Session 7 The Two Most Important Biblical Truths (Jn. 15:9)

 *“Let me drink from the river of Your pleasures as I delight in Your beauty.” (Ps. 36:8; 37:4)*

1. Two glorious truths and one command (Jn. 15:9)

*This is session seven of our John 15 series that myself and Stuart are teaching on Friday nights here. I am titling this:* ***The Two Most Important Biblical Truths****. I want you to notice, as we read John 15:9, that there are two truths. There are three statements that Jesus makes: two truths and one commandment. I want you to really lock in and pay attention to this.*

* 1. Jesus declared that His love for His disciples was as intense as the Father’s love for Him (Jn. 15:9).
	I refer to John 15:9 as the “two most important truths” in the Bible—each has many implications.
	(My qualifier: There may be 10 other truths that arguably should also be seen as “most important.”).

9“As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love…” (Jn. 15:9)

*Paragraph A. This is one of the most dramatic and significant declarations in human history: John 15:9. I mean, it is indescribable how glorious it is. It is so glorious it could bounce right off us, and we could move right on, but I have made a point over the years to camp out on John 15:9. Jesus declared that His love for the disciples was as intense as the Father’s love for Him. I refer to 15:9 as the two most important truths in the Bible. Each one of these two truths has many, many implications. Now my qualifier is there could be ten other truths that somebody might want to put on that list of the most important, but I do not want to go there right now.*

* 1. John 15:9 sets forth two glorious truths to believe (15:9a, b) and one command to obey (15:9c).
	I think of these two vast truths and their implication as “titles of books” in God’s heavenly library.

*Paragraph B. He set forth two truths to believe and these truths are outside of the realm of our human ability to grasp. We need Holy Spirit’s inspiration to grasp these two truths, and I believe these are the two most important truths that exist. Then He gives us one commandment. I believe this is the most important commandment in the Bible, but it is really easy to just run right past it and miss it.*

*I think of these two vast truths; I call them mountain truths, meaning there is a mountain of implications to each one of these phrases. One way I have referred to it over the years is as titles of books in God’s library. God has a vast library in heaven, and one title of a book—of course this is my opinion—is* ***The Way God Loves God****. There are many implications to that mountain truth. The second title of a book is* ***The Way God Loves People******And Its Vast Realities****.*

* + 1. ***Truth #1***: The Father’s love for Jesus (15:9a) points us to the reality of how God loves God.

*Truth number one is the way the Father loves the Son. Now that is only a hint. That is only a whisper, and you can miss the whisper of what Jesus is pointing to. He is pointing to that vast, glorious reality of how God loves God. He is saying, as it were, “Ask the Spirit. He will unlock this to you through the Word.” It is a much overlooked truth: the way God loves God. There is much strength and advantage and hunger and hope that will be awakened into our heart as we drink of this river, little by little, over the years.*

* + 1. ***Truth #2***: Jesus loves His people (15:9b) with the same intensity that the Father loves Him.

*Truth number two, obviously, the way Jesus loves people is with the same intensity as the Father loves Him. This is a mountain truth. This truth is so big. It bounces right off the human understanding without Holy Spirit’s inspiration, yet the Spirit is saying, in effect, “I will give you more if you determine to go deep on these two truths. I won’t give them to you on the run. I will give them to you if you are intentional about going on the treasure hunt on these two vast truths.”*

* + 1. ***The command***: To abide or live focused on understanding and expressing God’s love (15:9c). Jesus called us to abide or live in an on-going conversation with God around these two truths.

*Then the command is to abide in these truths, to live in them, to stay focused on them.*

* 1. The way God loves God (15:9a) is the greatest love story—it overflows to His people (15:9b).
	This is the narrative that we can “daydream” about by asking the Spirit to give us whispers from the Scripture of what He sees and feels about this glorious, divine, eternal narrative (Col. 3:1-2).

*Paragraph C. This much overlooked subject of the way that God loves God is the greatest love story in existence. The way that the Father and the Son and the Spirit love each other overflows to their family, to the redeemed.*

*This is a strange sentence in paragraph C, but I like it: This is a narrative we can daydream about. I mean, all of our days we can think and ponder on it. We ask the Holy Spirit to give us whispers, to give us little hints of what the scriptures tells us. Let us see, Spirit, what You see and feel what You feel when You look at the way the Father loves the Son. Give us a spark of insight, and let those sparks add up over the months and years.*

* 1. Jesus defined loving God as the “first” commandment, thus identifying it as the highest priority to God personally and the first calling in our life. From eternity past, God has loved God with all of His heart—the Father loves Jesus, Jesus loves the Spirit, the Spirit loves the Father and Son, etc.

37“You shall love the Lord…38This is the first and great commandment.” (Mt. 22:37-38)

*Paragraph D. We all know the statement that Jesus made: “You shall love the Lord your God. This is the first and the great commandment.” Jesus defined loving God with all of your heart and all of your strength as the first commandment, but stop and pause for a moment. By doing this, He identified it as the highest priority to God personally.*

*This is not a commandment that God gives just to us. God lives in the fulfillment of this commandment. From eternity past God loves God with all of His strength. That is a strange idea, but it is a big one that will empower our heart and awaken hope, strength, and hunger. Again, Jesus just laid the verse out there and said, as it were, “If you want more, ask for it. I will unpack this to you by the Holy Spirit.”*

*There is a surprising amount of insight and hints from Genesis to Revelation on these subjects, but they are for the hungry, for those who are determined that they are not going to go on without drinking of this river of pleasure; that is what David called it. The way the Father loves the Son, and the way the Son loves the Father, the way the Spirit loves the Son, the way the Spirit loves the Father, the way the Father loves the Spirit, and all the different combinations.*

* 1. We must see the first commandment in its eternal context of the fellowship within the Godhead instead seeing it as one of many commands. The command to love God with all our heart does not begin with us. It is an expression of the ultimate reality that existed before the creation of the world.

