

If You Love Me

... keep My commandments (John 14:15). The words of Jesus are so simple and yet so profound; they seem light and on the surface, but actually are deep and convicting when we meditate on them and allow them to take root in our hearts, producing fruit. Even more difficult is allowing those same words to be manifested in our daily lives.

In John 15:12 Jesus speaks another commandment "This is My commandment that you love one another (just) as I have loved you." We may read this and never catch what He is really saying. Do we stop to think about how Jesus loves us? How He forgives us, is patient with us, merciful, tenderhearted, always praying for us? (Hebrews 7:25a - He is always living to make petition to God and intercede with Him, and intervene for them).

When Christ was in the garden praying, He came back to find His disciples sleeping and spoke to them these words "What, are you so utterly unable to stay awake and watch with me ONE hour?" (Matt. 26:40).

On the cross dying for you and me He prayed "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34) He was innocent, dying for the sins of the world, yet He prayed for those who were crucifying Him to be forgiven.

The world around us cries out for a demonstration of Christ; His nature manifested in daily living. We can sing praises to our King, give tithes and offerings, read the Word, pray some and still fail to manifest the life and love of Christ to those we come in contact with every day. And who do we have the closest daily contact with? Our immediate family, husband, wife and children. And yet, more often than not they are the ones that we least demonstrate Christ's nature to.

As we counsel many hurting marriages these are the things we find:

- Failure to love one another as Christ loves them;
- Unwillingness to accept one another just as they are; always looking for change before acceptance and love (Romans 15:7 Welcome and receive (to your hearts) one another, then, even as Christ has welcomed and received you, for the glory of God).
- Too busy or too slothful to spend time in prayer for one another (much less for others, the church, government, etc.)
- Reading the Word only as an exercise or duty, not allowing the Word to convict or correct.
- Unwillingness to forgive past hurts and present mistakes.
- Holding on to bitterness, resentment and unforgiveness, failing to understand the poison that exudes from the unwillingness -(1 Cor. 13:3b love - takes no account of the evil done it - pays no attention to a suffered wrong).

The good news? When a husband and wife decide to "keep His commandments", forgive each other, pray for each other, allow the Word to convict and correct, a setting free occurs. God replaces the unforgiveness, bitterness, and resentment with His Peace, Love, and Joy and Victory is obtained!

As you read this today we prayerfully ask you to examine your heart (Psalm 139:23,24). As the searchlight of the Holy Spirit reveals patterns and practices that are not Christ-like, confession, forgiveness, and cleansing (1 John 1:9) will set you on a clear pathway walking as Jesus walked, manifesting His life and love to all. OBEY HIS COMMANDMENTS.