

### STATEMENT OF FAITH

We trust the reality that God is love (1 John 4:8). Love is other-centered, not self-seeking. The full representation of the love of God came in human flesh through the person of Jesus Christ, who created all things in the universe by the word of His mouth, lived a life of service to humanity and saved us from our sins, our rebellion, our own desire to live without Him. By His death and resurrection we have assurance of a future without pain, hurt and selfishness.

We also trust the ancient scriptures hold the evidence for the story of this passionate God, how He intended the world to be, what happened to get the world in the mess that it is in and if this mess is ever going to end.

Throughout these studies from the books of the bible we will see enough evidence that can give us assurance God loves us deeply, has won the hearts of most of the universe, except for this little planet, but His light is shining on the heart of humanity brighter and brighter each day. As restored followers of Christ, we will also show outwardly how to live a life of other-centered love, helping others in physical, material, emotional and spiritual need.

### INTRO

Chapters 14-16 present more of the final speech that Jesus gave to His disciples. The last class includes the clearest words of Christ about God's character, His form of government and His intention for the life of the disciples and therefore all of us. The most powerful words of Jesus, unfortunately, do not yet appear that it has been accepted by the majority of His followers. The fact that Jesus declares that those who see Him see the Father (John 14:9), that He wants us not to be servants but friends (John 15:15), and even that it is not necessary that He serves as a mediator (John 16:26) are constantly ignored by Christians over the ages. If our theology is to have its centrality in Christ, we will consider all those difficult words given by Jesus with humility and accept the radical message of Christ.

#### 1) HE WHO SEES ME SEES THE FATHER

John 14: 5-14

Christ said to Thomas that there is no other way to the Father. We could never really understand who the Father is except for what Jesus did. He showed us the true character of God, and demonstrated that He and the Father are united in the same purpose (v. 11). Philip also did not understand or accept the words of Jesus because he asked Jesus to show the Father (v. 8). Perhaps Philip's question is the same for most people. What is the Father like? We know that Jesus is kind, compassionate, kind, humble, but the Father can not be like that, can He? Jesus' words are extremely important, v. 9, "Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

Jesus is equal with the Father and the Father is just like Jesus. There is no difference. God is just as kind, compassionate, humble as the Son.

#### 2) THE HOLY SPIRIT

John 14:15-31

If Christ had stayed on earth, clothed with his humanity, the tendency of the disciples would be to stay around Christ instead of spreading the message around the world. Perhaps they would always have the idea of not going too far from Christ. That is why

notes:

Christ told them that he would return to the Father. However, He would not leave them alone, but would send the Comforter (helper, attorney), v. 26. As the Spirit would not be physically present everywhere, but in people's hearts and lives, the message could be shared with power around the world (15:27) and that's exactly what happened.

### 3) THE TRUE VINE

John 15:1-17

Christ called Himself the true vine. Israel and the Jews considered themselves the vine, several biblical passages served as the foundation for that belief (Isaiah 5:1-7, Psalm 80:8-11, Psalm 44:1-3). But Jesus declares that He is the true vine, a clear sign to the disciples that he way was not in the nation of Israel, but in Himself. Abiding in the vine is essential, and Christ associates this abiding picture with keeping his commandments, to love Him and others. Jesus commands his disciples to love (v. 12, 17). One of the most important phrases in the Bible is in verse 15, "I no longer call you servants (slaves), because a servant (slave) does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you."

The relationship that Jesus wants us is the relationship of friends, simply because Jesus revealed everything that He had to reveal. There are no secrets, no elite or hierarchy. Friends share details of life and give their lives for one another (v. 13).

### 4) NO MORE DARK SPEECH

John 16

Chapter 16 summarizes the essence of Jesus' teachings. Often, by the circumstances of our rebellion and sin, Christ can not communicate clearly, but tends to use parables, so that by comparisons, we can understand his teachings and his lessons. Jesus has much to say (v. 12), but unfortunately his people could not get everything at once. The work of the Holy Spirit, however, is to present the truth bit by bit as long as we keep searching for it. The more we learn, the more revelation we are going to have.

Those last moments with his disciples were being very difficult. They could not understand many of the things presented to them (v. 18). But even amid little understanding, Jesus said that there would come an hour to speak clearly about the Father, without comparisons and parables, dark speech (v. 25-30). And a phrase practically ignored by almost all Christians is said to the disciples, v. 26, 27 "In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I will request of the Father on your behalf; for the Father Himself loves you..."

Jesus says there is no need to ask for anything in our favor, that intercession, mediation is not necessary when we have to approach the Father. Why not? v. 27, "For the Father himself loves you." If God loves us, that means we do not need someone to calm Him down, to appease Him. Mediation is only necessary because we ask for it. The people asked for it in Exodus 20:19 so that Moses would be between them and God, Moses told them not to be afraid (v. 20) because He knew God's heart for the people and for Him. Even if these words don't quite sink in, just think for a moment...

notes:

who was between Moses and God? Who was between Abraham and God? Between Job and God? And many other friends of God when they had a discourse with God in the Old Testament? Nobody. Even the disciples had no one between them and God. Since we believe that Christ is God and equal with the Father, then we can see that no one was mediating the relationship between them and God himself.

Unfortunately this truth is highly ignored and never propagated by Christians around the world, but according to Jesus own testimony, it is one of the clearest teachings about the Father without using parables, comparisons or dark speech. The obvious question is, "then why did He institute the sacrificial system of the Old Testament? Why does the Bible use the words intercessor / mediator then?" The simple answer is, "because we ask." When you feel afraid of the voice of God as Israel did in the wilderness, or fear the judgment, or the consequence of disobedience, God condescends to our need and presents Christ as our advocate. But he is not there to change the Father, but to defend ourselves from the attacks of the accuser, the enemy, and who would not accept a lawyer who is defending our cause? So, will you accept this testimony of Jesus?

notes: