we're going public, we're going to sell what we're going to do. No, no, no, no. You're just an employee.” Jesus says, “That's not how I'm rolling.

I'm telling you. I'm like, 'Hey, here's the plan. Here's where we're going. Here's what's going to happen. Here's what I'm going to do. You don't have to do that yet'." And He's telling them. And then and then we read it. The Holy Spirit preserves that conversation for thousands of years so that we would read it today and say, "Hey, this goes to all of you. That you get to call Jesus your friend." Which is not big guy in the sky, oh yeah, 'Father, God who art in Heaven far from me'. No, no, no, Jesus, it's right here. And I can have a relationship, a relationship with the one who created the heavens and the earth. And from that relationship comes the only source of true sustaining joy. And so, my second point is sacrificial love offers true joy.

2. *Sacrificial Love Offers True Joy.*

This is the great irony, because we said, "Hey, what's the counterfeit of love?" The way the world defines it is the pursuit of a temporary pleasure. Oh, that felt good. Let's do that again. Or the pursuit of a feeling. Oh, I just love the feeling of being in love. It just gets me out of bed. I just love that feeling. I'm chasing that feeling. And the irony If you chase either of those, they leave you depressed and dysfunctional. Dysfunctional is the word I'm choosing because it's true. You become an addict to the feeling or the emotion. I read this morning, in the news this morning, the headlines this morning, it was talking about Hugh Hefner, if you know that name. And, and somebody that gave an interview that lived in the mansion, and, and they just said the Playboy Mansion, and, and they said, "We just cried all the time." Dysfunction. The biggest, most concentrated example of love as the world defines it, left us despairing. It was disgusting. We were medicated, man. That's where it goes, guys. You got to know, especially young friends, you got to know that's where it leaves you. But, if you learn to love, as the source of all love has called us to love, the promise, the exchange that you get for that is completed joy.

One of the most helpful developmental experiences I've had as a pastor is that I got to pastor a church in one of the most affluent places in the world. Okay, so I've sat with people who have all the things that you think you want. And what I learned is you can be absolutely, utterly miserable, rich or poor. And you can be absolutely overjoyed, rich or poor. And I'm about to unveil to you the difference, which I think the Scripture already did, but I want to bring, make it really clear. The difference is the person who is willing to lose all they have for the good of those around them. Meaning they hold it loose. Meaning they don't, they have no control over it. No desire to control over it. It's like, "Lord, it's yours. Use it as you please. You can give it, you can take it. Whatever you want to do, God." That person, if you ever meet them, and you will, you might even think of them right now. That person is the most joyful person you'll ever meet. And I will tell you that you can't learn that apart from the Gospel.

So, what I'm saying is the most joyful people on the earth are followers of Jesus. Now there are miserable people who claim to be followers of Jesus. And, and there are different seasons and things and challenges that can take place. But the most joyful people on earth are people who are in a relationship with God, the creator of the heavens and the earth through the work of His Son. And it's counterintuitive to think, wow, true joy comes from sacrifice. But it does. It's baked into the world, like how the world was made. Can't sacrifice, can't find true joy. And I mean, nothing will fill that hole, that void. Right?

And so you think, well, gosh, what if, what if I can't love? What if I don't love like that? Friends, you got to go back to the beginning. Are you sure you've got the Jesus thing, right? Like there's people here and they're like, I've been in church my whole life and I'm just a grumpy person. And I would be like, I have no reason. And you might be like, I feel like you're trying to get me

to question my salvation. And I want to make clear on that. I absolutely am. A hundred percent. How can you say “I'm connected to the purest source of love and I'm living my life, the One who says he's going to complete your joy, but I'm, but I'm miserable for everyone else to be around?” You don't know my God. Right? Now, some of you listen, some of you, you know, OCD, scrupulosity, you're questioning everything all the time. I don't, am I saved? Am I saved? And you need the fuzzy blanket? You need the Ephesians 2:8-9, **“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not from you; it is the gift of God; it is not from works, so no one may boast.”** Wrap yourself in that blanket, know that you're secured. You've been sealed by the Spirit. Nothing's going to separate you from the love of God. But some of you, you're leaning on the fact that you were born to a Christian family and you've been in church your whole life and you memorized some Bible verses, but you're miserable. And I'm like, are you sure? Are you sure? And it's the most loving thing I know to do.

