

Session 5: God's Love is Better Than Wine

I will take just a moment and give a review from last session for those who are new with us tonight. If you want the notes you can get them off the website. They are available right now.

REVIEW: UNDERSTANDING THE KISSES OF GOD'S WORD

The last session we looked at the theme verse of this eight-chapter love song. Where the bride cries out, "Let Him"— she is speaking to the Father—"let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth (Word)—For Your love is better than wine" (Song 1:2). What is happening in this passage is that the bride is making a request to the One who has authority over the King? In terms of the spiritual analogy, the King obviously is Jesus since she is speaking to the One who has authority over the personal matters of the King. She is talking to the Father. We looked at that in detail in our last session. It is in essence the prayer for the first commandment to be released, the grace to walk in the first commandment.

Jesus said—as a prophecy, and even more a word of instruction—the last declaration He gave to the nation of Israel publicly. He said you shall love the Lord your God with all of your heart, then He went on and described this as the first commandment, and it is the great commandment.

The cry for the kisses of God's Word is actually, in our context, it is the prayer of faith that God would release the anointing for us to walk in the first commandment, that it would be first place in our life. Now, before Jesus returns, the first commandment will be restored to first place around the whole earth. No matter what different ministry agenda the different ministries have, I can assure you at the very top of God's priority list is to cause the first commandment to be received in first place in the body of Christ. It is not only the first commandment it is the great one.

TO RESTORE THE FIRST AND GREAT COMMANDMENT TO FIRST PLACE

Now just again for those who are new with us in this first session, it is session five but it is your first time with us. The kiss of the Word, the kisses of His mouth refer to the Word of God. The Word is that which proceeded out of the mouth of God in

Deuteronomy 8:3. For many generations, the Rabbi's would refer to this verse as the kisses of the Torah, the kisses of the Word or the kisses of the law. Now the theme of the love song, it is an eight chapter love song; the theme of the bride is crying out that God would kiss her with His Word.

What that means is, as we looked at it last session, that God would reveal His Word to her in a way that awakens love in her heart. There are many different categories and themes in the Word of God. She is crying out for the Word that reveals the love of God and awakens the love of God in our spirit. It is the kisses of His Word. It is not just apostolic strategy for outreach for nations. Those are very important categories in the Word of God. The cry of the bride is not only for this but it is her premiere cry.

THE BRIDE CRIES FOR THE WORD TO TOUCH THE HER HEART

Lord, I want the Word in as much as it reveals Your love and awakens love in me for You and then overflowing to other people. So we study the Word of God with this focus. For some years now I have studied the Word of God specifically, strategically studying God's emotions.

I want to understand how God feels. I appreciate the story that Allen Hood, the president of the Bible school, tells. That he was here fifteen years ago in Kansas City as a part of the church here. I said it many times so I do not remember the time he was referring. He was twenty-one years old. Twenty, I guess it is six, seventeen, twenty, twenty-one, twenty-two years ago. I gave a challenge to go through and mark every place in the Bible that emphasizes or reveals something about God's emotions. He said, I was a twenty-one year old and I did it.

I went. I took my Bible. It took me months. I marked every single place that spoke about God's emotions and I studied them. That is what I mean by the kisses of the Word. It is the word in as much as it reveals the passion of God's heart.

So these many years later, what fifteen, sixteen, seventeen years later he tells the story as to that put a plumb line in his soul—that put a foundation in him. I want to encourage you to do that again. I would refer to that, in the Song of Solomon language, as the kisses of His word. I love that theme. I have not graduated from it yet. A billion years from now in the resurrection, I will still be focused on that theme as will you and the whole body of Christ.

THE SUPERIOR PLEASURES IN THE GRACE OF GOD

The superior pleasures and the grace of God. The superior pleasures in God's grace. I wrote a book called, "The Pleasure of Loving God." I give several chapters to the theme of the superior pleasure of loving God and being loved by God. It is one of my most exciting themes to touch my heart. It is the pleasure, the pleasure of giving ourselves to God and knowing how God gave himself to us. The other book, "The Seven Longings of the Heart," it is the same theme. It is the pleasure we feel when God touches our spirit.

