

October 22, 2023

## Commitment: The Foundation of Love II

**"Your faith will be tested."** Our faith is being tested in order to **expose our weaknesses** to prepare us for a darkness that is coming. Jesus warned Peter that Satan wanted to *"sift him as wheat"* right before Peter denied Christ 3 times.

**Luke 22:31-34** *And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. 32 But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren."*

Sift you as wheat means to separate you from your closest relationships; Jesus, spouse, children, family and church family and then from all people. Satan wants us alone and separated so he can destroy us.

Faith without works is dead **James 2:14-17**

Faith without love is nothing **1 Cor 13:1-3**

**Faith that works through/with love, is everything! Gal 5:5-6**

The best word that describes agape love is **commitment**.

**Love** Strong's # 26, *agape* (ag-ah-pay); an unconditional love that gives of itself without asking anything in return. This is a love of choice and will, not by feelings, chance and emotions. It is a commitment. It is the greatest of all love.

**It takes faith to walk in agape-commitment-love. Faith + love (commitment) = obedience to His commandments.**

**Obedience to His commandments = great joy, Christ-like character, peace and hope.**

This is a supernatural love poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

**Rom 5:3-5** *"...we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; 4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love (commitment) of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us."*

**John 13:34-35** *A new commandment I give to you, that you love (commit) one another; as I have loved (committed) you, that you also love (commit) one another. 35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love (commitment) for one another."*

If we love Jesus, **His law is written in our heart** and we will love to seek His righteousness being obedient to His law.

**John 14:21** *"He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves (committed) Me. And he who loves (committed) Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."*

**Manifest:** Strong's #1718 *emphanidzo* (em-fan-id-zoe); a combination of *en* "in" and *phaino*, "to cause to shine," thus to appear, come into view, reveal, exhibit, make visible, present oneself to the sight of another, be conspicuous. Also, to declare, make known.

**John 15:11-14** *"These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. 12 This is My commandment, that you love (commit) one another as I have loved (committed) you. 13 Greater love (commitment) has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. 14 You are My friends if you do whatever I command you."*

One way Jesus commands us is through the leading of the Holy Spirit.

**1 John 4:20-21** *If someone says, "I love (committed to) God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love (committed to) his brother whom he has seen, how can he love (be committed) God whom he has not seen? 21 And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves (committed to) God must love (commit) his brother also.*

Our "brother" is first our Church family, and then other Christians.

**Gal 6:7-10** *Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. 9 And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, **especially to those who are of the household of faith.***

**2 John 6** *This is love (commitment), that we walk according to **His commandments**. This is the **commandment**, that as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it.*

**1 John 3:22-23** *And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep **His commandments** and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. 23 And this is **His commandment**: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and **love** one another, as He gave us **commandment**.*

\*\*\*When we are walking in love (commitment) to this church family, it glorifies God our Father and Jesus or Lord! We are to steward the manifold grace of God.

**1 Peter 4:8-11** *And above all things have **fervent love** for one another, for "**love will cover a multitude of sins.**" 9 Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. 10 As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

**The #1 commandment** is to love God with all of our heart, and #2 is to love one another. That is why Satan works so hard to cause division between relationships. One of his primary weapons is "**hurt feelings**." Anger, hatred, offences, rejection, criticalness, bitterness, and the like, harden our heart. Once our heart is hardened, it is very difficult to hear correctly from God and to discern proper communications with others. Instead of perceiving accurate communication with someone, we see through a "hurt heart." This taints everything with a negative bias and we become more offended as words from other people are taken as a personal attack.

Unforgiveness will greatly hinder the flow of the Holy Spirit in our lives. The words "I forgive you" are easily spoken, but have we truly forgiven?

**Matt 6:9-15** *Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. 10 Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, **As we forgive our debtors.** 13 And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

**14 "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.**

The essence, the true character of Jesus Christ is love that brings forgiveness. If we are not willing to forgive, do we truly have Jesus in our heart? Forgiveness is a choice, not a "feeling."