

INI Hymns:
Mother's Day

John 15:9-17

Sermon 26-25
5/10/26

9 "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. 10 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. 11 I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. 12 My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. 13 Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command. 15 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. 16 You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed 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. 17 This is my command: Love each other."

Dear Fellow Redeemed,

"Love comes from God." "Because God IS Love!" That's what the Apostle John said in our Epistle reading, (1 John 4:7-8). No one can truly love with *Agape* love, unless they have been born of God and know God. In our text from John's Gospel, Jesus invites us and even urges us to "remain in [His] love." What sweet words! To Remain in His perfect, unending love. Look at the first verse. "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you." Jesus loves you and I with the same intensity and devotion as the Father who IS Love. What could be better?

I actually prefer the NKJV translation of "Abide in my love" rather than Remain in it. It's not that remain is a bad translation, but I prefer "Abide" because that is the primary meaning of the verb, to stay or dwell with someone as a guest. The two Emmaus disciples invited Jesus to "abide with us." They wanted Jesus to stay with them; to come into their home and eat with them and spend the night. Now Jesus is inviting us to "Abide in My Love." He wants us to Live in His love; to enjoy it; to let it be the power and impetus of our life. Let us

Abide in Jesus' Love!

Jesus immediately teaches us **-I- How we Abide in His Love.**

He says, "If you keep my commands, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and abide in his love." So many people today like to think they are enjoying God's love even though they ignore God's commands and live as they please. They are deceiving themselves.

Just to make sure we don't get the wrong idea, notice that Jesus does NOT say, "if we keep his commandments He will love us." He already said that He loves us just the same as the Father loves Him. He loves us with an eternal, unconditional love. His love does not depend on our obedience to His commandments. Paul says Christ loved us and gave Himself for us "When we were still sinners." Romans 5:8 What Jesus does say is that "If you keep my commands, you will ABIDE in my love." To live and dwell in Jesus' love means we will **enjoy it fully** and we will **show it**.

Let's be clear, the only way we can keep His commandments even in a limited way is if we abide in Christ. In the first part of this chapter Jesus compares Himself to a vine and we are the branches. A branch has to be connected to the vine to be able to grow and produce fruit. It needs the vine to live. If the branch is cut off the vine it quickly dies. So Jesus said, "Apart from me, you can do nothing." Vs. 5. We cannot begin to keep His commandments unless we abide in Him and know and receive His love. We need to draw all our spiritual strength and nutrients from Him in order to bear the fruit of keeping His commandments. His love instills love in our hearts for Him. His love compels us to keep His commandments. That's how we live in love.

His commandments are all about love. They teach us how to love. That is what they are all about. The first three commandments teach us how we are to love God, and the last seven commandments are all about how we are to love one another. That's why Jesus says, "My command is this: Love one another as I have loved you." So you see, when we keep His commandments we are abiding in His love. We are living in it and making His love our own.

Jesus also teaches us **The Joy of Abiding in His Love**. He says, "I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete." Where love is freely received and given there is great joy! We can experience that in our families. Sadly not all families have loving parents. In that case there is sorrow and misery and the children usually look elsewhere to find the love they crave. But, where love flows freely and deep, there is great joy. When a child knows and feels the love of their parents, there is a sense of security, satisfaction, and wholeness. Where that love is known and felt, that child is more likely to return love by helping mom and gladly doing what she wants. Then there is even more joy and laughter.

Most mothers will never stop loving their children. That doesn't mean all her children enjoy her love the same. Say she has two children. She loves them both equally. The one loves her and gladly does whatever she asks. The other refuses to do anything for her and turns away from her to live their own life. Which of the two abides in her love? The one who loves her and joyfully serves her. That child enjoys the mother's presence and her acts of love. The rebellious child only causes sorrow and pain for themselves and isolates themselves from the enjoyment of their mother's love. The mother doesn't stop loving that child, but that child doesn't live in it and so doesn't enjoy it.

It's just like Cain and Able. God loved them both. Even after Cain killed his brother, God tried to restore him, but Cain wouldn't have any of it. He went out from the presence of the Lord. He did not regard or keep God's commandments and therefore he did not remain in God's love or enjoy it.

So it is with us and Jesus. Our joy in life is found in His love which moves us to love Him and gladly keep His commandments. When we do we find more joy in life with Him. However, children often show a characteristic of our human nature. Even very obedient, polite children will often be heard saying things like, "I don't really want to do that." More rebellious children will simply not do it and will make a big fuss if they are forced to do something they don't want to do.

That is a part of all of our sinful natures. We think that our joy and happiness will be found in doing what we want to do rather than doing what God wants for us. We might be afraid that doing God's will won't work out for me in my circumstance, so we are inclined to do what we want instead. But true joy is found in doing God's will. When we abide in Jesus' love by loving Him and treasuring His Word in our hearts, Jesus gives us His own Joy and our joy becomes complete. So seek to do what God wants rather than what you want, and you will abide in His love and receive His joy, for then we reap the benefits of His love. Abiding in Jesus' love, following His commands, makes for a very blessed, happy, joyful life. We continue to receive His love and His joy remains in us and becomes complete.

Finally, Jesus teaches us **The Peace of Abiding in His Love**.

For the conscientious Christian, who genuinely wants to Abide in Jesus' love and strives to keep His commandments, this also causes us sorrow and fear because we realize that we don't keep Jesus' commands or love one another the way we should? Especially when we hear Jesus say, "My

command is this: Love one another AS I HAVE LOVED YOU.” That is a tall order that none of us lives up to. And our obedience to His commandments is not near what it should be.

Especially faithful, Christian Moms bear a lot of guilt, because as much as they love their children and are devoted to doing what is best for them, they constantly see areas where they come up short. Why wasn't I more patient? Why didn't I listen more? Why was I so quick to say no to things? It goes on and on. If their children have some problem or go astray, they are constantly wondering, “What did I do wrong? What should I have done better.” Our natural reaction is to say, “It's not your fault. You did your best. Kids make their own choices. You can't beat yourself up about it.” That may or may not be true. But none of those things remove the burden of guilt. The real solution is to Abide in Jesus' Love, because His Love never fails.

When He said, “Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends,” He reminds us of the extent of His own love. Jesus said all of this on Maundy Thursday, the night before Jesus did lay down His life for us. In doing so He has cleansed us from all our sins. That is the greatest benefit and the greatest joy of abiding in His love, we receive His forgiveness for all our failures, shortcomings and sins. More than that, Jesus loves your children too and He does everything to bless and keep them in spite of our failures.

So Abide in Jesus' Love. Bask in His love and He will produce in you a love for Him that delights in doing His will, that finds joy in loving one another, and that receives great Peace in His forgiveness and grace.

Today especially we honour our moms. There is no greater way to honour them than to love them and serve them, doing what they ask. When you love her and show it in doing what she wants, you make it all the more joyful for her to love and serve you. If your mother has already passed on into eternal life, take a moment to thank the Lord for her faithful love and especially how she has led you in your faith and love for the Lord.

Your mother's love gives you a little better picture of the love that Your Heavenly Father and his beloved Son has for you. May we always Abide in His love.

Amen.