You think about that woman at the beginning, Sandy. She died and hundreds of people learn how to love through her death. It's a picture of the gospel. Jesus dies, but not by suicide, not Him trying to control a situation, not Him taking all his problems and putting them on someone else. He died to absorb all your problems, right? He dies and He's showing you how to love by His example. And the good news is that you don't have to die, but you do have to lose your life. And there's a difference. You don't have to die, but you have to say, “All of this is yours. I'll go where you want me to go. I'll do what you want me to do. I'll say what you want me to say. I am yours. I'm your friend. I'm your friend.” And in an effort to make this applicable, there's needs all around you. And it's a beautiful seat to sit in just to see the body of Christ, be the body of Christ week in and week out in the way that you guys love and serve and care for each other. But there

was a recent example that I just want to put in front of you from, from my friend, dear friend, Jim Cox. Would you, would you guys just watch this?

[shows video interview recorded in September 2023]

[Melonie Cox] Jim had been sick for, since the fall of 18, just weird symptoms. We had no idea. We thought it was his back. So, all through 19, he had tests and MRIs and saw a neurologist and all these different attempts to figure out what was wrong. He had back surgery in December. We finally saw a neurologist at UT Southwestern. So, when we left that morning, we left believing that, this is going to be, 2020, this is the year of getting better. So, we went to the neurologist there at UT Southwestern in Dallas. Throughout the day as they ran more tests and did more things, and by that afternoon they came back to us and said, it is ALS. And because I had already done as much research as I had done, I knew what we were looking at and how horrible it was going to be.

[Jim Cox] The news was hard to take and the trip from Dallas to here in Waco was an eternity. We were just shell shocked. We didn't know what to think. We both cried. We both prayed during that time, asking God to just give us direction and guidance, which He has never let us down. Our circle of friends, our people, if you will, what we refer to as life group at our church. As we drove in the driveway, those people were here. They wrapped their arms around us. We all cried. We all prayed. And they said, "Guys, we don't even need to tell you this, but we're here and we're not going anywhere."

[Melonie] One of the ladies, Penny said, "Melonie, when y'all unzipped your life. It was like we had no choice but to come in" and that's the way it's been since Jim was diagnosed is we, didn't

have a choice. We had to be completely vulnerable. There just wasn't any other way to be. When you realize that your life is literally fixing to end and things as you know it have changed completely, then vulnerability is the only option. For months, you know, what can we do? What can we do? One or two of the couples would come over and watch church with us on Sunday mornings. And then they just started offering different things. Like we had a lease on a car. And I was like, "How are we going to get out of this lease? What are we going to do?" I, you know, just shared with everybody what was going on. We need you to pray because we've got to figure this out. And the next thing we know, we've got to check for the balance. It's done. It's done. And that kind of thing has happened over and over. You know, they still will ask, "What can we do? Is there anything we can do?" I just told them, I said, "I really could use some help getting Jim in bed." They said, "Oh, okay, well, I'll take Wednesday night. I'll take Tuesday, Thursday night. I'll take Sunday night. I'll take Friday night." Every night, every night of the week, one of those guys comes to my house. And they come in, they take Jim to bed, and it's been very, very sweet.

Vulnerability has definitely been the key to not just our needs being met, but I think our group opening up and really coming together. Every person in our group has had a trial or a struggle or everybody has something that is their worst. And when you have a situation that is the worst situation you faced, you've got to have your people. You've got to have somebody to come alongside you, to cover you with prayer, to call you and say, "Hey, how are you doing?" They've just been there, been there.

[JP] On October 31st, 2023, Jim was welcomed at the glory surrounded by his family and his life group. A few days later, their life group performed the memorial service.

[Life Group Member 1 at memorial] One of the greatest blessings of my life has been to be included in Jim and Melonie Cox's life each evening for the past year or so to assist in transitioning Jim from the freedom and autonomy, even though limited of his power chair, into his bed.

[Life Group Member 2 at memorial] It was Jim and Melanie's challenges are what really forged our life group and its commitment to each other. Melonie, we've got your back, our life group will continue, and you will be as always a crucial member. We love you and we're here for you now and in the future. You're doing an amazing job. They're caring for Jim. And give an example to all of us.

