***Session 11 Participating in the Family Dynamics of the Trinity (Jn. 14)***

1. do not be troubled (Jn. 14:1-6): Believe what God says

*In our last session we looked at John 15 and that glorious relationship of us abiding in Christ and Christ abiding in us. It is a two-fold abiding. Jesus made the point in John 15 how central this is to biblical Christianity. A matter of fact, it is not* ***biblical*** *Christianity if it is not focused on that interaction from the heart with the Lord.*

*I mentioned last week that the foundational truths of John 15 are actually established in John 14, so we are going back a chapter now. Jesus laid the groundwork in John 14 for this union, this interactive deep relationship between our heart and His heart, our heart and the Father's heart. Then in John 15 He applied it in the language of “abide in Christ.”*

*Let's look at John 14:1. The context is Jesus giving them an exhortation that their heart should not be troubled. He says in verse 1, “Let your heart not be troubled.” The answer to a troubled heart is to believe what God says about you and believe what God says about your future, believe what God says about the relationship that He wants to have with you.*

* 1. The primary themes in John 14 are Jesus’ exhortation on how to find peace when our hearts are troubled and how to relate to the Father in a deep way. Jesus told them not to be troubled by the fact that He was leaving them physically (Jn. 13:33, 36). He used the occasion of His departure and their troubled hearts to explain the new relationship with God they were to enter (14:7-24). Going deep in our relationship with God is an essential aspect of overcoming a troubled heart.

1“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.” (Jn. 14:1)

*There are two primary themes to John 14. The first theme is found in Jesus answering the question how to overcome a troubled heart. So John 14 actually applies to any trouble that comes to your life. The trouble that was at hand in context to John 14 was that Jesus had just told them that He was going to leave them physically. He said, “My Spirit will be with you spiritually, but I am going to leave you physically. I am going to depart from you, and I am going to die.”*

*So they are troubled, they are in turmoil, and, as a Pastor, the Shepherd of the flock, He is telling them that if you will believe what God says about you, your destiny, and about your relationship with God, if you will believe it and act on it, you can overcome the troubled heart. That is the first theme, and that is the initial context of John 14, but Jesus also uses the occasion of their troubled heart over His departure to describe a new relationship they would have with the Father.*

*So the bigger theme in John 14 is a new spiritual relationship with the Father. Basically Jesus is saying, “I am going to leave physically, and in place of my physical interaction with you that you have known for three-and-a-half years, now you are going to be established in a new spiritual relationship with the Father. It will go deeper than your relationship with Me was while I was with you in the flesh.”*

*Now they do not really buy that on the front end. Still Jesus is saying here, in essence, “If you will believe what I am telling you in John 14:1-6 about your destiny—where you are going, and the way I am going to relate to you—then you can be equipped to overcome a troubled heart.” We need to look at John 14:1-6 more often when our heart is troubled. Many people just ride the storm of anxiety, and they never go to John 14 where Jesus is actually addressing the greatest crisis of trouble in the disciples’ entire lifetime. He gives them His practical, pastoral instruction in verses 1-6 on how to overcome the trouble.*

* 1. He highlighted two foundational truths to help His people overcome a troubled heart (Jn. 14:2-6). We go to the Father—physically in the resurrection (v. 2-3), and relationally in this age (v. 4-6).

*Jesus highlighted two foundational truths. These two truths will help anybody who has a troubled heart, if we will apply them—if we will actually believe what God says about these things. The* ***first truth*** *that Jesus gave is that you are going to go to the Father physically in the resurrection. In other words, there is a bigger picture. There is a great destiny ahead. There is a bigger storyline than your personal difficulties right now.*

*Trying to manage our personal difficulties in pain apart from the larger storyline, apart from the bigger picture of our true destiny, is very difficult. Jesus is saying that you are not going to be able to manage a troubled heart if you do not link it to the big picture.*

*So in John 14:2-3 He talks about the Father's house which is the New Jerusalem. He talks about us being physically resurrected to live with the Father and the Son on the earth forever, for billions and billions of years. He says that, if you lock into that, you can actually be stable and have peace in the midst of whatever trouble you have.*

*He gives a* ***second truth****. He says that we are not only just going to the Father physically in the resurrection, we are going to the Father spiritually by the Holy Spirit* ***right now****, and that is verse 4-6. So He gives two different truths that if believed in, if applied, if acted upon, those two truths will actually bring peace to us no matter how severe the trouble is.*

* + 1. ***Father’s house***:We will be with the Father and Jesus forever on the earth (v. 2-3). The Father’s house is the New Jerusalem, which will descend to the earth (Rev. 21:2, 10). The Father’s house has many mansions, because His family is very large. Knowing that we will live in the Father’s house forever is a key to overcoming despair (2 Cor. 4:16-18).