*Paragraph E. In other words, we must see the first commandment—that call to love God with all of our strength­—in its* ***eternal*** *context, meaning it does not begin with us. This call to love with all of our strength the Lord would say goes back from before the foundation of the world. This is the ultimate reality. The whole created order comes under the power of this reality. It existed before the creation of the world: the Father and the Son living in perfect happiness together in perfect delight with the Spirit, one God in three persons.*

*This glorious doctrinal truth, the reality of the Trinity, has been kind of left to scholars to debate. The majority of the Body of Christ says, “We don’t get it anyway.” I want to encourage you not to conclude that. We do not have to get into scholarly debates and try to drill down on some of the minutia of it, though there is a vast reality. It is your Father that we are talking about. It is your Bridegroom. It is your Helper, the Holy Spirit, your friend.*

*We are talking about the way They love and the way They want to bring us into it. So do not be content to say, “Let the scholars debate those things. We do not really get it anyway.”*

*I say, “No. This is my Father we are talking about. This is my family. This is my inheritance. This is my Bridegroom King.” I want to learn more. I want to feel more. I want to be a part of this more with them.*

* 1. The love burning in God’s heart has at least 5 distinct yet deeply interrelated expressions.
	1. ***God’s love for God***: Each Person in the Trinity intensely loves the Others with all Their heart.
	2. ***God’s love for His people***: He loves His people with all of His heart, mind, and strength.
	3. ***Our love for God***: God’s very own love is imparted to His people by the Spirit (Rom. 5:5).
	4. ***Our love for ourselves***: We love ourselves in God’s love and grace and for God’s sake.
	5. ***Our love for others***: We love others in the overflow of experiencing God’s love (1 Jn. 4:19).

*Paragraph F. I have given this teaching many times over the years, so I will give a very abbreviated version of five distinct expressions of the love of God. The first one is how God loves God. The second one: with all of His heart, the Father loves the Son, and that is the way They love the people. Did you know that Jesus loves us with all of His strength? Well, this overflows to number three, our love for God. He imparts this love because the only quality of love He has is fullness. He does not have partial love. Then, we actually begin to discover in the grace of God who we are in Christ and His investment in His inheritance in us, and we begin to love ourselves in the grace of God—That is not a contradiction to hating who we are in our choices that are in the flesh and outside the will of God. That is another subject—Then number five, it overflows, this love, for one another. That is where the family of God is going. I believe in the end-time church we are going to touch number five far beyond any time of history, but the fifth one really is the end of the progression. Not that we wait to complete number one to four before we do number five; they all grow together. Number five will only flourish as numbers one to four grow in our understanding and in our heart. That is a new idea to some folks.*

* 1. In John 14, Jesus emphasized the command to love God and 5 times He defined it as rooted in a spirit of obedience (14:15, 21, 23, 24, 31). In 15:9, He declared truths that empower us to love God.

15If you love Me, keep My commandments…21He who…keeps them, it is he who loves Me…
23If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word…24He who does not love Me does not keep My words…31I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. (Jn. 14:15-31)

*Paragraph G. Just moments before Jesus spoke John 15:9 and said, “As the Father loves Me, I love you now live or abide in this love. Stay locked into this love to this reality,” just moments before, in John 14, Jesus emphasized the command to love God. As a matter of fact, I pointed this out and we did some 15 sessions on chapter 14. By the grace of God, we will do 15 sessions on chapter 15 on Friday nights, 15 sessions next fall on chapter 16, then 15 sessions on chapter 17. All in all we are going to do about 90 to 100 Friday nights of line-by-line through John 13 to 17, by the grace of God, Lord willing, and I think He is.*

*I believe this is the greatest teaching given by the greatest teacher and has been significantly overlooked throughout church history. I believe the Spirit is going to shine on these 15 chapters. I am wanting to labor in the good sense of Lord. I want to dig. I want to pray and search out and ask Him for help to take me deeper on every one of these phrases in John 13 to 17.*

*Well, Jesus just spoke in John 14 about loving God, and He actually emphasized it five times. As a matter of fact, I believe John 14 is the most clear or gives more clarity on the first commandment than any other chapter in the whole Bible. It is not there at a quick read. You have to look at it and ponder it for a little while before you would see that. I have taught on the first commandment for years, but I have never understood until just this last year or two that there is more information in John 14 on the first commandment than any other passage in the Bible.*

*Well, that was just moments ago He taught on John 14 and now is on John 15.The reason I am making that point at the end of the paragraph G is that, in effect, He is saying in John 15:9, “I am going to empower you how to love Me like I told you in John 14. I am going to give you some hints. It starts with understanding a little bit how God loves God, and then how I love you. If you get those two truths growing in you, you will be empowered to love Me with all of your heart.” So, in John 15:9, there is like this golden jewel, this very precious piece of gold in 15:9. He is saying, as it were, “I am now going to give you the way forward in John 14 of how to love me with all of your heart.”*

* 1. God is love—He is wholehearted love (1 Jn. 4:16). The essence of His being is wholehearted love. The only way that God loves His people is with *all of His heart*. John elaborated on the implications of “abiding in love” by relating it to the measure that we live in the reality of connecting with God.

16God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God. (1 Jn. 4:16)

*We all know the statement that John makes later. The same apostle who wrote John 13 to 17 wrote 1 John. You will find a lot of language in 1 John that corresponds with John 13-17. Those passages go together. That is a big subject for another day, but John says it really clearly in 1 John 4:16, “God is love.” What he means is that the very essence of God’s being is wholehearted love. The very essence of His being is wholehearted love.*

*Then he uses this phrase that he used in John 15:9. He says, “Abide in love.” He says that in John 15:9, and we will get to that in a few moments. That is the one command: to abide in love, to stay locked into these truths, and to receive them and then to express them in your life.*

*Well, God is, at the very essence of His being, wholehearted love. The point being, it is the only way He loves. When we settle that, it gives us this hope of maybe Jesus does love us like the Father loves Him. I mean, that just seems indescribably glorious beyond our human comprehension.*

* 1. Love, by definition, demands an expression–to be shared and multiplied. God wanted others to experience the joy of Their experience of perfect love. Thus, God created humans to participate in this glorious fellowship because ***He is love***. God does not lack anything. He has no need. He did not create humans because He was lonely or discontent or lacked something emotionally.