STUDENT OF THE EMOTIONS OF GOD

We cannot emphasize this theme enough. I want to urge you to become students of the emotions of God. Now she has been asking the Father, let Him kiss me with the kisses of His word. Now, she is going to give us the reason why she wants the kiss of God's word. Now, she turns her focus from the Father to Jesus. Again, using the spiritual application of this love song, we understand that this love song was written in its original context to extol or to magnify the beauty of married love. Song of Solomon is still to be read that way.

That is not the only interpretation and application. There is a spiritual one as well. So now she says Father let Him kiss me with the kisses of His Word. Now she turns to Jesus. She says because or for—it is the same word—because Your love or Your affection is better than wine.

What a powerful sentence. We get insight into her heart by that one phrase more than any other phrase in all of Song of Solomon. Why do I want the word of God so? Why am I so ravenously hungry for God's word? For this reason, Your affection for me is better than the wine of this fallen world. Your affection, which is communicated to me by the kisses of Your word, it is so exciting to my spirit. It so exhilarates my spirit, I want Your word more than anything. I understand it reveals Your love or Your affection which is greater than the wine of this fallen world.

WINE EXHILARATES THE HEART

Now, she uses the wine metaphor because she is talking in the context of a marriage relationship—in the celebration of marriage. Wine is that which exhilarates the heart. That is how it is meant to be understood in this love song. It is referring to the drink of earthly celebration—that is what it is talking about. It is

the drink of gladness. It is the drink of the wedding celebration in ancient Israel. I will just summarize it. It speaks of the things that exhilarate the human heart, the wine. Now there is a good wine and there is a bad wine in terms of this analogy.

She is not only talking about the wine of sin, of the intoxications that are dark. She says even the wine of Your blessing, even the blessings You give me. For You to touch my heart in intimacy, it is even more exhilarating than You to bless my circumstances. To have her heart grow in God is more powerful than even the good wine of God's blessing. She is saying more than Your word is more exciting than sin. She is saying more than that. She is saying it is even more exciting when Your word kisses my heart than even the blessings You put in my hand.

Now, we do not turn away God's blessings. We want God's blessings but at the same time we understand that there is something more powerful than blessed circumstances. The blessing I am referring to, financial increase, that is good. I want zeros added on the financial increase that God wants to give me. I want to help fund the going forth of the gospel in the prayer movement in a supernatural way with finances. I want financial increase. Favor in relationships, physical health, these are wonderful blessings. New spheres of influence, whether ministry or in the market place or whatever, these are different facets of the blessings of God. Now here is the problem: as good as God's blessings are—they are good, no qualifier—but we want the blessings of God, they are not to be the primary focus of the bride's heart.

AS WONDERFUL AS GOD'S BLESSINGS ARE, THEY ARE NOT OUR FOCUS

They are to be the secondary focus, not the primary. What happens, history proves it, many people who get touched by God's blessing in ministry, finance or favor gets so preoccupied with the blessing that their heart actually diminishes in its communion and its experience with Jesus.

They get so busy managing the blessing that they begin to diminish, it is very slow, it is so gradual but their spiritual connection at the heart level. Their heart diminishes. It gets smaller in that sense. Now this is the thing that Jesus told them about in Revelation 2 when He said: "I know you have persevered and have patience, and have labored and I am blessed by that" (verse 3, paraphrased). Revelation 2:4 (paraphrased): "He said I have something against you even though you worked so hard for Me. I appreciate that you are faithful in that regard. I have

this against you. You have left your first love. You do not love Me like you used to. Though you work for Me with great diligence, you do not love Me the same. Jesus says you need to repent or I am going to take the lamp stand. I am going to take the blessing off of your church so you are not so busy so you return to your first love. He said I warn you to repent.”