2“In My Father’s house are many mansions…I go [to the cross] to prepare a place for you… 3I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.” (Jn. 14:2-3)

*Let's look at the Father's house in John* ***14:2-3****. I am going to be very brief on this. It deserves a lot of attention, but I just want to highlight it to you to say that we cannot live disconnected from this massive, important truth. He said that the Father's house, the New Jerusalem, is coming to the earth, and we will live Him forever. We will live with physical, resurrected bodies on a renewed earth forever. Beloved, that changes everything if that is where we are going.*

* + 1. ***Relating to the Father***: We can cultivate a deep relationship with the Father in this age (v. 4-6). We are called to *participate in the family dynamics of the Trinity* as described by Jesus in John 14:7-24 and then applied in John 15:1-11.

5Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going…” 6Jesus said,   
“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. (Jn. 14:5-6)

*Next He addresses the second foundational truth in overcoming a troubled heart. He spends the rest of John 14 on this one. It is the more prominent point He is making. I mean the New Jerusalem is a big one, but this is the one He expands on because it is an entirely new idea that He is giving the disciples.*

*He is saying, “My physical relationship with you, My physical presence, you relating to Me this way, is going to be replaced by a spiritual relationship with My Father, and that spiritual relationship with My Father is going to parallel the way that I have related to My Father as a human in My physical body. You are going to have a relationship with the Father that parallels Mine.”*

*I imagine they are looking at Him, thinking, “We are not following what You are saying.”*

*So Jesus had been speaking about leaving them, departing from them—He meant His death. Thomas misunderstood Him. In John 14:5 the disciple Thomas said, “Lord, we do not know where you are going,”—like are you going to another city in Israel, like can we go with You—“so we do not know the way.”*

*Jesus is saying, “Thomas, I have not been telling you I am going to another city. I am going to the Father through physical death.”*

*Then in verse 6 Jesus shifts the conversation to His main theme of John 14. He shifts the conversation from the question of where He is going in His physical death to where* ***they*** *are going in their spiritual relationship with the Father. He just shifts the whole issue, and He does not answer Thomas’ question. Rather He addresses the thing that Thomas needed to know to prepare him for Jesus’ departure.*

*Thomas said, “Where are You going? I don’t know where You are going.”*

*Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.”*

*Thomas thinks, “Well, I was actually wondering what city you are moving to.”*

*Jesus said, “****You*** *are going to the Father, that is where you are going, and all of you are, but know this—there is no other way to the Father except through me and what I am about.”*

*So this very famous verse, verse 6, that we are all so familiar with, is actually introducing the grand theme of John 14 on how to overcome a troubled heart. That truth is that we are going to go to the Father, we are going to be able to participate in this dynamic relationship like the Father and the Son have. When I say the relationship that the Father and the Son have, what I mean is the way Jesus in His humanity related to the Father.*

*So do not miss the point in verse 6 that this is about us going to the Father. Some people get so focused on “I am the way, the truth, the life,” they forget the bigger point—****we are going to connect with the Father.*** *That is the big vision for our life. I mean just going to the New Jerusalem is not going to satisfy our hearts. It is* ***the Father and the Son******we want to be with****, and yes, we love that “Garden of Eden/Emerald City” so to speak, that beautiful diamond city.*

* 1. ***The way***: Jesus’ death on the cross made theway for us to go to the Father by paying the debt of our sin on the cross, giving us access to relationship with the Father in this age (Eph. 2:18).

*Jesus said, “I am the way.” What He meant is, “I am going to go to the cross, and I am going to pay for your sin and make a way for you to be in relationship with the Father.” Beloved, let's be clear about that, and we are clear about it, there is* ***no other way to God but through Jesus****.*

*There is a lot of “love” rhetoric today in religious circles saying that if we are really loving, we will tell people lies that there are other ways to God. There is* ***not*** *another way. There is only* ***one way****. If we love in truth, we need to be bold and hold the line, because the other ways are deceptions. They do* ***not*** *lead to the Father, and Jesus made that really clear.*

* 1. ***The truth***: Jesus showed the truth about what the Father is like and how He relates to His people. He told the truth about how He related to the transcendent God of Israel *as a Man* (Jn. 14:7-11), and how His people are to relate to the Father in a similar way by the Spirit (Jn. 14:12-24).