*Paragraph I: If God is wholehearted love, by definition, it demands expression. It demands to be shared and multiplied. For God to say, “I am wholehearted love,” but not to multiply it, there would be a contradiction in that. Thus the Father, the Son, the Spirit in perfect unity wanted others to experience the joy of perfect love that They enjoyed. They had such pleasure in perfect love, They said, as it were, “We have to bring others into this,” so God created human beings. One of the reasons They created human beings was to participate in the joy of perfect love together with Them.*

*God did not create humans because He lacked something. He was not lonely or wanted more worshippers so He said, “I will create humans.” He was not discontent at all. He was utterly satisfied in the fellowship of His family: Father, Son, and Spirit. It was the pleasure and the delight that motivated Them to create. It was not loneliness and need.*

*I have heard people say that if we do not worship God, His heart is broken. I say, “No, He is so filled with delight that He said, ‘I have to bring others into this with us.’”*

* 1. It was determined in the eternal councils of the Godhead to create a race of beings called humans with whom They could share the pleasure of Their wholehearted love. We were created in His image to respond in wholehearted love because it is *who He is* and *who He created us to be*.

*Paragraph J. It was determined in the eternal councils in the Godhead—or however the Father, Son, and Spirit work together and determine their plans—it was determined in the eternal councils to create a race of beings we call human beings. The point was so that They could share the pleasure of wholehearted love. That is why this is not a small thing. This is the very purpose of the creation of the human race. This is who you are at the core. This is who you are in reality.*

*Outside of this, we cannot make sense of what we are really doing and what we are about and where we are going. We grow in this a little bit. I have only grown in this a little bit, but more than before, and it is pleasurable. It creates hunger. It creates a desire to go in deeper, and the Lord wants us on that journey.*

*We were created in His image. We were created in the image of a God, who is wholehearted love, to be wholehearted lovers of God and of one another. Beloved, we were created for love. Now that is a cool statement and a cool song, but outside of this pursuit, the human heart does not work. If we are not reaching for this, dissatisfaction, despair, darkness, dark emotions, and dark thoughts dominate the human heart.*

*It is only in the reach to grow in this and to walk in this that the heart gets liberated in any sustainable way. So we don’t do anybody a favor by minimizing these truths. Rather, call them be wholehearted with all of their hearts. That is the only way your human spirit functions right. You were created to be lovers of God with all of your heart. That is who you are. That is what you do. That is what you are about. In our brokenness and weakness, we lose sight of that. The Lord would say to realign with who you are before Him and what He has called you to do.*

* 1. God’s desires or affections are the most important realties in life. His infinite power and wisdom are employed to carry out His desires—they are used to establish His plan to fill the earth with love.

*Paragraph K: God’s desires. Let’s call it His affections. I believe the way God feels—His desires—is the most important reality in the created order. The way God feels is the most important thing in all of creation. He uses His great power and His great wisdom in order to implement what He desires. It is not that He shows power so He can flex His muscles or that He shows wisdom to show how smart He is. He uses His brilliance and His power to make a way for what He desires, where His affections are.*

* 1. The way that God “feels” is the most important subject. It reveals the “why” behind the “what” of what He does. We understand “what” He did—He created and redeemed—by seeing the “why” behind it. Why did He create and redeem? One reason was to share the pleasure of His holy love.

*Paragraph L: The way that God feels, I believe, is the most important subject in existence. The way God feels is a subject that is not often focused on. If we buy into that sentence and how important it is, we become students of God’s emotions like King David was, a man after God’s own heart. He was a student of God’s emotions, and that is one reason he was called a man after God’s own heart, though there are other reasons. When we understand what God feels, it reveals the why behind the what.*

*We understand what He did: He created–Genesis 1. We understand what He did: He redeemed through sending Jesus to the cross and the resurrection. We understand He leads history in a very, very specific way. Those are some of the “whats” that He has done, but we will understand what He did better when we understand why He did it.*

*Why did He create? Why did He redeem? Why does He lead history the way He leads history? One of the reasons is to share the pleasure of His holy love. There is a pleasure of love that He wants imparted and shared with others, but He won’t force anybody to it. He only wants voluntary love. He wants the response, He wants hunger and then a voluntary response to receive it and grow it. There is no shotgun wedding. Jesus does not want a Bride who does not want to be a part of this glorious dynamic that at the very fountain of His being is this love.*

* 1. The Lord always loves in fullness because He is always 100% true to who He is. He is never less than 100% loving or 100% wise, or righteous, etc. He cannot ever be less than who He is; if He did,
	He would deny Himself—even if He were just 1% deficient in just one attribute. He will never diminish or grow in love because His love is infinite in measure and eternal in duration.

6“For I am the Lord; I do not change; therefore you are not consumed…” (Mal. 3:6)

*The Lord always loves in fullness, always. He has to be 100% true to who He is in everything He does and says. If He were ever less than 100% true to love, true to wisdom, true to the righteousness, true to goodness, if He were 1% less, He would deny Himself. Therefore His love actually can never grow, and it never diminishes because it is infinite in its measure and it is eternal in its duration.*

* 1. The Father always loves His people in the way that He loves Jesus because He only loves in fullness. He does not withhold His love when a sincere believer stumbles or struggles with sin.

*Paragraph N. God loves His people in the way that He loves Jesus, because the Father only loves in fullness. That is the only way He can love. That is the only way Jesus loves us, in fullness. God does not withhold His love in our lives when we struggle with sin or we stumble. He does not withhold His love because we struggle.*

* 1. Our spiritual immaturity does not affect the way He feels about us. He never loves us less in this age than He will love us in the age to come, when we live in the perfection of the resurrected state. We *experience more* of His love as we mature spiritually, but He does not love us more.