LOVERS OUTWORK WORKERS

God has called us first to be lovers of God and secondly to be workers for God. Now a lover will always out work the worker always. I am not in any way calling or asking the people to work less. That is not what I am really doing. I am saying that the anointing to love God with all our heart, to receive the love of God and then to overflow and love others.

The anointing of love is the premier thing the Spirit wants us to understand in our lives. You get a person walking in love; they will be far more consistent in work and in holiness than a worker who has got a great big vision. The vision will wear them out over time if there is not love energizing them in their spirit. There are just enough disappointments, there are enough set backs, even the busyness of increase will wear you out if your spirit is not being renewed in the love of God: love from Him, love to Him and again, love for others.

The bride is introducing the priority. I love the phrase: the superior pleasures of the gospel or the superior pleasures of the word of God. She is showing us her priority of touching, that which is better than, that which is better than the good or the bad wine in this world.

THE BAD WINE IS THE EARTHLY PLEASURES OF OUR SIN

It is obviously better than the bad wine, which is the sinful pleasures. Beloved, it is better than even blessed circumstances. Again, we do not have to choose between them we get them both. It is a matter of prioritizing at the heart level. It is a matter of what the dream of our heart is.

Many people dream more about increase in their ministry than they do increase of their heart. That is a dangerous place to live, it is very common but it is very dangerous, it is spiritually dangerous. The biggest dream of your heart needs to be where you go in God at the heart level.

We started the International House of Prayer. It was sixteen years after I heard the audible voice of the Lord speak. Sixteen years afterwards in May 1983, the Lord

spoke audibly, twenty-four hour prayer in the spirit of the tabernacle of David. We put a big sign on the wall for sixteen years.

People would say what is this? I said I am not sure. We are going to do prayer in the spirit of the tabernacle of David. I am not sure what it means. One year turned to five turned to sixteen. Finally we began it. The Lord began to call people: Singers, musicians, workers, intercessors and all manners of leaders. Over the years my friends who I have known for many years would come through.

Here we are right at the eight-year mark. People ask, “Is this not your dream? Has our dream come true?” I want to be clear about this. I am not mean when I say it but IHOP was never my dream. IHOP is my mandate. I do like IHOP but I do IHOP in obedience to God. I do it for love. I said my dream has nothing to do with IHOP. My dream is where I am going on the inside in my heart with God.

That is my dream. I have been able to reach for my dream long before IHOP started. IHOP is not going to derail me from my dream even though it will go to world wide notoriety and attention and all kinds of things. It is not my dream. I do not want to be seduced by a ministry that gets notoriety or a platform that increases and increases. Neither do you have to be seduced by that. It is a seduction. If ministry is your first dream it will be very difficult to avoid that seduction.

If your dream is for the kisses of His word because you have revelation that His affection for you is even more powerful than the good wine of blessing then you will stay steady through the years. She reveals the priority of these superior pleasures. She says, “Your love is better than”—the NIV says—“Your love is more delightful than” (Song 1:2). I like that. It is better than. It is more delightful. There are different pleasures. There are different pleasures that are legitimate. Pleasures we celebrate under Jesus’ leadership.

THERE IS PLEASURE IN GOD’S PERSONALITY

Some people have the idea that pleasure is from the devil. No. Pleasure was created by God. God has pleasure in His personality. The devil saw how effective pleasure is, and he counterfeited it. He has offered counterfeit pleasures. They are real pleasures, but they lead us to darkness is what I mean by counterfeit. The subject of pleasure is the subject of God’s personality. God’s personality is filled with pleasure. We will have pleasure forever in His presence. God rules through pleasure.

Pleasure is a dynamic part of His kingdom and His government forever. He motivates by love and pleasure in an effective way where His people will stay steady forever under His leadership of love and pleasure.

So there are pleasures in this age that are legitimate. There are physical pleasures. There are mental pleasures. There are emotional pleasures. There are spiritual pleasures. God made us. He created us where we are hungry for pleasure. We need pleasure. You have to understand this. That is why I love the Song of Solomon so much.