*Now He makes this next statement. He says, “I am the truth.” This idea of Jesus being the truth has many facets to it. I mean we could spend a lot of time talking on all the implications of what it means that Jesus is the truth, but in context to John 14 it means two very specific things. In the context of the whole Bible, Jesus being the truth means many things. Here Jesus is narrowing it down to two very specific things that He reveals the truth about, because He is preparing them for this relationship with the Father.*

*He is going to show them what the Father is like. He communicates to them, “I am the truth about the Father, and there are two points about this. First, I am the truth about the personality of My Father. Not only that, I am also the truth about how God wants to relate to human beings.” That is what Jesus is actually focused on—that second point. (John 14:9, “Anyone who has seen Me has seen the Father.”)*

*Jesus is the truth about the Father's personality. What that means, He said, is that when they saw Jesus act in kindness, really they were seeing the kindness of the Father (John 14:9, paraphrased). When they saw Jesus act in wisdom, it was really the Father's wisdom coming out through His behavior and His words (John 14:10, paraphrased). When they saw the power of God in Jesus’ life, He said that it was really the Father's power; you are really seeing the personality of the Father. (John 14:9-10, paraphrased).*

*So He is the truth about what the Father's personality is like, but that is not even the main point He is making here about being the truth. In John 14:7-11 He really unpacks this, and then in verses 12-24 He applies it to us. The major theme of John 14 is that Jesus is the truth about how God wants to relate to human beings. He says, in effect, “Look at Me and understand how God relates to people.”*

*Now Jesus is going to make some statements we will look at in a minute, and He is not giving them a doctrinal lesson about His deity; He is giving them a doctrinal lesson about His humanity. It is not perplexing that Jesus being fully God is in union with God the Father. It is not surprising that God the Son is in perfect union with God the Father. That seems reasonable. That is not perplexing.*

*What is perplexing is that* ***as a Man*** *He is in this deep union with the uncreated, transcendent God. That is the new idea that is going to overwhelm and perplex them because the take-away point is this: Jesus was saying, in effect, “I am not just telling you so you know how I relate to the Father as a Man. I am telling you because it is the parallel, the pattern of how you are going to relate to the Father in your humanity. That is why I am telling you this.” This point is often overlooked in a casual reading of John 14.*

* 1. ***The life***: Jesus is the supernatural life that enables us to relate to the Father in deep union and to experience the realm of the Father. Jesus is the only source of deep relationship with the Father. This relationship requires an on-going present tense empowering of the Spirit to understand and walk it out. Jesus elaborated on being “the life source” for union with the Father in John 15:1-11.

*Then Jesus says, “I am the life.” He said, “You do not just need to know the truth about what the Father's personality is like and how He wants to relate to people. You also need a supernatural supply and a resource to walk out that truth. It is not enough to seek that truth. You are going to need help. You are going to need supernatural inspiration to understand it and to walk it out in a consistent way” (John 14:6 and 15:1-2, paraphrased and amplified).*

* 1. ***Summary***:Jesus is the ***way*** to the Father by His death; He is the ***truth*** about how the Father relates (14:7-24); He is the ***life*** source to empower this relationship (15:1-11). He addressed each point in sequence. John 14 unfolds logically when reading it with a relational paradigm.

*In summary, Jesus said, “I am the way”—to the Father by My death and resurrection. “I am the truth”—about how the Father relates to humans, and, again you will notice here, that is the majority of John 14, the rest of the chapter. Then He says, “I am the life.” He actually addresses that in John 15 when He says, “Abide in Me,” and unpacks it in John 15. So really John 14:6 is the central theme of John 14-15. He unpacks these truths in sequential order, one after the other.*

1. understanding Jesus (Jn. 14:7-9): Revealing the Father
   1. The disciples found it difficult to believe that a *human* could relate to the transcendent God in an intimate way. They did not understand Jesus and His mission; thus they did not understand what the Father is like nor how He wants to relate to His people. Jesus came to make a way for us to relate to the Father forever and to show what the Father is like and how He desires to relate to us. He had taught that to see Him was to see the Father, but they did not understand (Jn. 8:19; 12:45).

