

The Love of God #3

An Overcoming Love that Loves Jesus without Offense!**I. Loving God with all of our heart requires we Overcome Offense!**

A. One of the primary foundations of the Kingdom of God is that Jesus' leadership is good. In other words, Jesus uses His power with perfect love and infallible wisdom. Understanding this foundational truth causes us to be filled with trust in and gratitude for His leadership.

B. We are empowered to love Jesus to the measure that we have this trust and gratitude. Satan's strategy to hinder us from loving Jesus is by accusing His leadership so as to convince us that He is not loving or wise. We will be hindered to the measure we are offended at Him. Satan tells us we are being mistreated by God. The truth is that He treats us far better than we deserve.

C. Many sincere believers have unperceived offense at Jesus' leadership. The residual effect dulls their ability to love Him. This will be one of the major battlefronts in the end-of-the-age.

2 Thessalonians 2:3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed...

D. Jesus warned John the Baptist's disciples to not be offended at His leadership in John's life. Many are offended at Jesus both for what He does and what He does not do or what He allows.

Mt. 11:2-6 2 John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples 3 and said to Him, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?" 4 Jesus answered..., "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: 5 the blind see and the lame walk (Isa. 35:5-6; 61:1); the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. 6 And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me."

E. Jesus vindicated John the Baptist's unwavering commitment and set him forth as the model of spiritual violence. Overcoming all offense about Jesus' leadership requires determined spiritual contending.

Mt. 11:7-12 7 Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind (a man wavering under pressure)?...A man clothed in soft garments (a man seeking comfort)?...11 Among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist...12 From the days of John the Baptist until now the Kingdom of heaven suffers (allows) violence, and the violent take it by force.

F. Jesus offends our mind to reveal our heart to cause our hunger to grow and to bring our offenses with Him to the surface so that they can be healed so we can love Him with all of our heart.

Jn. 2:15-20 15 When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple...poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables...19 Jesus answered..., "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." 20 The Jews said, "It has taken 46 years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?"

G. There is a special blessing in trusting Jesus' leadership before we see the final outcome of a situation. During this age is the only time in history we can express this aspect of love to Jesus.

Jn. 20:29 Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

II. Understanding the Discipline of the Lord as the Love of God!

A. The Word of God makes clear the fact that we can expect both suffering from the sinful in the world, and discipline from the Lord's own hand. These truths are described as love in the wisdom of God and are not to lead us to discouragement but to wisdom and holiness.

Hebrews 12:3-6 (Prov. 3:11,12) For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. 4 You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin. 5 And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; 6 For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives."

Colossians 1:24 I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church,

B. We must see the purpose above the momentary pain is both instances of suffering and learn to receive from the sovereign wisdom of our loving Father.

Hebrews 12:7-11 If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? 8 But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. 9 Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? 10 For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. 11 Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

2 Corinthians 4:17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,

C. The word judgment is used in a threefold sense in scripture and must be approached with wisdom as we trust Jesus and His leadership in our everyday lives and in the future.

1. As those that love God there are things in our life that we cannot let go of that are harmful or unnecessary in the Father's purpose for us and His judgment comes on those things and the issues surrounding them. We want to be totally committed and want them gone, but in our immaturity cannot seem to let go!

1 Corinthians 11:30-32 For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.

2. As those that have followed after Jesus there are things in our life that we know are wrong for us and for others and yet we do not want them to be gone and God sovereignly deals in His judgment with those things! We are rebellious and stubborn and need revelation of His love and purpose for our lives in order to surrender completely.

1 Corinthians 9:27 But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

3. There are many without the knowledge of God and are completely independent of His will and ways. The clear warning of scripture is that God is bringing all things to surrender to Jesus and that He will remove everything that hinders and stands against love and obedience to Jesus!

2 Peter 3:7 But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

Jude 14-15 Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, 15 to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

III. Abounding Love that Overcomes all Offense!

A. We pray that our love would abound as we set our heart to confront all offense in our heart.

Phil. 1:9-10 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, 10 that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ,

B. We ask the Spirit to reveal pockets of unperceived offense working in our heart.

Ps. 19:12-13 Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret (unperceived) faults. 13 Keep back Your servant from presumptuous sins... Then I shall be blameless...

IV. Our Confession: Both in personal and corporate life (in time and eternity)!

A. Our anchor is our confession that "The Lord is good, His mercy endures forever". The good leadership of Jesus speaks of His perfect love and infallible wisdom. His mercy enduring says that no one is disqualified from the benefits of His leadership if they come to Him.

B. This confession song was sung at strategic times in redemptive history. For example, it was sung at the dedication of the Tabernacle of David (1 Chr. 16:34, 41); Temple of Solomon (2 Chr. 5:13; 7:3, 6) and in the war led by Jehoshaphat that prophetically foreshadows the Armageddon Campaign (2 Chr. 20:21). The End-Time battle comes to a head at the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3:2, 12) or the Valley of Berachah (2 Chr. 20:26, 16) also called the Valley of Decision (Joel 3:14).

2 Chr. 20:21-22 He (Jehoshaphat) appointed those who should sing to the Lord...they went out before the army and were saying: "Praise the Lord, for His mercy endures forever." 22 When they began to sing...the LORD set ambushes against the people of Ammon...

C. Our confession is that Jesus' loving leadership works all things for good in our life. Jesus overrules the evil that others plan against us (Gen. 50:20) as well as our own bad choices.

Rom. 8:28 We know that all things work together for good to those who love God...

Song 2:4 He brought me to the banqueting house, and His banner over me was love.

D. We declare that Jesus is worthy of our unqualified trust and our sacrificial obedience.

Rev. 5:12 Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power...and honor and glory...

E. Our true view of Jesus' leadership comes to the surface in context to His redemptive judgments.

Psalms 19:9 The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

Rev. 15:2-4 Those who have the victory over the Beast...3 saying: "Great and marvelous are Your works...Just and true are Your ways...Your judgments have been manifested."

F. This confession is our war cry against the Antichrist's accusation against Jesus' leadership.

Rev. 13:6-7 He (Antichrist) opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name...7 It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome (physically) them.

Rev. 12:11 They overcame him (Satan the accuser) by...the word of their testimony...