

## Podcast 221 My Relationship with God Impacts My Relationship with My Wife

We just finished the new commandment, which is love one another as I have loved you. It's got our attention focused on Jesus in a new way. And we recognize too, that Paul, when he gives what I call the great husband commandment, the one that most people quote when I asked them, "What is the great commandment for husbands?" They'll say, "Husbands, love your wife as Christ loved the church." And what that means is it's simply Paul applying the new commandment afresh when he says, "Husbands, love your wife as Christ loved the church." Or as I have loved you built on John 15 and John 13. So now how do we follow that up? And I have an idea and so we're going to jump into that one now.

If we are to love our wives as Christ has loved us or the new commandment as when Jesus is speaking he says, "Love one another as I have loved you." What this forced me to do, force might not be the best word, but what it encouraged me to do was to go a little deeper into John 15:9, and so let's pray and then we'll jump in there.

Father, thank you for this revelation to our heart and thank you for in podcast 220 there were things that I felt like the Holy Spirit brought to mind that weren't even in my notes. So I appreciate that very much, because I definitely want to be in sync with what heaven is saying today. And I pray that you'll help us now, to continue that spirit in this next podcast and help us to see ways that equip us to love each other, especially our wives, as you have loved us. In Jesus name amen.

The new commandment is actually for all believers. It's not simply for husbands, but that's the focus of this series, so that's what we're going to continue on but it's also for dads, love your children as Jesus has loved you. Love each other as Christ has loved you. So the new commandment is for all of us as believers to keep our eyes on Jesus, think of ways that he's loved us and then love each other the same way.

But I noticed something because when I read John 15:9 for the first time, the effect on me was, well, it was very deep. It was very meaningful because Jesus says talking to his disciples, "As much as my dad's likes me, that's how much I like you." And when that worked its way into my mind and heart, I almost couldn't read anymore.

I just thought, are you kidding? As much as the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. I knew that the Father and the Son had this incredible relationship, in the same way that the heavenly Father loved his Son, that's how Jesus was now loving us. I don't know if that gets you the same way, but it sure does hit me.

If I can do a little parenthesis here and stop for a second. One of the things that I learned when I was going through a difficult time with our family seven years ago, was that I learned that my relationship with God impacts my relationship with my wife and my sons, in how well I'm able to assimilate the love of God is how well I'm able to then pass on that love to others.

And when I thought about that some more, John 15:9, "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you." I would back and I just read the first half of the verse again, "As the Father has loved me." And I started thinking, how has the Father loved me? In other words, how has God the Father loved Jesus, the Son?

And my next thought was, I went to the baptism of Jesus. Matthew Chapter 3 and it says, When Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up on the water and behold the heavens were open to him, and he saw the spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him. And behold, a voice from

heaven said, "This is my beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased." Now I want to read that in a different translation just to help us fill it out a little bit.

But I've been specifically drawn to the NLT, the New Living Translation lately and here's what it says in the New Living Translation. "After his baptism, as Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens were opened. He saw the spirit of God descending like a dove and settling on him, and a voice from heaven said, "This is my dearly loved Son who brings me great joy."

Okay, so this summer I was preaching on that verse in Wyoming and a lady brought me in a picture. She said, "I had this on my wall. I took a picture of it just to show you. What do you think?" I'm starting to tear up here. That picture was amazing. I just ordered it. It just came this last week. I have it sitting on my dresser now.

It was a picture of Jesus looking up to heaven, beaming. His face is radiant. He's smiling and it's the picture that I would assume she'd even, this artist did a better job than I could have, because when the heavenly Father spoke those words to the Son, the Son looked up to heaven and he was radiant because he heard words that every Son needs, wants, craves to hear.

I'm going to read it again in the NLT. "This is my dearly loved Son who brings me great joy." And I see three components in there. Number one, you're my Son. I'm finishing up the Old Testament right now and I notice several times in Jeremiah and Ezekiel, which I know are not people's favorite books, but I really liked those books.

And several times within them, after these horrific things happen because of their despicable sins, but then he'll say, "But if you'll repent, I'll be your dad and you can be my kids. I'll be a Father to you. You can be my children if you'll just put away your idols." But this this happens over and over in the Old Testament because each of us wants to belong. And this is what he tells Jesus. "You are my Son." But not just any Son, you are my dearly loved Son.