7“If you had known [understood] Me, you would have known [understood] My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen [understood] Him”…9Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known [understood] Me, Philip? He who has seen [understood] Me has seen [understood] the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? (Jn. 14:7-9)

*Let’s move on to verses 7-9. Throughout the rest of John 14, Jesus is going to give insight into what He means by, “I am the truth.” As in “I am the truth about how God wants to relate to human beings”—that is what He is dealing with when He applies it to the disciples, because Jesus says, “My relationship to you in the physical sense is going to be replaced by this new spiritual relationship” (John 14:16).*

*We could imagine Jesus saying, “If you do not get it, and you do not have a vision for it, you are going to be swallowed up by a troubled heart filled with anxiety. But if you get this, you will have an energizing power, and you will have a strength in your inner man that will sustain you through any trouble you will ever face, including the crisis of My coming death.”*

*Let’s read verses 7-9. Jesus said, “If you have known Me, you have known My Father.”*

*Now they could have said, “Well, what do you mean? We know You—we have been traveling with You for over three years. We know who You are—we know You are the Messiah. We know You are the Son of David. We know You are the King of Israel.”*

*What Jesus could have said is, “I do not mean “know” exactly that way. I know you know those things.” They were “saved,” in that sense. I like to use the word “understand” because this is the night before His death and He is saying, “You still do not* ***understand*** *a critical point of what I wanted to bring you into. I am going to be gone in hours from now, and you are going to have to relate to the Father, and I am telling you how to do it, and this is the part you have not understood. You have not understood what I have been trying to tell you about this.”*

*He says, “If you would have understood Me and My mandate and My mission as a Man anointed with the Spirit and how I relate to the Father, then you would have understood how My Father wants to relate to His people.”*

*Now we are clear, and the Bible is clear, that Jesus is fully God. Forever in the past and forever in the future, He is fully God. He has never, ever, been less than fully God. He is equal to the Father and the Spirit in His deity. Jesus is not talking about “Jesus as God” relating to “the Father as God.” He is talking about something very different. He is talking about “Jesus as a Man” relating to “the transcendent God.”*

*The nation of Israel understood that no man could see God and live. They so reverenced the God of Israel, the transcendent, the majestic and infinitely superior God of Israel, that they would not even say His name. Jesus is looking the disciples in the eye, and He is saying, “I am telling you as a human being,”—He is going to say it in verse 10-11, we will get there in a minute—“I am in the Father and the Father is in me. As a man, I am in this deep union with the uncreated God. In my humanity I am.”*

*They are looking at Him thinking, “We don’t understand at all what You are saying. We believe You are the Messiah. Jesus, we believe You are the Son of David.” I believe they even believed He was God. “But how can You as a Man say You have that kind of interaction that God the Father is in You and You are in the Father?” That is what He is going to say in verse 10-11, right after this passage.*

*Well, it is even more extreme than that in verse 20, and I am getting ahead of myself. He is going to say, “You are going to have that relationship,” and He could have told them that is the point of His entire teaching.*

*He said in verse 7, “If you had understood My mission, My relationship with the Father, you would have known or understood what the Father is desiring. He desires to relate to you in a deep and intimate way by the Spirit beyond anything you can imagine. That is what My Father is after” (John 14:7, paraphrased).*

*In verse 9 Jesus said, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not understand this about Me, Philip? You know I am the Messiah, but you do not grasp the quality and the nature of the relationship I have with the God of Israel. You do not really grasp it, do you, Philip?” (John 14:9, paraphrased).*

*He says, “He that has seen Me—if you understand Me, you understand not only the personality of God, you also understand how God relates to other human, to redeemed human beings, how He relates to His people” (John 14:9, paraphrased).*

* 1. Israel was looking for the Messiah to reveal Himself as the Son of David and the king of Israel, who would liberate them from the oppression of Rome, heal their diseases, and prosper them.
  2. The disciples believed He was Messiah—even the Son of Man and the Son of David—but they did not understand that Jesus lived as the model man, according to God’s original design. Jesus called Himself “the vine,” as the model and source of how God wanted to relate to His people (15:1).

*The disciples believed Jesus was the Messiah, that He was that Son of David. But they did not understand that He was more than the deliverer of Israel from Rome and the Healer of their physical diseases, etc. Jesus is saying, “I am the model. I am the picture of what God originally wanted when He created the human race. I am a picture of how you will relate to God spiritually. I have been a demonstration of it for the last three and a half years. You have watched Me. What you have seen Me do, I want you to understand that is what you are going to do. I pray and have confidence that God is moved; you will pray and have confidence that God is moved.”*

*Jesus was a picture of how a man filled with the Spirit would relate to the Father. Jesus was a picture in His earthly ministry of how a man or a woman anointed with the Spirit would relate to the Father, and that is what they did not understand about Jesus.*

1. union between the Father and Jesus (Jn. 14:10): how God relates (Jn. 14:20)
   1. Jesus elaborated on this in John 14:7-9 by describing His relationship to the Father as a Man (14:10). Jesus’ point was to show how He relates to the Father in order to introduce how God relates to His people (Jn. 14:20). The truths in John 14:10 and 20 are foundational to abiding in Christ (Jn. 15:4).