[video ends] [applause]

It's like when you see it and it's beautiful because you are made for it. Set as an example to all of us, right? That's what happened at the cross. That's what happened in the life of Jesus. That's what happened. A life well lived is a life with a head on a swivel saying, "All right, Lord, I'm on mission." And, and you talk about joy. You've never experienced joy, like being in partnership with the creator of the heavens and the earth. He's like, "You want to have some fun. Do you want to have some fun? Like I'm bringing you in on the inner circle. We're friends. Like, let's do work in the world. Like, let's get after it." And it will stir you. It will stir you from the inside. You're like, oh, that's what it's about. That's what I was meant to do for my life group. And, and for my family and for those around me, my community, my neighbors and my apartment, like God has recruited me for this. Let me, let me show you. **"You did not,"** verse 16, **"You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit-."**

That, “and appointed”, it's *tithemi*, is the Greek, and it means made for. I made you for this. So I've recruited you, I chose you, and I've made **“you so that you might go and bear fruit- fruit that will last- and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. This is my command: Love each other.”**

By the way, this is the verse, this is why we pray in Jesus name. You say at the end of the prayer, “and in Jesus name”, it's this verse right here. And I don't know that that was God's original intention, that we would just tag it onto the back of a prayer. Not that you need to change that. I'm not trying to make you insecure about the way you pray, but the heart behind those words is that I would pray in a way that is consistent with the will and the desire of the Son as taught to him by the Father. Okay? And that's why I said I was going to come back to it last week in verse seven, it says, **“If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.”** Okay, more on that in a moment. Because I don't want to just throw that out there and be like, “Hey, figure that out”. I'm going to try to make that clear in just a second, but I want to show you that you were chosen by God. Why? Because you were rich, because you were attractive because you were skillful? You could run fast, jump high, smart, popular? Why were you chosen by God? And it answers the questions. I'm going to give you the answer right now. Why did he choose you? So that you will bear eternal fruit. That's why. And it's okay to say “Well, but yea, but what why me? Why me? Why did he choose me?” No one knows. According to his good pleasure. But so that you would bear a fruit that would last forever. And so, my third point, you were recruited and made to love.

3. *You Were Recruited And Made to Love.*

God recruited you and made you to love. It's the biggest pyramid scheme in the history of the world. Except for it's not a scheme. Jesus is at the top. Jesus is the greatest lover of people that has ever lived. He gave his life for those who would trust in Him, believe upon Him. And then He recruits you into that program. And He says, "Alright, now you are my hands and feet in the world and I want to love people through you." We've got to get in the game. Like, we've got to do something, right? We've got work to do.

You guys hear Baylor has a new recruit? Five star guard recruit? Yeah, V.J. Edgecombe. Right? There's a picture. Okay, like just, just imagine with me for a minute. Like, he comes on the team. We're all excited about it. Like, yeah, Bears just got better. Let's go. And then he's talking to Scott Drew, he's like, "Hey, coach. Hey man, I don't really want to play in the game. You know, I just came here to learn basketball from you. So, I'm going to go to the practices, man. Teach me everything you know, but I'm not really interested in playing in the actual game. We cool? Like that's, is that cool?" I mean, wouldn't coach be like, "Wait a minute, hold on, wait, I recruited you. I brought you in on the team so that we could do this." And I think some of us are having that conversation, we're like, "Hey, God, yeah, that's cool. Hey, teach me lots of Bible. No, I'd love to grow in my knowledge of the word. And sure, yeah, go to life group. I'd love to have some people praying for me. I might even pray for some other people, you know, but, yeah, I don't know. I don't really want to, you know."

And we call that Christianity and I think it should confuse us. I think that's really confusing. God is saying, "I chose you. Not because you're good, not because you're great, but because I am. Want to play? You want to have some fun? You want to live a life on purpose? You want to experience real, complete, and sustaining joy? You got to lose your life." You got to, here's the

word I'm going to use, you got to give up control. Yeah, write that down. You've got to give up control. You've got to, you've got to stop thinking, Hey, yeah, that's cool, but let's do it my way. It's like, I have zero interest in doing it your way. His track record is way better than yours. Let's do it His way. God's about His business. I think if you feel like you're in a place where you're like, man, He's not answering my prayers. I think it's fair to say, "Wait, am I completely and utterly totally about his business?" Okay? In summary, sacrificial love comes through obedience. Sacrificial love offers true joy, and you were recruited and made to love.

I think it's fair right now to be like, okay, but we, we said it was like be and this feels like do. It's like love, go out there and love. You're recruited. You're in, you know, I'm in the army. I'm the friend like, let's go love. What God is asking you to do is not difficult. It's impossible. You can't do it. You're not smart enough, big enough, fast enough, pretty enough, good enough, networked enough, wealthy enough. You don't have what it takes to do what God is asking you to do. You've been transformed for it. His Holy Spirit has made a room inside of you, living with you. And He has to do it through you. As you remain connected to Him. You hear that you're like, yes, but what does it mean? And I'm going to do the best I can to show you. And so, remember John 15, it says this, He says, **"I am the vine. You are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit but apart from me, you can do nothing."** Apart from Him you can do nothing.

