



NEVER
FORGET

From Pastor's Desk...

Be Genuine: Never Forget the Difference Jesus Made

We live in a hostile world with increasing tensions due to differences in culture, class, race, linguistics, religion, ideologies etc. The whole world is struggling to come out of the pandemic now. There are always two pandemics: worldwide spread of a pathogen-viruses, bacteria and fear. We must always address the fear first because of the promise of God we have in the Bible for 365 times- "don't be afraid".

- **We are called to abide in Jesus Christ just as a branch abides in a vine to bear fruit.** We should stay in intimate fellowship with the Lord. We were reconciled through Jesus' death on the cross where greater love is demonstrated

(Jn.15:13). Our right standing before God makes a difference in us. A continual dependence upon a living Savior through the Holy Spirit, and submission to Him in all things results in bearing fruit which proves us to be the disciples of Christ (15:6).

- **We are commissioned with a commandment to love one another.** A Christ-like love between Christians is also fundamental in genuine Christian life. His love is demonstrated in laying down his life for His friends. He died for His friends as well as for His enemies. In perfect obedience to the commandment we become the friends of Jesus (15:14). The proof of this divine friendship is not only the cross on which He died but the truth which He had revealed. We are no longer servants but friends (15:15).

- **We are expected to show the full extent of His love to others throughout our life.**

Jesus knew that He would be betrayed by Judas Iscariot, disowned by Peter and deserted by all of them for a time. He still showed them the greater love in full extent. When the discouraged disciples turned back to the profession of fishing forgetting that they were transformed as fishers of men, Jesus appeared before them by the sea of Tiberias and restored them (Jn.21) How do we respond to that kind of love?

- **We owe our lives to a few, and our eternal lives to One.** Our response to such a lavish, infinite outpouring of God's love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit is praise and thanksgiving. It is an opening of our hearts more and more to serve

others in pandemic too. Lives lived fully in God's love speak louder than volumes of sermons.

Rev. Dr. K. P. Mathew
(Senior Pastor, IPC Hebron, Los Angeles)

Greater love
Sis Rachel Regi

I love my friends very much! But I cannot lay down my life for my friends, as stated in the Bible , John 15:13 "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" I think of the friendships I have on earth, is nothing compared to the true friendship I have in Jesus.

In earthly friendships we can have feelings of mistrust and loneliness but as 1John 4:8

says, "God is Love "and true friendship is based on love.

In the Old Testament, we see a similar friendship between Jonathan and David .1Samuel 18:3 says, "Then Jonathan made a covenant with David, because he loved him as his own soul". We can see here, that they had an equal respect for each other and that Jonathan stayed loyal to his friend rather than his cruel father. In the same way, God is our true friend through all our misfortunes and shortcomings. He is the shoulder we lean on and our comfort in times of need.

In a deeper look into the verse we see the phrase" greater love has no one than this"- the use of this rhetoric implies that this love cannot be observed anywhere else besides God's attitude toward humankind. This is not a normal type of love but can be categorized as God's agape love for his children. Agape

love can be defined as “the highest form of love.” Isaiah 54:10 tells us how he loves us, “Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed, says the Lord, who has compassion on you.” God himself is the meaning of love and yearns to reach for our hearts so that we will be closer to him. This is why God craves a friendship with creation because he loves us so much and wants to hear and speak to those he loves. He even displayed how deeply he wanted our love by sacrificing himself for our sins so that we may be free.

What is very important is that, we didn't do anything to compel God to love us and we cannot do anything to make Him love us less! Romans 5:8 “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”.

I pray we take this message as a reminder to praise him for the grace he bestowed on us and that we can maintain a friendship with God which he deeply wants.

The Ultimate Sacrifice

Br Abraham Mathew

“Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends”

The verse from John 15:13 during this time of the year bring to remembrance the sacrifices made by men and women of this land through the centuries defending America’s freedom. Likewise, around the world we come across many awe-inspiring stories of sacrifices made by people for the good of their country and fellowmen. Laying down one’s life for sake of others is the

greatest expression of love and our Lord Jesus is the embodiment of this truth.

Despite the fact that the act of sacrifice made for one's country is noteworthy, it was only Jesus Christ - the son of God who made the ultimate sacrifice to restore us to the right relationship with our heavenly Father. While we as Christ's followers enjoy our freedom in Christ, we have an obligation to make this freedom known to others. We are reminded by Apostle John in his second epistle "By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us, and we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren".

Most of us may never be in a situation where we will be called to lay our life for the brethren, however we do have the opportunity to share our life through God given resources for expansion of His kingdom. Let us live a life worthy of His calling and

expect to hear his voice say some day “Well done, good and faithful servant: you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your Lord” (Matt 25:21).