10“Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works… 20At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.” (Jn. 14:20)

(Jn. 14:10, 20)

*Now Jesus is going to push the envelope. He says, “I am telling you, Philip, I am a picture of how a Man anointed with the Spirit, a Man filled with the Spirit, relates to the Father. Let Me tell you more about what that looks like.” He says, “Do you not believe I am in the Father and the Father is in Me?” (John 14:10, paraphrased).*

*I can imagine Philip and the others thinking, “What does that mean—you are* ***in*** *the God of Israel? I mean we know You are anointed. We know He likes You. We know He listens to Your prayers. You are* ***in*** *Him?”*

*“Yes, He is* ***in*** *Me.”*

*“Okay, what does that mean?”*

*Well, I am going to give just a few little elementary points, and the reason they are elementary is because that is all I know. In verse 20, notice He references His relationship to the Father as in verse 10, but now He includes the Body of Christ in this participation in the family dynamics of the Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*

*One God, One Essence, three distinct persons as one God—that is a mystery. They are each distinct. Jesus has His own will, and He laid aside His will to embrace the Father’s will, making the Father’s will His own. He talked about His will and the Father’s will. He talked about His words and the Father’s words. The glory is in their unity in these points, yet they are distinct persons.*

*Now again it is not perplexing that Jesus as God is in unity with the Father as God. What is perplexing is that Jesus as a Man can say this about God. Then what is even more perplexing is in verse 20—He applies it to the rest of the Body of Christ throughout history. Beloved, verse 20 is one of the most dramatic, one of the most extreme statements in the entire Bible. I mean I do not know how anything can be more extreme than that.*

*I want to urge you to underline verse 20, circle it, put a star by it. He looked at them, verse 20, and He says, “In that day,”—that means on the day of Pentecost, fifty days after the crucifixion, fifty days later on the day of Pentecost—“when you receive the indwelling Spirit, then you will know by revelation, by living understanding, that I am in the Father just like I said in verse 10, but now it goes up a notch—you are in Me and I am in you.”*

*I can imagine them sitting around the table having the last supper. He says, “You are in Me.”*

*They are thinking, “Okay?” I imagine Peter looking over at Thomas, whispering, “Okay, we are* ***in*** *Him, how?” They are staring, thinking, “Pass the matzo…please, somebody break the silence. What does this mean? What do you mean we are in You and You are in us? What is that talk? What are you talking about?”*

*Now know this, though we are being beckoned and invited to participate in this kind of unity in the family dynamics with God, there is no equality in it for us.* ***We are not equal in any sense****. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit are equal in their deity. We do not share that in the relationship. We are forever the created, the creature, the redeemed. God the Father, Son, and Spirit are forever the uncreated, the Creators, the One true God.*

*When Jesus said, “I am in the Father,” theologically the phrase that is used to describe this is “the mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son.” Then it goes beyond that. It is the mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son, and then we are invited* ***into*** *that relationship. Again, the reason I am pressing this—well, because Jesus pressed it is the big reason, but another reason—it gives us a vision of where our relationship with God can go, and it is only in this context that we actually can overcome a troubled heart.*

*So many of God's people get troubled, and they just stay troubled. They stay troubled for months and months and months until the storm passes and runs its course. Then they get troubled by the next thing for the next number of months, then that storm of trouble passes. Then they get troubled by the next thing. They never know what it means to live with peace throughout trouble, and it is critical to understand this relationship in order to live in peace without that troubled-thinking.*

*There are two aspects to this mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son, and I do not understand either of them hardly at all, just to be totally honest. But the first one I really do not understand. The Spirit of Christ is in the Father, and the Spirit of the Father is in Christ. I do not* ***even*** *know what that means.*

*They possess the same Spirit as three distinct persons, as one God. That is as deep as I go on that. So they dwell in one another by the Spirit of Christ being in the Father, the Spirit of the Father being in Christ, and possessing the same Spirit. That is far above what I understand, but that is the first sense of which they are dwelling in each other.*

*There is a second sense, and I want to spend the next few moments on that. The words that Jesus speaks enter the Father's heart, and they move the Father. The deeds that Jesus did, they are also in the Father, and they move the Father. The Father delights in them, the Father rejoices in them, and it is a mutual experience of each being moved by the other.*

*When the Father spoke, the words of the Father were in Jesus’ heart, and they moved Him powerfully. They brought Him great delight. When the Father showed Jesus His words, His works, His plans, Jesus’ heart just resonated with it. His heart was filled with enthusiasm about what was in the Father.*

*So in this second sense, the Father is in the Son and the Son is in the Father. We are going to find in John 14:20, when it comes to us, both of these have a parallel application to our life with the Father and with the Son.*

* 1. The gospel of John highlights at least five elements in the union between the Father and Jesus—their *mind* (thinking), *heart* (feelings), *will* (values), *words* (speaking), and *works* (actions). In other words, they think, feel, value, speak, and act in ways that are in unity with each other. Their being is of one essence, and their mind and will are distinct, yet they are in perfect unity.