It is the book that addresses it just head on. Beloved you were created by a God of pleasure to need pleasure. If you do not get pleasure in the right place you will look for it in the wrong place. There are legitimate, godly, physical, mental, emotional pleasures under Jesus' leadership.

The spiritual pleasure is the greatest of them all. It is the pleasure that is called the love of God. It is more delightful than. It is more pleasurable than. Now God created, I identified seven longings of the human heart.

There could be more, but you could categorize them in a different way. These longings are common to all of us. All of us have these longings. The reason we have these longings is because they are reflections of God's personality. Our longings reflect the genius of who God is in His own personality. He put these longings in us as a reflection of His glory in us. We feel delight because He has delight. We feel happiness. We long for happiness because He is happy and we are created in His image. Happiness is fantastic. We just have to get it the right place. God wants us happy but He wants us happy under His leadership.

SEVEN LONGINGS OF THE HUMAN HEART

I identify these seven different longings. The longing to be enjoyed by God, to have the assurance that God enjoys us, we crave that assurance. The longing to be fascinated, I do not want to get off on these. Each one of them is a big subject. The longing to be beautiful, now, guys do not like that word, we say cool. It is the same thing. The longing to be great, you can not repent of the longing to be great. You can only repent of seeking it the wrong way through pride and self exaltation instead of servant hood.

The longing for intimacy, the longing to be whole-hearted—to be totally passionate: you will not work right if you do not know the pleasure of whole heartedness. That is one of the great problems in the church. The gospel has been watered down.

The grace of God has been watered down and offered in a deceptive form where the grace of God affirms us in everything we do good or bad. Well, God has grace. We end up living lives that are not radically passionate, and we break on the inside. We die of spiritual boredom.

We have to be passionate or something goes wrong on the inside of us. We were not made to be eighty percent committed to God. That is probably high in the body of Christ in many parts of the world in other parts it is not. We only work right completely pouring ourselves out at the heart level. Then there is a longing to make a deep and lasting impact.

SATAN COUNTERFEITS THE PLEASURE THAT GOD CREATED

Now Satan counterfeits these pleasures. The end-time saints are going to be victorious over the Antichrist. It says in Revelation 15, those who have “the victory over the beast” (Rev.15:3), it is talking literally about the Antichrist. It is over, their life is over and now they are in heaven, they have had victory on the earth. Many of these were martyred. Many of them were not martyred. Both groups the martyrs and those who were not martyred, this group that is gathered around the throne, they had victory over the Antichrist, which means they were victorious in love. It does not mean that their circumstances were easy. They would not draw back in love.

The reason is because they marveled at Jesus and His leadership. I do not mean they marveled at Him they tried to. It was not a commitment to marvel. They understood Jesus in the right way. They said, “Great and marvelous are Your works” (Rev. 15:3). It is not a commitment to marvel. You can not decide to marvel and then marvel. It does not work that way. I am committed to being impressed. I am now impressed. No, it does not work that way.

When Jesus—when we understand Jesus right—from a biblical point of view where He is proclaimed and is taught in a right way, we understand it from the Bible, our heart marvels at the grandeur and the greatness of His love and His leadership. He is magnificent to us.

It is the marvel or the fascination of the endtime church with the affection of Jesus that will make us victorious. What am I saying? I am saying this subject is not a small subject. This is a huge subject. It is not one we can kind of well we will put it off for ten years. We will get around to the affections of God. I mean we like it a little bit. Beloved you will want to cry out for the kisses of God's word that God would reveal His word in a way that unveils the passion and the affection of His heart for you because His love is more powerful than the wine of this world.

Later on in the book of Song of Solomon 8:7, Jesus is standing before the bride. He is offering grace to her. He is saying, "Set Me as a seal upon your heart" (Song 8:6-7). In verse seven, He goes on to talk about this seal of fire, He said, is so powerful that the waters of persecution and the waters of temptation can not drown it out.