This is what we all want to hear. We want to have our mom and dad look at us in the eye and say, "So thankful that you have been born into our family. You are our Son. You are dearly loved." And then he goes on to say just the icing on the cake, if I could put it that way, "And you bring me great joy." You are just a pleasure to have around.

And Jesus, here's these words, "He looks up at his dad in his face is radiant." And that should be duplicated millions of times because this is what every Son wants to hear from their dad. And the more I've thought about that, I thought that's how Jesus started his earthly ministry, by this divine benediction from his Father, who just poured out his heart in one sentence and just made his Son, know, I'm so glad you're my boy. I love you to pieces and you bring me great joy.

So I get to make a comment now, and I think it's very germane to what we're talking about. Jesus was a loved Son before he was a loving savior. And then because he was able to be loved beautifully as a Son, he was able to love us beautifully as our savior but he loved well because he was loved well.

That's something we have to get, and I recognize that I need to be loved well before I can love well and that's what I started to say a minute ago. I realized that my relationship with God, impacts my relationship with my wife. If I feel like I have to earn my Father's love all the time and I got a performance-based religion, the next thing you know I'm going to be passing that onto my wife and kids and they're going to think that the more things they do for me, they are going to earn my affection.

It's just inevitable that how I perceive the Father's love is what I'm going to pass onto my kids, but as Jesus perceived God's love perfectly, he was able to pass on perfect love to us. So I'm recognizing

that before I can be a loving husband or father, I need to be a loved Son. I need to spend whatever time it takes and be intentional about being a loving son, before I can become a loving father.

And that's something that has been probably a revelation to me and that's why I'm trying to get us to not just jump into, let's just read the list of things of how Jesus has loved us and then seek to apply them. The first thing, the best thing we can do is let God love on us, so that then we can learn how to love on each other. Because we are going to, as the day follows the night, we're going to love people as we think we have been loved, but we need to love people as we have been loved and that's different.

So I'm going to make a plea here that we do some reflection and we let the Holy Spirit work in our hearts, and reveal areas where we haven't taken in grace the right way or how we can assimilate and comprehend God's love in a different way. And I'm going to mention the Holy Spirit here again. I think I've already mentioned him in Ephesians 5:18 where it says be filled with the spirit precedes all those wonderful passages in Ephesians about loving your wife and the wives submitting the husbands and all that but it's the same thing here. "When Jesus was baptized, the spirit of God descended like a dove."

And then the wonderful benediction from his Father. Romans 5:5 says, "The love of God is shed abroad or poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit." So this is a good time in our lives as men, is to ask God to help us to take in how much he loves us, because the more love we're able to take in and comprehend, the better equipped we're going to be to love our wives the same way that God has loved us.

And there's several passages. I think about this. Ephesians Chapter 3 talks about being rooted and grounded in love. I think of James that says, "Every good and perfect gift comes from above." I can't give something I haven't received. I can't extend grace until I receive grace. Those who are loved much and forgiven much will be able to forgive much. It's just the way that it works.

And I have been preaching this and seeking to live this now for several years, and I know that the best thing I can do for my wife and my sons, is to spend time with my dad and get my eyes on Jesus and let him hold me. Let him speak those words to me, "You're my Son. You're beloved. You're well pleasing." I've put together studies for myself on those three things right there.

There's all kinds of passages of scripture on God's love, on the fact that we've been adopted as his children, that we are pleasing through Christ who has now clothed us with his righteousness. And those theological studies I put together, if you want to put it that way, have helped me to transform my thinking because I need to be transformed by the renewing of my mind. Because in my mind I still have these false beliefs that somehow if I do more stuff God will love me better and I need to learn how to live in grace and how to walk in love that he's loved me.

I've done transformational studies. I've done podcasts on each of those topics. But probably the best part of my day is when I get up I spent time in his word, I pray, and then I go for a walk and I just spend time in the presence of God, drawing near to him. And I think of the church in Ephesus in Revelation where he's knocking on the door, not Ephesus, [inaudible 00:15:25] and he says, "I stand at the door and knock. If anybody will open the door, invite me in, I'll come in and we'll have a meal together."

And that's all God needs is for each of us to just say, "I hear your gentle knocking at my door. I'm opening the door. Come on in. Let's have a meal together." And then we're going to start getting the same kind of ministry that the Son got from his dad when he heard those wonderful words. This is my boy. I love him to pieces. He brings me great joy, but I can't do that without the help of the Holy Spirit.