*The Gospel of John highlights five elements that describe the union of the Father and the Son. When you read the Gospel of John, carefully look for these five things. The Father thinks, and the Son thinks, and their thinking comes into union. The Father feels, and the Son feels, and their feelings come into union. Their words, their actions, etc. In other words, they think, feel, value, act, and speak in ways that are deeply satisfying and bring great joy to each other and are in full agreement with the other.*

*I do not know what the term is, but this is a more functional, practical union in the way their personalities function, whereas the first is a mutual indwelling of the Spirit, again of which I do not understand much.*

* 1. To be “in” the Father or the Son includes being in perfect agreement with the fullness of love and joy (Jn. 15:9-11). When Jesus said, “I am in the Father,” He was saying, “My thoughts, feelings, values, words, and actions resonate in and move the Father’s heart, and what He thinks and says resonates in Me. The Father is moved powerfully by what Jesus thinks and says, and vice versa.

*I know this is a little conceptual, and it is new for some of you. You are thinking, “Now wait a second!” But just hang in there, because if you can get familiar with these ideas—and they are not so complicated—you will read the Gospel of John with an entirely new attentiveness and a new fascination because you are not only seeing how the Father and the Son interact, but also a model of how the Father wants to interact with you, even in this age. It does not come to fullness in this age, but it will in the age to come. Yet it is substantial in this age, and that is the vision of how we want to live. In fact, that is the only way we can live with peace in the midst of trouble in a consistent way.*

*To be in the Father or to be in the Son is in this secondary sense, this functional sense of their personalities being in agreement with fullness of love and fullness of joy. When Jesus said, “I am in the Father,” one meaning of that—there are many meanings—one meaning He says, “I am in the Father. My thoughts, My feelings, My words enter His heart and move Him.”*

*It is also the other way around, “The Father is in Me. His thoughts, His words, they move Me.” Again, that is another element of them being one in the other. There are a number of different dimensions to this that are beyond my understanding. In fact, the Father found so much joy in Jesus’ words that He answered every one of His prayers. When Jesus would cry out for a miracle—every prayer for a miracle Jesus asked—the Father would answer. He had joy in Jesus’ words.*

*Here is the take-away point. The Father is moved powerfully by what Jesus thinks and does, and vice versa. Here is our take-away: the Father is moved by* ***our*** *words, and* ***we can be deeply moved by His words*** *and these other activities as well [mind (thinking), heart (feelings), will (values), words (speaking), and works (actions)].*

* 1. John 14:20 is one of the most dramatic and “extreme” statements in the Scripture—Jesus applied the relational reality that the Father enjoys with Him as a Man to our relationship with God. The Spirit enables God’s people to ***participate in the family dynamics of the Trinity*** by abiding in Christ. The fruit of this union of humans with God is *miracles* (v. 12), *answered prayers* (v. 13-14), and *obedient love* (v. 15) by the power and leadership of the indwelling Spirit (v. 16-17).

*This is the call to participate in the family dynamics of how the Father, Son, and Spirit interact. Then later on, just a few moments later, a few hours later, whatever, in John 17, Jesus prays for the unity He described in John 14-15. He prays His final intercession for the Church before He goes to the Garden of Gethsemane. He prays that His people throughout history would enter into this union, even in this age.*

*Now we will not enter into the fullness of this union until we have resurrected bodies and resurrected minds and everything, but, beloved, if Jesus so valued this—in His final recorded prayer for the Church, He is interceding that there would be those through history who would enter into this—I want to enter into this. I want this to be the vision of my life, no matter what my assignment. In ministry, in the marketplace, in the home, whatever, this is the premiere vision of our life.*

* 1. Thoughts and words are two of the main elements in the union between Father and Son and between Jesus and the Body of Christ. We grow spiritually as we exert effort to bring our thoughts and words into unity with God’s; this is foundational to abiding in Christ (Jn. 15:4-7).