But the problem is God didn't find you in Christ, right? I think I first saw this illustration by Pastor Louie Giglio. And so, this is helpful to me, right? God did not find you in Christ. That's not how he was like, "Oh, there you are in Christ." No, he found you in sin. That's what Romans 6 says, that while you were in sin, He died for you. He found you in sin, and not just in sin, but

He found sin in you. Romans 7, **“as it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me.”** So, He says, “Hey, I don't need that. So, I'm going to take you, this is you, and I'm going to deal with that.” And this is what He says in his, in His word, for He has received us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves **in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.** And now He starts doing the work. He says, “Hey, we got rid of the sin in you. Let's put something else in you. We're going to put Christ in you, right? He says in Romans 8, He says, **“You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ. But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the spirit gives life because of righteousness.”**

Colossians 1:27, **“To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”** And Galatians 2:20, **“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. This life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”**

So, I now have Christ in me, which is beautiful, that's amazing. I have the Holy Spirit. I have access to God himself. And that would be amazing if that was it, but that's not it. It's not just that, right? Because then He says, remember all the verses last week, that we're in Christ, remember that? Do we have that? [verses scroll through the screen] Look at that. Look at all those verses. In Christ Jesus. In Christ Jesus. In Christ Jesus. In Christ Jesus. You in Christ Jesus. You in Christ Jesus. You in Christ Jesus. You in Christ Jesus. You in Christ, do you see that?

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” [2 Corinthians 5:17]

Can you see you? Because people are like, “Man, you don't look the same anymore. You look different. You're not who I graduated high school with. You have different prerogatives, different preferences, different priorities. It seems like you, I can kind of see you, but I see a lot of Jesus. You look really different, man. You've changed.” You're like, “I haven't just changed. I'm new. I've been transformed for a new purpose.” And man, if this was it, like if this was all there was, right, it would be, it's like amazing. It's amazing. Like there it is. Right there we are. But that's not it, dude. That's not it. That's not the only one, right? Because then He says, right? He says, “For you died and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.” You see that? Gosh, now it's really hard to see you through God and through Christ. And with Christ in you, like, that's a, you're like a new person, right? And I'm going to go ahead because you know, that's going to stay that way, right? You've been sealed by the Spirit. We'll go ahead and put this on because that's not going anywhere. So, we'll go ahead and just, yeah, there you are. You see you now, you see you? Well, I see God. Do you see you? I see Christ. Do you see you? I think I'm there somewhere with Christ, in Christ. Christ in me, hidden in God, there I am. What's this person worried about? What are you worried about? What are you worried about in there? What's that person, what are they concerned with? This person? Whatever they ask. It will be given to him. Why? Because their desires are so lost and mingled with God's desires that they're the same desires.

God is doing this in you, with you, through you, right now. Will you let Him? Will you, aren't you tired? Aren't you tired of having one foot in the church and one foot in the world and dipping into the bucket, and coming out of the bucket, and having some of the bucket in you, and then going out and just, you know, having other stuff in you. Aren't you tired? And what I'm trying to tell you is there's a better way, a more beautiful way, a more joyful way. But you got to let go.

You have got to get really lost in God. Here I am, God. Send me. I'll do what you want me to do and go where you want me to go and say what you want me to say. And spend what you want me to spend and give what you want me to give. Use me. It's a different you. That's a different you. Let me pray. Let me pray we'd be that as a body.

Lord, would you make us that? We need your help to become that. Would you strip us of sin? Remove us from sin. Place us in Christ. Place Christ in us. Place us, hide us in you. Transform us. You talk to Him. Don't be distracted by my voice or by someone, by you. Abide. Abide right now. Just abide. Lord, I'm here. God, I've been, I've been holding on. I've got some control. I've got some things I don't want to let go of. There's, you know, there's stuff. Talk to Him. Talk to Him. Don't be distracted. Just talk to God. It's you and God. This is your time. And may it be multiplied in your life if you talk. Don't worry about who's beside you, behind you, in front of you, what they're thinking. Just talk to God and press in. Press in until all the distractions flood away. Press in, press in until all the distractions flood away. Press in. Press in.