WATERS OF ADVERSITY CANNOT QUENCH THE FIRE OF HIS LOVE

Beloved I tell you, a little bit from experience, from the Word of God as well. I do not have the full experience of this by any means. I want more but I know a little bit about this. There is a fire that touches the human heart called the seal of God. That is the language of Song of Solomon. The kiss of God's Word that is, again, the language of Song of Solomon. There is a fire. There is an experience of intimacy with the Word of God in our heart coming from God's heart. The Word touching our heart is called the fire of God.

It is more powerful than water. Now water always puts out fire if there is enough of it unless the fire is supernatural. There is a supernatural fire that is more powerful than the flood of temptation and the flood of persecution. Now many of God's people's experience is opposite.

The fire has been drown out. The fire has been quenched. They live with a quenched heart. They lived with a heart that is drowning in temptation, condemnation, and fear. Their heart is drowning. That is the description of their heart. That needs to be revived.

Many believers I know have a quenched heart that is drowning under temptation, accusation or condemnation. They do not feel. They do not enjoy the Word. The Word is boring. The presence of God, as long as the music is good, they like the presence of God. They cannot, being alone with God and praying is so hard. I understand that I have experienced that for years. In my early days praying the Word was so boring. I told God if You would just make this thing easier, You

would have a lot of followers. There is a place in our life in God where the thing begins to gradually turn where the Word of God has more fire on it touching our emotions than the sin or condemnation and the persecution, even the weariness of this age. Jesus is talking through again the analogy of the spiritual interpretation.

IF A MAN WOULD GIVE FOR LOVE

“If a man would give for love all the wealth of his house, it would be utterly despised” (Song 8:7), meaning if he gave up everything for love he would never want any recognition for it. He would despise any honor that he did something noble. That is what it is talking about. We will look more at that later in some weeks. There is a fire. There is a love that is so powerful that if you gave up everything for love you would despise being honored and recognized as having done something noble. You would say, “Oh for the sake of love.”

THE POWER TO LOVE IS THE REWARD OF A LOVER

Here is why: The power to love is the reward of a lover. The man or the woman who gives up everything for love they go I do not want honor with men waving their flags and putting my name on walls. My reward is the power to love. That is my reward. God is raising up a church across the earth.

Their number one reward is to receive it from Him and to give it back and then overflow in love to others. I tell you, when the worker, and I have watched a lot of this at IHOP over the last near eight years, when the worker changes in their heart to become a lover.

The worker for God becomes the lover of God their work is very different then. Their spirit is very different. When the worker gets changed into a lover their entire point of view is different. It is a glorious thing to watch. Lovers do not need check lists. Workers do. Workers have got to look down the check list to make sure they are doing everything on the check list. A person in love is in love where they go I will do double what is on the check list. You do not have to tell me what I have to do. I will do double. A person in love will do anything for love.

A lovesick man or a lovesick woman will do anything for love. That is where the end-time church is going. The bride of Christ says this. She says, “Your love, the experience of it and the ability to even give it back to You is better than, it is better than having a world famous ministry. It is better than all the wealth of the world,

than all the notoriety. Something is moving me deeper than even the wine of blessing.”

AFFECTION-BASED OBEDIENCE: MOTIVATED BY SATISFACTION IN JESUS

Affection based obedience. Affection based obedience. This is obedience that flows from experiencing a little bit. None of us have experienced very much of Jesus' affection, though we think we have. When we meet Him face to face, we will find out we are merely sipping. Taking sips, little drinks of the vast ocean of the love of His being. His love is a vast ocean.

We are sipping at it right now and getting overwhelmed which is so good. There is nothing wrong with that. We are little. He is big. We are sipping and we are like wow. He says, “You wait, you wait. When I give you a resurrected body your capacity will be so much greater.

Your mind will be so much greater. You will drink and be intoxicated forever. You will never exhaust who I am, never.”