*Two of the five elements in the union that I want to highlight are thoughts and words. Thoughts and words are so dynamic in the relationship of the Father and the Son, but they are also very important in the relationship of God and the Body of Christ. When we speak words that are under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, even though we might not feel a lot, those words actually enter God's heart.*

*We are in Him, and He is in us. Now He is in us by His Spirit, but our spirit is not in Him in that sense. We do not have an omnipresent spirit, but our words are in Him. Our deeds move Him so much that He rewards them forever. He will give us eternal rewards because they move Him so deeply. This is part of being in Him.*

*I am captured by the idea of how our words and thoughts can move His heart and how important they are. Our words and thoughts are not of no consequence. It is not like we are going to do a ministry trip, and we have to really focus in, but then for the next few weeks afterwards we just draw back and go wherever we want to go in our thoughts and words. Jesus is saying, “No, there is a higher vision for your life.”*

*You can live participating in this family dynamic, even now in this age. It is worth exerting effort to take hold of the reins of our mind and bring it into unity with God because when our thoughts and words are in unity with Him, they move Him, and there are many good consequences.*

*His words move us, too. What a way to live fascinated! Beloved, I want to live fascinated. I want Him to be in me, not just His Spirit in me. I want His words, His values, His desires to be in my mind and heart. I want Him in me in that second sense too.*

* 1. Thoughts and words in agreement with the Spirit bind people to God and each other in His grace. David understood the power of our thoughts and words in our relationship with God (Ps. 19:14).

14“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight…”

(Ps. 19:14)

*Thoughts and words that are in agreement with the Spirit bind people to God at the heart level, and they bind people to one another in the grace of God. I want to say that again. You have thoughts and words. People might think, “Ah, that is not a big deal. I mean I will say a few kind words at the right time and have right thoughts at the right time, and then the rest of the time my thoughts and words are my own.”*

*I want to tell you this—thoughts and words under the leadership of the Spirit will bind you to God and to people in the most glorious way! I am talking about at the heart level. Our spirit is already connected to the Lord. Now it is our mind and emotions that we want to be bound to the Lord and to others in the grace of God. In Psalm 19, David saw the power of thoughts and words, and he said, “May the words of my mouth and my thoughts, my meditations be pleasing to You, O Lord” (Psalm 19:14, paraphrased).*

* 1. The enemy seeks to disrupt our ongoing conversation with Jesus with busyness, anxiety, fear, and frustration, because he knows that fruit bearing comes from maintaining dialogue with God.

*The enemy wants to disrupt this. He does not want us to get a vision for this at all.*

* 1. In calling us to abide in Christ (15:1-11), Jesus elaborated on being our “life” (14:6). The Spirit is the divine Helper who came to lead us by His life into transforming union with God.

16“…the Father…will give you another Helper that He may abide with you forever…26But the Helper, the Holy Spirit…will teach you all things…” (Jn. 14:16, 26)

13“…the Spirit of truth…will guide [escort] you into all truth.” (Jn. 16:13)

*Now notice just the verse or two later in John 14:16, Jesus says that God is going to give you a Helper, the Holy Spirit. This promise of the Holy Spirit is in context to growing in this deep union with God.*

*A lot of people think of the Holy Spirit mostly as how to have power demonstrations in a worship service and that is good. But, beloved, in this context Jesus is talking about how God wants to relate to humans, and the promise of the guiding, teaching Holy Spirit—the supernatural dimension—is given in context to this relationship. Yes, the Holy Spirit does release power in our ministry, but, beloved, He releases power in our hearts, too, and brings us on the journey for which**John 14**is the context.*

* 1. The Holy Spirit wants to lead and help us in developing the same five elements in the union between the Father and Jesus—their *mind* (thinking), *heart* (feelings), *will* (values), *words* (speaking), and *works* (actions). We are to intentionally seek to think, feel, value, speak, and act in ways that are in agreement with God, knowing that this deeply moves the Father’s heart. Over time, what He thinks, feels, values, says, and does will fill our hearts us and powerfully move us.
  2. John 15 is a highpoint in Scripture related to our relationship with God. Jesus’ main exhortation was to “abide in Me” (v. 4-5) that we may bear much fruit that remains forever (v. 16).

5“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me [talks to Me], and I in him [I talk to him], bears much fruit… 16I chose you…that your fruit should remain…” (Jn. 15:5, 16)

*We mentioned last week that John 15, the abiding in Christ reality, is building on the foundation of John 14. So I have a little bit more on that. I covered some of this last week. There is a dimension of us abiding in Christ, a secondary dimension of Christ abiding in us. Those are two different realities that go together in the transforming union.*

* 1. Transforming union with God has two elements—we abide in Him, and He abides in us.
  2. ***Abide in Me***: The foundational activity related to growing in God is for us to abide in Christ. It involves three main activities: *talking with God*, *trusting His Word*, and *obeying His leadership*. Talking with God is the core activity of abiding. This is where it starts, but it includes more.
  3. ***Jesus abides in us***: There are two aspects of Jesus abiding in us: He abides, or lives, in our spirit *instantly* at our new birth, and abides, or manifests His presence in our hearts *progressively* as His activity increases in our mind and emotions. The Spirit renews our mind and emotions as we engage with Him. Both aspects are involved, but He emphasized the second aspect in John 15:5.
  4. Paul spoke of Jesus “dwelling in our heart” by His manifest presence (Eph. 3:17) and of Christ being formed in our hearts (Gal. 4:19). Jesus promised to manifest Himself to us (Jn. 14:21-23).