So don't want to continue emphasizing this. I think is clear enough. We're going to love well when we have been loved well. We're going to be loving husbands, while we have been loved sons, because that's how Jesus got his start by spending a whole bunch of time with his dad preparing for his ministry and they did a whole bunch of loving on each other. And I really think that those words that the Father gave to his Son after his baptism, "This is my dearly loved Son who brings me great joy." Jesus I think probably just went to bed that night just saying it over and over. "Wow. I am my Father's dearly loved child. I bring him great joy."

And if you and I can really believe John 15:9 which says, "And just the way the Father loved the Son, so has the Son loved us." Then if that's true, that scripture and if we mix it with faith, then we're able to go to bed at night and say, "Phew, my dad thinks I am special. I'm his dearly loved son and I bring him great joy." And the only way we can say that is because of what Jesus has done for us in taking away our sin, clothing us with his righteousness and adopting him as his child.

So because of Jesus, John 15:9 is accurate and as much as the Father loved him, that's exactly how much he loves us. And when we take that in, not just in our heads but in our hearts and in our spirits, then we are able to grasp that and wrap it around ourselves, then we're going to be in a good place to love our wives the same way that we have been loved. What do you think?

Scott Moore:

I'm about coming undone here man, because I'm yeah, we need to dwell on this for a long time because this is not just a good idea, it's not just helpful for marriage and how to be a better dad and a better husband, this is the whole ball game man. Because if you look at what does Jesus do next, after his dad tells him how great he is and how much he loves him and puts his spirit on him, he goes out to the desert and is tempted by the devil for 40 days. The devil hammers him and he goes at his identity first he says, "If you are the Son of God." Like, "Did your dad really say you're that great?"

Steve Demme:

And that's another reason why I've done all those scripture studies because Jesus responded with what? "It is written." And we have to be equipped and prepared. That's a great point there brother. We have to be able to have our sword of the spirit ready, because he's going to attack us at this very point. You're right.

Scott Moore:

One, and if he wasn't rooted in the identity bestowed by his Father, if he didn't know to the core of his being that he is the Son of God and he is loved and he has the spirit with him and in him, it might've been a whole different story. And for us, certainly we're going to get hammered when we go out into the world and we're doing battle. We're going to need to know that, that we are his beloved Sons and daughters and that he has poured his spirit into us. We have to feel that and know that his love is there, his spirit is there or we'll just get taken out.

Steve Demme:

Sometimes I've asked audiences, "How many of you believe God loves you?" And everybody raised their hand. And then I'll say, "How many of you believe God likes you?" And that's a whole different question. But I think that most Christians that I'm affiliated with, earnest Christians, earnest believers, these people are there, they're laying it all out there and I think that we struggled to believe that God really likes us that much. We struggle to believe that God likes us for who we are and not based on what we do and we struggle to that we bring him delight.

But that's exactly what these passages are saying. Jesus says, "Just like my dad loves me, that's how I love you." And so we can transfer that. And Jesus hears, "You're my Son. You bring me great joy. You're dearly beloved" that's a direct transfer to us but how many of us really believe that in our heart of hearts?

And that's where I think the battle is. If we can take that in right down deep ... Let's change the little expression there. Not if we take it in, as we take it in, it transforms us from the inside out. And we look at each other differently because once we know that we belonged to God, we're his child and theirs that we're loved and that nothing can separate us from his love, and that we bring them great joy, that we're well-pleasing because of Jesus in his robes of righteousness, when we really get that, that's when we're able to love others the same way that we've been loved. But you're right, it's going to be contested because the devil knows that that's where the battleground is too. Yeah. Amen.

Let's pray and let's commit these words to God because only he has the power. We just need to give him a window. We just need to open the door a crack and say, "Boy, this sounds really good. Help us to take it in." So Father, help us to open our doors just a smidgen. Help us to open the doors of our heart, where you have been gently knocking maybe for decades.

And I pray that you will come in and gently and wonderfully make us know that we are your child. We've been adopted into your family, that you not only love us, but that you like us and that we bring you delight. That we are great joy to you, that when we come into your presence, you beam and you light up because we're your children. We're your dearly loved children.

Help us to be dearly loved children, so we can be dearly loving adults. Help us to work and allow you to work in our heart of hearts and in our thinking and in our minds. Transform us by your word. In Jesus name, amen.