

If You Love Me . . .

By Jim Golden

“He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.” (NAS)

This is an interesting verse of Scripture presented by Jesus, but let’s read it in another translation, the Contemporary English Version.

“If you love me, you will do what I have said, and my Father will love you. I will also love you and show you what I am like.”

At first glance it looks as though Jesus is suggesting that the proof of our love for him is based on our obedience to his commands, yet I don’t believe that is entirely accurate. Remember what Jesus said in Matthew 22:37-40 — Jesus answered: Love the Lord you God with all your heart, soul and mind. This is the first and most important commandment. The second most important commandment is like this one. And it is, “Love others as much as you love yourself.” All the Law of Moses and the Books of the Prophets are based on the two commandments.

Wow, so his command is to love him, since he is God, if we love him then we are doing what he said. So how do we know if we love him? Jesus basically says that we must love him with all our heart (spirit) soul (emotion) and mind (understanding). It may be easy to say that I am sure I love God in the spirit and with my mind or understanding, but what about the soul or emotions? Ops, if I am honest I have to admit I don’t always have the “feel-good fuzzies” when it come to Jesus or anyone else for that matter. If we define love as the unselfish choice for the greater good of another, I miss the mark there as well. So what are we to do?

John the beloved said this, “We love Him, because He first loved us.” Paul picks up this theme in his letter to the Romans in chapter 5 saying, “... endurance builds character, which gives us hope that will never disappoint us. All of this happens because God has given us the Holy Spirit, who fills our hearts with his love.” I heard a preacher say once that it takes God’s love to love God and I believe that Paul is basically agreeing with that preacher.

We must remember that we were “born-again” or “born from above” because we died with Christ on the cross and we no longer live but Christ lives within us and the life that we now live in these mortal bodies we live by faith in the Son of God who loved us and gave himself for us! Ours is a total identification with our Savior.

In closing out these simple thoughts we must remember,

We don’t obey him to love him but love him to obey him.

And the ability to love him resides within our hearts in the person of the Holy Spirit, because of this we are bathed in the constant love of the Father and the Son which secures for us the promise, “I will show you what I am like.” The old song says it best, “Jesus did it all, all to him I owe...”

The next time some asks you if you love God you can say with confidence, yes with all my heart my soul and my mind, I love my God. Love is my Life, literally, and his name is Jesus. AMEN!