16…that He would grant you…to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, 17that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith… (Eph. 3:16–17)

* 1. ***Jesus abiding in our hearts***:This involves at least three activities: the indwelling Spirit *teaches us* about Jesus’ heart, Word, and will; *He inspires us* to obey or respond; He *empowers us* by renewing or transforming our mind and emotions (desires) to come into agreement with His.
  2. Some only emphasize our legal union with Christ—our justification by faith (Rom. 3:21-31). Others only emphasize our living union with Christ—our participation with His indwelling life.
  3. We embrace both the work that Jesus did ***for us*** on the cross and the work the Spirit does ***in us*** as He draws us into an intimate relationship with God as our Father and Bridegroom King.
  4. Bible study is to lead us into conversation with God by giving the “conversational material” for our prayer life. It is simply speaking the truths of the Word back to Him as we read it. Talking to God as we pray-read the Word is a practical way to strengthen our life of abiding in Christ. This makes prayer enjoyable. (***For an article on*** *How to “Pray-Read” the Word,* see mikebickle.org)

1. biblical Christianity
   1. We cannot bear eternal fruit in God’s eyes apart from this abiding relationship. It is pride to think that we have the strength spiritually to live rightly, to relate to people in God’s love, and to do the work of ministry that bears fruit that remains without connecting with Jesus.

5“He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.” (Jn. 15:5)

*Jesus said in John 15:5 that without this abiding relationship you cannot bear fruit that lasts forever in God's sight. You cannot. It is impossible. You cannot live a godly life. You cannot do ministry correctly. You cannot do family life rightly. Apart from abiding you cannot do this thing rightly. You simply do not have the power by the force of even your brilliant, winsome personality. It is not powerful enough to impart spiritual life to others.*

*The most devoted mom and dad, the most devoted pastor, disconnected from this abiding reality, cannot impart spiritual life to others by their devotion, their brilliance, and their winsome, kind personality. That is not enough to impart power to someone’s spirit.*

* 1. The Christian faith can be outworked in two very different lifestyles—“abiding Christianity,” which results in peace, joy, and spiritual fruitfulness, or “non-abiding Christianity,” resulting in spiritual boredom, burnout, and much anxiety, fear, and turmoil. Non-abiding Christians live with a troubled heart and lack peace, fruitfulness, and the feeling of being loved by God.

*There are two different kinds of lifestyles that are associated with Christianity. There is the abiding Christianity, and there is the non-abiding Christianity. The non-abiding Christianity—I am talking about us believers: we buy Christian ethics, we buy Christian morals, we do Christian activities, we have a Christian culture, but we are devoid of cultivating and contending for that abiding relationship.*

*Beloved, that is not biblical Christianity, though we are genuinely saved, and we are sincere. It does not have the power dimension in the heart that Jesus meant it to have. So I want to give you a vision to have this in your life. That is what we are talking about here in John 14-15.*

* 1. The believer who neglects to cultivate an abiding relationship with Jesus will suffer spiritual boredom and burnout. This approach to Christianity is very common, but it is not biblical.
  2. Some who embrace Christian ethics and activities do not always walk in biblical Christianity, which only flows from a life of abiding in Christ. Jesus spoke to those who had a name for being alive and radical for God, but in truth were spiritually dull on the inside (Rev. 3:3).
  3. We can be genuinely saved and have a lifestyle filled with Christian ethics and activity, and yet live without abiding in Christ because we do not regularly dialogue with Him. The fight for living faith is found in contending for a lifestyle of abiding that regularly brings our thoughts and words to Jesus and takes time to be absorbed in His (Jn. 15:7).

*Amen and amen, let's stand. “Lord, I want to cultivate, I want to contend for, an abiding love. That is what we are talking about, contending for an abiding life. It does not come automatically. Nobody can do it for you. Lord, come as close as You want. Lord, I want to come close. I want to be with You, God. I was made to dwell with You, glorious God. Take My heart. I want to be consumed with You, Father.”*