*Paragraph O. Our spiritual immaturity does not affect the way He feels about us. He never loves us less in this age than He will love us a million years from now in the perfection of the resurrection. He cannot increase in love because He is love. He is fullness. Now the key phrase here that I want you to grasp: we experience more of that love as we grow, as we mature spiritually. It does not change how He feels. It changes how we receive it and how we appreciate it and enter into it. But He does not love us more when we are in the perfection of the resurrection.*

*He loved us, and He gave His Son for us. We said yes to Him, and His love was set upon us. Our hearts are awestruck when we grow with the understanding of this mystery of love that is rooted in the Trinity. Beloved, it is an indescribably glorious, infinite mystery. We will never exhaust it. We will never get to the bottom of it. We will always be growing in it. A million years from now we will still be enjoying the way the Father and the Son relate to each other and how They relate to us and even how we relate to one another in the overflow of that reality.*

* 1. Our hearts are awestruck as we grow in our understanding of the mystery of the love in the Trinity. Each Person in the Trinity enjoys an eternal, mutual relationship of love, humility, and unity. They delight in using their authority to serve and honor each Other (Jn. 5:23; 8:49-54; 12:26; 13:31-32; 14:12; 17:1, 4-5, 22, 24) and have a satisfying relationship with each Other (Mt. 11:27; 1 Cor. 2:10).

*Our hearts are awestruck as we grow even a little bit. We only grow a little bit here and there, but a little bit of this goes a long way. What I want to do is move people from the place of feeling, “Well, I don’t really get it, but, hey, I’ll get it when I am standing before the Lord.” Beloved, it is our inheritance* ***in this age*** *to drink deeply of this river of pleasure. David called it a river of pleasure in Psalm 36.*

*When God reveals God to the human heart, when God imparts His own love in the human heart, that is called the river of pleasure, according to David. The mystery of the love in the Trinity—each person in the Trinity: Father, Son, and Spirit—they enjoy this mutual relationship of love, humility, unity, and it goes on and on. It is a big subject. I am only pointing at it, just kind of drawing attention to it. They delight in using Their power to serve and honor each other. The Father delights to honor the Son. The Spirit delights to honor the Father. They delight to honor us. They delight to serve us. What? It is in Their hearts. It is Their nature. They do not act as servants at the core of Their being. They are wholehearted love. They are wholehearted servanthood. They love to give honor, and when we understand God cannot deny Himself, He cannot be any other way. It begins to dawn on us that maybe this is real.*

* 1. Each person of the Trinity fully enjoys and engages in the relationship with the Others. Jesus has joy and enthusiasm in His love for the Father and is moved in loving Him and in being loved by Him. Jesus’ love is never mechanical, and He is never bored in His relationship with the Father.
	2. Imagine how enjoyable fellowship in the Trinity is and how we will enjoy participating in it!

*Paragraph R. This is the treasure hunt we are on all of our life in this age, the age to come. Imagine how enjoyable the fellowship is within the Trinity! Imagine—man, I am taking this personally—how we can enjoy participating in it, even now in this age. We will never get to the fullness in this age, but we can participate in this now. When we understand the way the Father and the Son relate, that is this first truth, the way God loves God.*

*Jesus only introduced it by saying, “As the Father loves Me.” Again, He could say that there is a vast reality there, go dig deep, go on that treasure hunt. As I touch this, as you touch it, just a little bit—a little bit again of this goes a long way—it creates hope in us. It creates hunger in us. When it touches me a little bit, it creates confidence that by meditating and talking to the Spirit, I can grow more. It gives me security.*

*Beloved, for billions of years, our family is secure forever. There is no divorce. There is no breakup of the family. There is no disenfranchising of the family. It is forever like this, and it just like becomes an anchor of hope and strength. Again, it creates hope. It creates hunger, creates confidence, creates security. I want to go in. I want to go further in this reality.*

1. Father’s love for Jesus (Jn. 15:9; 17:26)
	1. The Father’s love for Jesus is the highest affection conceivable (Jn. 3:35; 5:20; 10:17; 15:9; 17:23, 24, 26). Search out statements that depict the Father’s love for Jesus such as He puts all things into Jesus’ hand (3:35; 17:10) and reveals all things to Him (5:20). He loved Jesus *before* the foundation of the world (17:24) and releases His own love for Jesus into the lives of the redeemed (17:26).

35“The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand.” (Jn. 3:35)

20“For the Father loves the Son and shows Him all things that He Himself does…” (Jn. 5:20)

24“…You loved Me before the foundation of the world…26I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them…” (Jn. 17:24-26)

*Roman numeral two. Truth number one, the Father’s love for Jesus. Jesus said, “As the Father loves Me,” and again, that is the big subject of how God loves God and all of its facets. That is what He is really pointing to: the Father’s love for Jesus as the highest affection conceivable. We cannot even imagine the intensity of the fullness of it.*

*So I am going to give you a “Holy Spirit” assignment. It is my assignment, and I am going to say it to you, too. Search out the statements that depict the Father’s love for Jesus from Genesis to Revelation. Don’t do a rapid-fire study. Search it out. Go on a lifelong treasure hunt.*

*I want to see more and search it out. There are many verses. The two I have here is that the Father says, “I have given all things into the hand of the Son. I reveal all things to My Son.” In His humanity is what He is talking about when He says this to Jesus. It is about Jesus in His humanity. Jesus is fully God, but Jesus in His humanity is when the Father says, “I give everything to You.” We are going to find out in a few moments that Paul the apostle in other verses says Jesus gives all things to us. It is remarkable, the glory story is.*

*Jesus said in John 17:24, in effect, “Before the foundation of the world, My Father loved Me. He loved me with this intensity, and the Father is so committed to loving Me in this way He is going to impart it supernaturally to the redeemed.” Look at verse 26. Jesus said, “Father, the love with which You love Me, supernaturally impart it to them.” That is, “You are so committed to loving Me, You are going to fill the created order. You are going to fill the redeemed families, and what I mean is with people that love Me like You do.”*