AFFECTION-BASED OBEDIENCE FLOWS FROM EXPERIENCING JESUS' LOVE

So affection based obedience—that is what we are aiming for. When people touch the love that is better than, put whatever you want after that, better than. It is powerful. It is the strongest kind of obedience. That obedience is deeper. That obedience is steadier. That obedience has got a right spirit in it. It is fantastic. It is the strongest kind of obedience there is because a lovesick person will do anything when they are in love, anything.

OBEDIENCE BY FAITH

Now there is what I call obedience by faith. I have done plenty of this. I do not feel a thing, but the Word of God says still obey. I go ugh everything I feel is opposite. How many of you know about obeying when you feel nothing. Well it is worse than that, obeying when you feel the opposite. I have had that much over the years of ministry. Beloved, we still must obey even if the affection is not working. I am saying that the word of God still requires that but I am telling you something. There is a stronger obedience than just obeying just by raw determination and by faith.

FEAR-BASED OR SHAME-BASED OBEDIENCE

There is another kind of obedience. I call it fear-based obedience or shame-based obedience. It is the kind of obedience that we have because we are afraid that we are going to be put to shame or we are going to suffer loss. We are going to have negative circumstances.

Something really bad is going to happen if our sin is found out. Now, this may surprise you but fear-based obedience is in the Bible. It is biblical. Jesus preached it. He said you will go to hell if you do not obey Me. Beloved, that is fear-based obedience. It really is. I mean for real.

It is biblical, but it is not the strongest kind of obedience. It is not the only kind of motivation. That is biblical, but if that is the only motivation that Jesus ever gave the people will not stay steady with only fear-based obedience. The people will not stay steady with only faith. I am using the word faith differently than we normally use it I am just talking about obeying without feeling anything. The only way that we will stay steady through the years is by affection based obedience.

So why am I telling you that? The idea is you want to take the truths of the Song of Solomon; again, you do not have to read them from Song of Solomon as they are from Genesis to Revelation, the truths about God's passion for you. You feed your spirit on it. It will make you long for more of the kisses of His word. It is not only the kisses of His word. That is it. The revelation that Your affections are better than everything else in this age, even the good things.

GOD LOVES US IN THE SAME WAY THAT GOD LOVES GOD

God loves us in the same way that God loves God. Now I want to say it kind of funny, but I want you to get this: Did you know that God loves you in the way that God loves God? That is stunning, this reality. There is no greater truth I could imagine than God loves me like He loves Himself.

The Father loves me like He loves Jesus. Jesus loves me like He loves the Father, the most remarkable reality. Jesus spoke this truth and He emphasized it three different times, the fact that the love of God could be experienced at this level.

John 15:9: Look at this—this is absolutely staggering—“As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.” Think about the implications of how much

the Father loves Jesus. Instead of the word “love,” put how much the Father has affection, how much the Father has passion, how much the Father has enjoyment of me?

That is the way He enjoys you. That verse alone gives every believer the right to be called God’s favorite one. Now you might be careful how you say that because if you are talking to someone who does not understand this idea, and you say “I am God’s favorite one”—they are liable to get really offended and confused.

Beloved, if God loves you the way He loves Jesus, guess what? You are God’s favorite. Every single believer on this basis is God’s favorite. It is not only the Father loves me. I mean it is not only that Jesus loves me like the Father loved Him. Jesus said, “I love you the same way My Father loves you. I mean the same way My Father loves Me, I love you the way My Father loves Me.”

My goodness this is so awesome, this reality. I am standing at the edges of this sea shore with my feet still half in the sand and just maybe a quarter inch of water looking at that vast ocean.

I have hardly even touched this reality and the Spirit is beckoning us into the vast ocean of this truth. Beloved, I know what I am going for in this age. I know in the age to come for sure we all are. Let’s go after this thing. Let’s not get so busy about other things. Let’s lock in and get a hold of this thing.

Look what he says in John. 17:23: Jesus said that this love is so the world may know the Father. You have loved them in the way that You have loved Me. Not only does Jesus love you like the Father loves Him, the Father loves you in the way He loves Jesus. You know you might have said, “Jesus do You feel bad about that? I mean He loves us as much as He loves You?”

