

At Home with Jesus

#0701

Study given by W.D. Frazee—June 19, 1964

In John 14 I suppose most of us think of the wonderful promise in verses 1-3 where Jesus tells us He will come again. It is indeed a thrilling and a heartwarming assurance. But the coming of Jesus in glory is preceded by the coming that we will study.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in My name, I will do it. If ye love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwells with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.”
John 14:12-18.

Is this the coming He speaks of in the third verse? No. This is a different coming. We must experience the coming of the eighteenth verse if we are to know the joy of the third verse.

The disciples had been like children with Jesus. As a loving Father He had cared for them, trained them, disciplined them, and guided them. Now He said He was going away. But He told them not to fear or be discouraged, and don't think they were going to be left orphans, as the margin says.

“Yet a little while, and the world sees Me no more; but ye see Me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you. He that hath My commandments, and keeps them, he it is that loves Me: and he that loves Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him” John 14:19-21.

Notice the disciples had a hard time grasping how Jesus could leave them and go to the Father and yet be with them.

“Judas saith unto Him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us, and not unto the world?” John 14:22.

How is this going to be? You say You are going away and the world will not see you anymore, but we will see You and know You. How is that? They didn't understand it.

“Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him.” John 14:23-24.

What an intimate relationship. We are told that John wrote this Gospel after he had received the wonderful revelations that he wrote in the last book of the New Testament. And these words seem strangely and sweetly like that wonderful appeal in the Laodicean message:

“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me” Revelation 3:20.

The figure is the same. The experience is the same. Jesus wants to live with us. He associates His Father with Himself in this desire. He has already associated the Spirit. The Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit all desire to live with us. How much closer this is than that wonderful fellowship the twelve enjoyed when Jesus was here in the flesh. The Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit all living within us is something closer. The Revised Standard translates this last clause of John 14:23, “We will make Our home with him.”

Where does Jesus live? Does He live in your heart? That is His plan. That is His desire. We have an idiom of the English language of people being at home. We say, “Make yourself at home.” Somebody says, Well, I feel at home here. We all understand what that means. It is a feeling of belonging, of being wanted, of being accepted, and of being at home.

That is the way Jesus would like to feel in your heart. He is coming not for a brief visit. Not for a social call. Not for a week-end. He wants to live with you forever. And by the Spirit this is made possible for everyone. Notice the relationship between the Spirit and the Word:

“If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it. If ye love me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwells with you, and shall be in you” John 14:14-17.

Notice that the promise of the Spirit living in our hearts is dependent upon our entering into the willingness to keep His commandments. Just as Jesus and the Father are always in harmony, so the Spirit is in perfect harmony with Father and the Son. And we can never get the favor of one if we despise the other; we can never

receive the Spirit while we despise or neglect the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

The three are in perfect harmony. If we want the Spirit in our hearts we must open our hearts to the Word of God, the law of God, the commandments of God, and the testimony of our Lord.

In verse 23 Jesus says, "If a man love Me, he will keep My words." The obedience Christ values is based upon love. That is the only obedience that is worth a nickel to our Lord. But may I add that the only love that is worth anything is the love that is manifested in obedience.

"But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" Matthew 15:9.

True love will be manifested in obedience, for love seeks to please. Jesus says, Do you love Me. Do you want to please Me. Just do what I say.

There are certain well-defined and well presented commandments that are designed to keep us from getting clear off the road to heaven. They are briefly comprehended in the Ten Commandments.

For example, God says, "Thou shall not kill." If a man commits murder, he is off the highway to heaven. "Thou shall not steal." If a man steals, he is off the highway to heaven. So we have other well defined, clearly explained commands that are like a great barrier between us and going over the precipice to eternal ruin.

We might think of the two tables of the law as two fences, one on either side of the highway. Here is a fence on this side to keep us from the precipice. There is a fence on that side to keep us from the precipice. By the way, is the path we travel cast high above the world? Yes. If we get off the path, what are we going to do? We are going to fall. Babylon is fallen. If we are where we belong we will not be looking up to it, we will be looking down at it, because it is fallen.

But the thing to keep us from falling is God's word. Thou shall not worship images. Thou shall not do any work on the Sabbath. Thou shall not steal. Thou shall not commit adultery. Thou shall not covet. All these are barriers to keep us on the path. I would like to suggest to you that within the confines of the commands that deal with those flagrant transgressions there are closer restrictions for the heart that love has touched. And those restrictions are for those who want them. Those confining, guiding influences are for those who desire them.

Let me illustrate. "Thou shall not kill." What is back of that commandment? It is love. Love for God who made man. Love for our fellow men because they are made in the image of God. But when Jesus magnifies the law He shows us that commandment is broken by what? Anger. He who hates his brother is a murderer.

I would like to come much closer than that. If love is the reason we do not kill, and if love is the reason we do not even get angry, will not that love lead us to devote our lives to saving the lives of others? If we love as Jesus loved, can we be

content to merely pass along assured that we have neither murdered our brother nor even hated him? Will not love lead us to devote the life in service to others as Jesus did? Was it not the spirit of the Sixth Commandment that caused Jesus to leave heaven and come down to this world to give His life for His murderers, and ask His Father to forgive them for they know not what they do?

My point is, the Holy Spirit will lead the heart that is willing to be led to what looks like a much narrower pathway than merely avoiding murder or avoiding anger. It will lead to a sacrificial, self-sacrificing, self-denying way of life. What for? Not to be ministered unto, but to give our life for others, a ransom for many. The Holy Spirit alone can interpret that to each heart.