*Beloved, this is our inheritance, but what I want you to see is the Father’s passion for Jesus in committing to impart that love into our weak and broken lives and hearts. Again, we can grow in this a lot in this age, not in fullness, but a whole lot more than we are growing now. The Lord would say, “Thank Me for this and ask Me to show you more.”*

*That is the phrase I have repeated week after week on Friday nights. In each one of these truths are these promises. Instead of just thinking, “Wow,” stop and turn it into conversation. Say, “Thank you. Show me more.” Then the Lord will give more, and a few more phrases will come out just as you are talking to the Lord. Meaning, turn these promises into living conversations or ongoing conversation with the Lord. Even a little bit of conversation will move your heart forward. Do not just see it and think, “Yes.” Bring it into conversation with Him.*

* 1. The Father spoke of His love for Jesus at His baptism (Mt. 3:17), just before His temptation in the wilderness, and again during the transfiguration (Mt. 17:5) before Jesus went to the cross. We need insight into our “belovedness” as we face temptations or deny ourselves in sacrificial obedience.

17…suddenly a voice…saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Mt. 3:17)

* 1. The Father and Son have made eternal commitments to each Other. The Father committed to give Jesus the preeminence in everything. He works so that all creation *obeys* and *honors* Jesus and all the saints *love* Him (1 Cor. 15:24-26; *cf.* Ps. 110:1-3; Eph. 1:20-22; Phil. 2:9-11; Col 1:18).

18He is the head of the body…that in all things He may have the preeminence. (Col. 1:18)

*Paragraph C: The Father and the Son have made eternal commitments to each other. The list is long. I put just one or two here. One of the things the Father has committed to the Son is that the Son would have preeminence over everything. The Father says, “Son, I am going to give You everything that within My wisdom and in My love that I can give you. I am going to give you everything in preeminence. Every knee will bow. Every tongue will confess. Demons and unbelievers will bow and acknowledge Your leadership. You will be supreme in everything.”*

*The point I want us to see is the delight of the Father and the Son, but it does not end there because Jesus said in the same intensity, a different application, that He loves us in the same wholeheartedness*

* 1. The Father’s love for Jesus is the measure and assurance of Jesus’ love for His disciples. We thank God for the intense, pleasurable, infinite way that He loves Jesus—we ask to Him to show us more! The details of Their relationship give us insight into Jesus’ beauty, supremacy, and worth.

*Paragraph D. The Father’s love for Jesus is the measure and the assurance of His love and Jesus’ love for us. The way the Father loves the Son is the measure of how Jesus loves. Like, what? Beloved, we cannot climb that mountain of truth without a Holy Spirit escort, and the Holy Spirit will give much more to those who determine they cannot go on without more of this. So we pause. We thank Him. “Father, thank You for the intense pleasurable, infinite way You love Jesus. Show me more. Thank You for the way You delight to love Him. Show me more.”*

*He would say, “Okay. Keep talking to Me. I will show you more.”*

*“Give me little glimpses when I read the Word.” I take those glimpses into the conversation and say, “Show me more there.”*

*The Lord could say, “Okay. Put your seatbelt on. I have a lot to tell you about this.”*

*If you determine that you are hungry for the details of Their relationship—Father, Son, and Spirit—together give us insight into Jesus’s beauty. We get insight to His supremacy, into His worthiness, His worth and how worthy He is. As we read each episode of the Bible—because the whole Bible is about the Son at the end of the day if you can see it in there—when we read—and I am going to challenge you to read the Gospels and go on a treasure hunt—in every episode, pause when you see a detail about how the Father and Son interact or the Spirit, pause, do not go quickly. “I do not get it, but thank You. Thank You. This is true. Show me more, just phrase by phrase.” I do not mean every phrase of every line in the Gospels, but every episode.*

*The Father is saying, as it were, “If you want to see how I feel about My Son and how He feels about Me, how the Spirit feels, stop and talk to Me. I will give you a little whispers, little hints.”*

*I want to know how You work together, how You relate together, and He would say, “Ask Me, and I will tell you more.”*

1. Jesus loves the Father
	1. Search out the statements that depict Jesus’ love for, honor of, and obedience to the Father
	(Jn. 5:19; 6:38; 8:28; 14:31; 15:10; 17:10). Search out how Jesus loves and honors the Spirit, etc.

10“…I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.” (Jn. 15:10)

*Roman numeral three, ever so brief. How Jesus loves the Father. My point isn’t to give an in-depth teaching of how the Father loves Jesus, how Jesus loves the Father, and how the Spirit loves Jesus, how the Spirit loves the Father. My point is to point to that mountain. We have the four gospels. We have the epistles. We have the Old Testament. There is more than we think. There are hints and whispers of it all through Genesis to Revelation.*

*So I want to encourage you to search out statements. Search out statements that depict Jesus and His love and obedience to the Father. Search out how Jesus honors the Spirit.*

*Again, that first phrase, “As the Father loves me,” is a mountain of truth. He is saying many implications. Go search it out. I want to leave you with that hunger, even a frustration, even a desperation, even an, “Ah, I do not get it.” Good. Good. Keep going. Keep it all in that. That is how it starts. “I don’t know. It is out of reach.” Okay. Okay. Talk to God, “God, this is out of reach.”*

*He would say, “Just keep talking to Me. Read phrases, then bring them into conversation with Me.”*

* 1. Jesus exhorted His disciples to see His death as an expression of His love for the Father (14:31). Jesus’ obedience unto death was the most costly display of love for the Father in history. Jesus’ declaration *“I love the  Father”* will be stamped over His story forever.