Jesus responds, “I love it. I mean You have been so faithful.” You have been with Him from before time. You are uncreated. So many shared experiences and He loves us the same.

Jesus goes I love it. That is how I want it. Beloved the Father loves you in the way He loves Jesus. It is not only that. The world is going to know this before it is over. The world is going to understand this before it is over. That is staggering. It is not just that you will know it.

The world is going to know it as well. This is the ultimate statement of our worth, our value. Beloved, if you put the anchor down at this place. If you put the anchor of your life down here, God loves me like God loves God. This is the most exciting. This love is better than the wine of this world. It is better than riches and fame. Even in the blessing of God, there is something far bigger than being successful in ministry or in business or in anything else.

THE MYSTERY OF THE VASTNESS OF THE OCEAN OF GOD'S LOVE FOR US

It is the fact that God is in love with you. Your heart feels it, and then returns wholehearted love back to Him. Oh the vastness of the ocean of God's love. Like it says in Ephesians 3:17, we are "rooted and grounded" in it. My question is this: Are you rooted in this reality? Are you grounded in this reality? Most believers that I know are not. They know it casually but they are not rooted in it.

When they are not rooted in it, it goes on later in Ephesians 4 it says they are tossed to and fro by every problem, every wave and wind that hits them. Every wave and wind, every wind of doctrine, new ideas get them off center. Waves talk about difficult circumstances throw them off and they doubt the love of God. It goes on in Ephesians 4:14 it describes how waves and winds will toss them if they are not rooted in this. Many believers are tossed by waves, difficult circumstances and they are tossed by winds, just new ideas that come that get them off line from this truth.

Beloved, I want to be rooted in this. Look at it. It is the length, the width, the depth, the height.

It passes human knowledge which means there is more to know than we can grasp in this age. It is beyond our ability to get it all. We can get a lot of it to change our life but even when we are overflowing in this reality there is so much more to be had in the age to come.

Now the interesting thing about this is that this passage, I mean that these truths where Jesus is talking. John 15 and John 17, it is in the upper room. It is at the last supper. He was saying these truths in order to stabilize His young disciples. He knew that night He was going to be taken and killed. They did not know that. He told them a dozen times. The girls all got it. The guys only went He died. The girls go well that is what He told us. I mean over and over and over again. That is another subject for another time. All the guys were shocked. All the girls, the girls

were at the grave and at the cross. Uh oh, I think I got into something there. Anyway, these guys, I like these guys but they are going to betray Him tonight. This very night they are going to betray Him.

JESUS LOVES US LIKE THE FATHER LOVES HIM

He looks them in the eyes and says, "I love you like the Father loves Me." He could have said what He said an hour or two later . "You will betray Me tonight but that does not change how I feel about you."

He knew that the scandal, the shame of their betrayal would so shock them; the only thing that would cause them to recover was this truth. Not only are they going to be shocked by their sin, and their disappointment. I mean John the Baptist got killed, and now Jesus is going to be killed. Think of their, they are all twenty-one, twenty-two years old. The movement is over. John and Jesus are dead. Jesus says there is one truth, which will steady you.

I love you like the Father loves Me. You will be steady. They are going to be beaten and thrown into prison, years later killed themselves. They are going to have the pressures of an exploding ministry with so much pressure and controversy. The thing that stabilized them was this reality. Beloved, this is what the Spirit is saying to the church. There is this wrong idea that if we focus on this somehow we will get so introverted. We will get so focused on ourselves that is absolutely wrong.

When the love of Jesus who died for the world touches you it will make you in love with Him and you will be absolutely radical in your love to give it away. There is no such thing as touching this man and just forgetting everything. Your priorities will shift. The things that are important to many people will go way down the priority list so they will think you forgot everything. Beloved, you touch this Roaring Lion, and you will have the heart of a lion in love for others as well as for God