The fellowship that Jesus is trying to describe is one in which there is communication between Jesus and us, and between us and Jesus. Think of it. Jesus has come into the heart. We say in the early morning, Oh Jesus, I am so glad You are still here with me. What can I do for you today? What can I do to please you? Jesus will not say, Be sure you don't kill anybody, and don't get angry with anybody? Aside from that go ahead and do as you please. He will not say, If you want to get rich, or if you have any selfish plans you want to carry out, go ahead and do it, but just be sure you don't kill anyone and don't steal from anyone and don't hate anyone.

Oh, no. In the silence of the heart that love that has touched Jesus begins to make the way narrower and narrower. He begins to cut off extravagances here, indulgences there.

You say, That is the trouble.

Yes, that is the trouble with many a weary heart. And if all you think is that it is a list of restrictions, it would be very wearisome and burdensome.

But Jesus says, If a man love Me, he will keep My word. Love delights to please. Love finds joy in that fellowship. So to the converted heart, the born again heart, there is actual pleasure in the thought that here is something Jesus has asked me to give up for Him so that I might more efficiently and effectually work for others.

Isn't that the spirit of the sixth commandment? Yes. Take every one of the commandments and rejoice in the fact that the Holy Spirit will take that commandment and, as far as your life is concerned, bring it to focus more and more upon an unselfish, sacrificial, self-denying experience.

Someone was calling my attention to a most interesting discovery someone had made in the Spirit of Prophecy about the picture idols that line the walls and cover the mantels and pianos in many homes. The photographs of friends and relatives and loved ones. Faces. Human faces. Did you ever read about it in *Messages to Young People*?

But when the Spirit of Prophecy deals with that subject, do you know what the text is? "Thou shall not have any other God's before Me." Where did that come from? It is the First Commandment.

Let me tell you, it isn't for me to go into somebody's home and pull the picture off the piano or off the mantel, is it? No. It isn't even for me to go into that house and start talking to them about it. But somewhere along the line the same Spirit that inspired the Lord's messenger to write an article in *Messages to Young People* is going to be talking to the human heart about it. And then is the time for the response of love to say, Oh Jesus, I am so glad You are impressing my heart about that. I want the people who come into my home to see no man but Jesus. I want the things in and around my house and yard and in my life to be of such a nature that attention will be directed to Jesus the Creator rather than the creature.

You say, That is a little thing. Well if you think that is a little thing, I leave it with you. But study it. My subject is not pictures. My subject is not getting angry. My subject is not any of these details. My subject is the coming of Jesus to the heart before He comes to this earth in power and great glory. He comes to the heart that is open. He comes and says, I want to abide with you. If you love Me, let Me in. If you love Me, keep My commandments. If you love Me, keep My words.

There are these great outstanding commandments nobody can misunderstand or misapply. People certainly shouldn't. But remember that between the confines of those prohibitions there is a narrower road which you must not define for others, which you must make no attempt to outline for others, but which the light of the Word will illuminate for you as you walk in the light of the Lord's suggestions. Love above will seek the response of love below. Love in the heart of Jesus will seek the reflection of love in your human heart. And happy is the one who has learned to say moment by moment, Dear Lord, what is it You want me to do? And let the answer be very simple. Do what you think will please Him.

We have one of those marvelous statements that opens up a great room of blessings. Listen:

“If the followers of Christ were but earnest seekers after wisdom, they would be led into rich fields of truth that are as yet wholly unknown to them. He who will give himself fully to God will be guided by the divine hands. He may be lowly and apparently not gifted; yet if with a loving, trusting heart he obeys every intimation of God's will, his powers will be purified, ennobled, energized, and his capabilities will be increased” *Acts of the Apostles*, page 283.

What is an intimation? It is something a little different than a thou shall not steal or a thou shall not kill. Those are not intimations. Those are plain unqualified commands. They ought to be. They are to keep us from going over the precipice.

But for the loving heart there is something far within those prohibitions that deal with the outward flagrant transgressions. And therein lies the beauty of this. The child of God who will stay in that narrow beam of light, doing not merely what is required but what He thinks will please the Master in the very best way, will never get anywhere near that precipice where he might fall to eternal ruin.

Let's state it in another way. Long before a man goes over that precipice, whether a murderer or adulterer or liar, he has been violating his conscience in the details of Christian living. Mark it, it is always so. There is no exception to it. The precipice is no temptation for the earnest true Christian who is living in the light of the precious experience we are studying here in Christ's words, "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him" John 14:23.

How sweet it is to love those intimations of His will. When we have somebody with us that we love, we like to please them.

My mind goes back over thirty years ago when my wife and I were first married. Some weeks after the wedding we went on a little trip. Among other places we visited a relative, an aunt of ours.

She let us sleep as late as we wanted to the next morning. Then she came in and said, "What would you like for breakfast?"

I said rather lightly, "Strawberries and cream."

She said, "All right, you shall have strawberries and cream."

Well, I had no idea we would have any, but bless her heart, she went out and got strawberries and cream. Why? She wanted to do something to please us. It was not a requirement. She didn't have to do that. Far from it. But she loved to do it. We were there just for that one morning, and she wanted to do something to please us. Do you see what I mean?

My dear friends, if Jesus comes into our hearts and we love Him, and love to please Him, He won't have to just say, You must do this or you must not do that. It will be the great longing of our heart every morning to find out how we can best please Him. This is summed up beautifully:

"Always be trying to find out what best pleases the Lord"
Ephesians 5:10 (The Twentieth Century translation).

This is the yoke which is easy, and this is the burden that is light. And the paradox of it is that although it is narrower than mere outward conformity, it is also sweeter and less burdensome than merely conforming to those outward restrictions. "My yoke is easy and my burden is light."

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