30“…for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me…31But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do.” (Jn. 14:30-31)

*Paragraph B. Just before John 15, Jesus exhorted the disciples to see how His death was actually an expression of His love for the Father. It is the phrase before John 15. John 14 ends with them at the last supper, sitting around the table. Jesus said, in effect, “I want you to know you are potentially going to be confused before the night is over. I want you to know the devil is coming in the person of Judas and the Roman guards, but I want you to know the devil has nothing; he has no advantage over Me. He did not trick Me. This is My plan. I came of My own sent by the Father, not by the devil. Do not be confused. Give it some time”—and He means 2000 years. When He returns, look at this—“the whole world will know I did this because I love the Father and not that the devil had any gain over me at all. This was an expression of love for the Father.” They do not even know what He is talking about. “I want to say this,” Jesus declares. I love the sentence which He will stamp all of history for billions of years after He returns: everyone will know it. He knew 2000 years ago that everyone would see it was about His love for the Father. He stamps history, “I loved the Father. That is what I was about.”*

* 1. After “the end” or after the 1,000-year millennial reign when all kingdoms of the world and all the spheres of society are openly obeying Jesus’ leadership, “then” Jesus will submit all of them and Himself to the Father as an expression of His love for the Father (1 Cor. 15:24-28).

24Then comes the end [of the Millennium] , when He [Jesus] delivers the kingdom to God the Father…28When all things are made subject to Him [Jesus during the Millennium], then the
Son Himself will be subject to Him [the Father]…that God may be all in all. (1 Cor. 15:24-28)

*In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul captured what I think is one of the greatest statements of Jesus’s love for the Father. Paul says in verse 24, “Then comes the end”—meaning the end of the millennial kingdom, the end of the thousand-year reign—“and Jesus with everything He gains in bringing every nation and city and every sphere of society under His leadership—it is all His. He earned it all by His own obedience and wisdom—He is going to gain it all and then He is going to deliver it to His Father.”*

*Paul said, as it were, in verse 28, “Let me say it again. When everything is made subject to Jesus”—and it is talking about Jesus in his humanity, the Son of David—“when every demon in hell, every unbeliever, every believer, everyone sees everything is submitted to Jesus”—that is at the end of the millennial kingdom, it is all wide open—“Then the Son will subject Himself to the Father and say, ‘It is all for You, Father. It was about You, Father, being all in all.” This was Jesus’s most compelling goal. He wanted the Father to be all in all of all the human beings. It says in Revelation 5:9 in the New American Standard that He came and shed His blood and purchased men for God. “Father, I love them, but I want them to love You. I am doing this for You.” I mean, what a glorious story!*

1. Jesus loves his disciples (Jn. 15:9)
	1. Jesus declared that He loves the redeemed in the intensity that His Father loves Him (Jn. 15:9). The way the Father and the Son loves us is the ultimate statement of the worth of every believer. This truth gives every believer the right to view themselves as “God’s favorite.” John called himself “the disciple whom the Lord loves” (Jn. 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20).

9“As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.” (Jn. 15:9)

*Jesus loves His disciples. Again, in this message I am just giving you kind of the headlines of what to search out, but really John 13 to 17 is loaded with headlines. I mean, there are so many power-packed implications in phrase after phrase after phrase. I have never had such an enjoyable time in the Lord. I remember when I first began to touch the Lord’s heart in Song of Solomon in the nineties, I thought, “Wow, this is a whole glorious reality!” The passage I want to quote over and over is Psalm 36. David said, “Let me drink of the river of Your pleasure.” Beloved, I do not believe there is any pleasure greater than what God will reveal about God in John 13 to 17.*

*So now we are going to phrase number two. “In the same way the Father loved Me, I have loved you.” Now you know that very night He told all of them this, a few moments later, Matthew 26:30, “All of you are going to abandon Me tonight. Every one of you.” So Jesus is not saying, “I love you like the Father loves Me because I have some idealism about your commitment. I know you are going to come up short, but you do not know who I am and therefore you do not know who you are. Until you know who the Father and I are together, you will never know who you are to Me, and therefore you will never know who you are really.” You will always think you are just going through life’s struggles and difficulties and nobody is paying attention or honoring you. He said, in effect, “Do you know who you are to Me?”*

*The way the Father and the Son love us is the ultimate statement of the worth of every believer. Again, if I do not see a little bit of how Father and Son love each other, it will be hard for me to even be open to grow in believing He loves me that way. Like, really? I will never know who I am, then I will never know who you are and who we are together forever. It changes our view of life and of the redeemed. Things can be going hard and with difficulties, but there is a big narrative and we are all a part of it.*

*I love to say this. When Jesus said, “I love you like the Father loves Me,” this gives every believer the right to see themselves as God’s favorite. I have said this for years and people always get that it is kind of cute, but it is more than cute.*

*I say, “Jesus, if you love me like the Father loves You, I am Your favorite.”*

*“Well, a billion other people are My favorite.”*

*“That is good. That doesn’t bother me. I am glad for them to be Your favorite, but I am not going to let go of who I am to You just because You feel the same way about a billion other people. That is good.”*

*I have made this comment over the years, that John the apostle was the only one who talked about himself as the one that God loved. I mean, Peter and James, they were all there around the table. John is the only one who said it. In the Gospel of John, whenever he talks about himself five times, he never says, “I” or “John.” He says, “The one God loved ran with Peter.” The one God loved.*

*I imagine Peter and all these guys in the age to come and I want to ask, “Why didn’t you guys say that? Why didn’t you say that?”*

*They might say, “Well, John was always trying to get right next to the Lord. You know, he always wanted to be there at His right hand.”*

*John said, “I am running with this.” I do not know the real dynamics, but I know this. It is yours if you want it. Beloved, this is not cute. This is real.*

* 1. Scripture emphasized Jesus’ desire to be with us (Lk. 23:43; Jn. 12:26; 14:3; 17:24; 1 Thes. 4:17; Heb. 10:22). Jesus wants us near Him as His partners in filling the earth with the Father’s glory. Revelation 3:21 is one of the most dramatic statements related to our function in the age to come.

24“Father, I desire that they…be with Me where I am that they may behold My glory” (Jn. 17:24)

21“To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne…” (Rev. 3:21)

*Paragraph B. Scripture emphasizes Jesus’ desire to be with us. Look what He said in John 17. He was about to die hours later. He said, “Father, I desire that they be with Me.” Wait, Jesus! You are about to go into the most cruel suffering humanly conceivable in a number of hours, and what You are crying out is, “I want them with Me”?*

*He said in Revelation 3—I mean, it is almost inconceivable and is the most dramatic statement about our function forever—Jesus said, “You will sit with Me on My throne.” Like, nobody has the right to say that besides Jesus.*

*Well, Jesus, You don’t really mean that?*

*He would say, “Yeah, I do. I want you to rule with Me.” I mean, He is the preeminent! No one ever touches that category. “I want you with Me. Do you see who you are to Me?”*

* 1. The Lord has given “all things” to His family and prepared glorious things for us (1 Cor. 2:9; 3:22). We will be together with Jesus forever in a paradise that includes beautiful light, weather, agriculture, architecture with glorious décor, art, and furnishings with fragrance, music, food, etc.

22whether…the world or life or death, or things present or to come—all are yours. (1 Cor. 3:22)

9…“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.” (1 Cor. 2:9)

18[sufferings]…are not worthy to be compared with the glory…[to be] revealed in us. (Rom. 8:18)

*Paragraph C: Paul picked up on this phrase of John 3:35. I mentioned a few minutes ago where the Father gave everything to the Son. Well, in 1 Corinthians 3:22, Paul says everything has been given to the redeemed. It is the same passion. Now there are different applications of this, but it is in His heart. Everything He wants for us. Like what? What does this mean? Paul says also in the very same 1 Corinthians, in 2:9, “Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, it has never entered the heart of a human being, the height of the glory of what God has planned.” It is beyond anything you could imagine.*

*Here is the point I want you to catch. I want you to catch that Jesus, with all power and all preeminence, has planned something so glorious for you. That is who you are to Him. It is not just for them. He has planned it for you. Paul talked about it in Romans 8. He said, “Yes, we have sufferings. We are persecuted. We are rejected, but it is not worthy to compare. That Man has planned such extravagance for us. We are in His heart. He is giving everything to us now.” Obviously there are qualifiers on what that means, with the rest of Scripture, but it is extravagant. Paul was saying that you cannot imagine what that Man has planned for you. The devil is a liar, you know.*

*So I just put down a thought or two here, when I think of how soon He is returning and we are going to all be with Them in paradise. Beloved, you are going to be in a context of so much beauty in all the magnificent multifaceted type of lights and colors. The weather is going to be awesome, always. For real, and the agriculture in the garden of Eden is beyond anything you could imagine. This is more than fun or cute. This is real. This is you forever. You are going to be in the mix. You are going to be in context with the architecture that is so beautiful. The food is so glorious. The music everywhere, the fragrance. We are talking everything that you touch will inspire you, and you are going to be there for billions and billions and billions of years. Jesus said, “In the way the Father loved Me, I have plans for you because I love you. You do not know who you are outside of knowing how the Father loves Me and how I love you.” You certainly cannot know who the people around you really are.*

* 1. What if the sovereign King was not full of love, goodness, and kindness towards His people but instead was full of anger and torment like Satan, the god of this world?

28And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God… (Rom. 8:28)

13…for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness… (Joel 2:13)

6He…made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7that in the ages to come
He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us… (Eph. 2:6-7)

*This is a wonderful thing, paragraph D. It looks kind of horrible, but it is wonderful. I stop, and I think—and I do not say “what if” like it could be—I think, “What if the absolute Sovereign was not filled with kindness? What if the absolute Sovereign was filled with anger?” I stop and I say, “Lord, it is indescribably glorious that the absolute sovereign King is filled with tenderness and goodness. Oh, this is so good. Thank you, Lord! Show me more.”*

*If it was opposite, it would be…We cannot fathom it. We do not have to fathom it, but we need to stop and recognize how glorious it is. We can easily take it for granted because we are in the humdrum of life and pressures are real. It is easy for me to lose sight of this. That is why I want to get it back in my mouth over and over again. Paul says it the best in Ephesians 2:6-7. I am just going to declare Ephesians 2:6-7. He said the Father has made us to sit together with Jesus in heavenly places. The reason He is doing this is He wants to openly display in the age to come the riches of His kindness towards you. The Father says, as it were, “I want to show all of created order how kind I have been to you.” I gain more insight on statements like that when I camp out on these three phrases in John 15:9: the way God loves God is the way God loves me.*

1. abide in love: the most imporant commandment (Jn. 15:9)
	1. We are to abide in or *stay focused on* living in His love with much conversation with Him around these two truths in John 15:9a, b. We are to search them out by prioritizing time to study, reflect on, and to speak to Him about the two truths in 15:9. This is to be the primary preoccupation of our life before, during, and after revival. This command beckons us to become lifelong students of “how the Father loves the Son” which also gives us insight into how the Father and Jesus love us.

9“As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.” (Jn. 15:9)

*Then, Roman numeral five, Jesus gives what I consider the most important commandment in the Bible. Again, you could put a few on that list, but this is my list. He said, “Abide in this love.” What He means is living in it; what He means is stay focused on the two truths of God loves God, and God loves you with all of His heart. Stay focused on those truths.*

*Now we all have different assignments in different seasons in our spiritual life. Over the years as I walk with the Lord and, you know, in three and five and eight-year periods, you get an assignment to go after something in a focused way. The Lord would say those assignments are important, but none of those assignments are to replace this one of abiding and staying focused on this revelation of love. That is what abide in love means. It means stay locked in on it, search out these two truths that Jesus just said. Search them out, study them, talk to others over the years. Many of you do, and it is good.*

*I want to learn from anybody— men and women through history—that could teach me more about how God loves God or how God loves me. I do not care if it is the 12th century, the 8th century, if it is the 16th century, if it is men, if it is women, if they are monks or kings. I do not care who they are. If they have insight and a teaching anointing on them, I want to learn from history. Meaning, I do not want to just know what we know. I want to search out the larger Body of Christ. I have put a lot of energy over the years searching out the subjects. I want more, but I want to urge you to do the same thing. There are many teachers through history, many teachers in the Body of Christ, and I believe many more are going to raise up with these themes.*

*Search them out. Do not be happy to get a quick run by or drive by. Say, “I am going to study.” I have read these guys from all the different places of history and I will get a key paragraph here and a key paragraph there. It is worth everything to me. Search it out because I have understood abide in love as a commandment to stay locked into these truths. This includes prioritizing time to study them. Beloved, you are not going to get this on the run. All of us are hammered with demands on our life. All of us have a small amount of discretionary time we can do things with. The Lord said, “Stay locked into this. Abide and live engaged with Me on these truths about love.”*

*This very commandment beckons us to be lifelong students of how the Father loves the Son. I want to be a lifelong student about this. I want to learn from anybody that I could get it from. I pick up little one-liners all the time in the prayer room. I will be reading and studying. I like to journal. I am a journal fanatic, and I want to write what I am getting because it grows when I write it. The singers will sing a phrase and I think, “Perfect! Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.” It is not just us. it is history and the teaching anointing in history. There are many deposits made by the Father and the Son and the Spirit into the family of God through history. I want to learn this stuff.*

*I have encouraged folks that this is our life preoccupation before revival, during revival, after revival. Folks say, “I am all for revival.”*

*I say, “Well, you have to abide in this, engage in this, before the revival. Engage in it during the revival, and engage in it after revival.” So no matter what, this needs to be your number one preoccupation. It is not your only one, but do not let this become second, third, fourth, and fifth. For many believers, it is not even on their priority list to abide in this love and to study it, to engage in it, to search it out, to talk about it, to pray about it, to pass it on to others. That is what it means to abide in this love.*

* 1. Abiding starts with words. Simple phrases spoken to God can shift our emotions. Over time, what He thinks, feels, says, and does gradually fills our hearts. I see a 5 part process—***knowledge*** (Bible truths), ***conversation***(with God), ***illumination***(new insights), ***inspiration***(renewed motivation to obey), and then ***transformation*** (new emotions and thoughts) which are satisfying and pleasurable.

*Paragraph B: Abiding in this love and staying focused in it begins with simple phrases. We stop and say simple phrases to God. Again, “Thank You for this truth”—whatever the truth is—“that You give all things to Jesus. Thank You. Show me more. I do not know what that means. That is a big one or He would not have said it. Holy Spirit, do You know more about that verse that the Father gives all things to Jesus?”*

*“Yeah, I do actually. Ask me.”*

*“Thank you. Show me more.” Over time what the Spirit is thinking and feeling about these subjects will grow in us. It will shift our emotions. A lot of folks have emotions that are just stuck in darkness, even though they are very sincere for the Lord. They are trying through their own kind of determination to be dedicated, to overcome dark emotions. We have got to enter into this other conversation as our way. I do not mean that all dark emotions all disappear forever, but there is a power over them. It is the pleasure, the drinking of the river of pleasure.*

*I see a five-part process. First we know these truths. We study these truths. I gave you a bunch of them right here. You have a bunch of them. We start with intellectual* ***knowledge*** *of the truth, but then if it ends there, it ends there. We turn that truth into* ***conversation*** *with God. “Thank You, Holy Spirit. Show me more.” Then, when you do that, little sparks of living understanding, just little ones come. I call that* ***illumination****. The little lightning flashes from having the phrases one here, one there—they are normally not a very big, but—we capture them and, these little whispers, we write them down. I do not want to go to a prayer meeting without my books open. I want to write the phrases. I want to capture them. I do not always go back and read what I wrote, but if I write it, more happens. It ignites zeal in our soul for God. That is called* ***inspiration****. When those little flashes of insight come I think, “Yeah, I am going to go all the way. Yeah.” It creates inspiration. You call it zeal or motivation to go deeper. You know what that ends up as? It is* ***transformation****. Little by little, we have new emotions and new thoughts and a little bit of new emotions and new thoughts goes a long way.*

*Well, amen and amen. We are going to end with that.*

*I want to encourage you for these eighty to a hundred Friday nights as we are doing for the next two years line by line: you do not have to be in every meeting. We have them all in archives with the notes of transcripts. Find ones that touch your heart and search them out. Find other places in the Body of Christ. Search out these truths. Do not be content to let a few folks go deep. You think, “Well, praise God, they are going deep, and, you know, Dana Candler is writing books on it, and one day I will kind of go deep.” No, I want everyone to go deep. I do not want it to just be ten or twenty teachers or worship leaders or singers. I want it to be hundreds of the community going deep.*

*Father, here we are before You. Here we are before You. I ask you for truth number one, Father, the way You love Jesus, show me more. Thank You. I want to know more, Holy Spirit. Truth number two. That is how You love me. Thank You that You love me. Thank You that You love me that way You love Jesus. Show me more.*

*Beloved, when was the last time you thanked Jesus for loving you like the Father loves Him? Abide, and that is actually a commandment. Go deep in this subject and do not move on. Yes, take on other subjects, but do not ever replace this as your number one preoccupation in your conversation with God.*

*So Father, we say, yes, we say, yes, we say yes, we love You. Our hearts are hungry. Lord, I am even painful about how little I know of this, but I am so hopeful and hungry for more. We say, thank You that we are in a community that cares about these subjects. I ask you for the Spirit of grace to come in now across this room. I ask for a spirit of grace to come across this room through those little flashes of inspiration, those little marks of the heart that say, “Yeah, this is for me.”*

*Beloved, if you leave in a moment here with just a little bit more of a resolve, “I think this is for me,” that is the Spirit’s work in you. That is not you. If you think this is for you, the Spirit just moved on you tonight, because that is how it begins. This is for me. This is for me. I am doing it. I won’t do it great, but I am going to keep doing it. Amen and amen.*