

John 14-15-26
Proof of love!

Preamble:

Review mission statement (at least once a month).

Prayer for illumination:

Please join me in prayer.

Sermon introduction:

What is the proof that someone loves Jesus?

Is attending Bible college or seminary proof of love for Jesus? Not necessarily!

Is naming your children Peter, James, John, Malachi, Abraham, Calvin, Luther, and Mary proof of love for Jesus? No!

Is carrying around a massive ESV Calf Skin study Bible proof of love for Jesus? No!

Is reading the theology of the Puritans proof of love for Jesus? Not necessarily!

Is placing your kids in private Christian school proof of love for Jesus? Maybe, but not necessarily!

Is giving away tons of money proof of love for Jesus? Not always!

Ok, so what is proof that someone loves Jesus? Jesus tells us four times in Matthew 14:15-26.

John 14:15 (ESV) — 15 "If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

John 14:21 (ESV) — 21a Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me...

John 14:23 (ESV) — 23 Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him..."

John 14:24 (ESV) — 24 Whoever does not love me does not keep my words.

Proof of love for Jesus is obedience to Christ's commands.

Many of us want to obey Christ commands, but it is often hard. Isn't it? Take heart, these verses contain good news. God promises to help us to obey Christ's commands. Who or what specifically helps us? The spirit, the son, and the Scriptures. More specifically...

The spirit empowers obedience.

The son empowers obedience.

The Scriptures guide obedience.

First, the Spirit empowers obedience.

How? By helping us!

John 14:15–17 (ESV) — 15 "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. **16** And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever,

What does another helper mean?

Another helper!

The Greek word specifically means another of the same kind, i.e., someone like Jesus Himself who will take His place and do His work. The Spirit of Christ is the third person of the Trinity, having the same essence of deity as Jesus and as perfectly one with Him as He is with the Father. He is a person and not a force.

Another helper!

The Gk. word translated "Helper" was used in legal language for an advocate for the defense (1 John 2:1), and more generally for one called upon for help. Jesus was such a help for the disciples; and after His ascension, the Holy Spirit assumed this work. (RSB)

17 even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

The Holy Spirit is the spirit of truth. He not only helps us, but he reveals truth to us. Furthermore, he dwells inside of Christians (and only Christians). Think about that for a moment, the Spirit of God dwells inside of you right now! He dwells inside of you to help you understand truth and to help you obey Christ's commands.

Illustration:

A few mornings a week I go to the "Wellness Center at North Park" to lift weights and play tennis. When lifting weights, it is helpful to have a spotter, especially when doing the bench press. It is the spotter's job to ensure that the lifter can finish his last few reps without dropping the weights on his chest (thus crushing his chest).

The one doing the bench press lies on the bench and lifts the bar above his chest. The spotter stands above him. Most lifters want to stay within the 8-12 rep range. Usually by the 9, 10, or 11th rep the lifter is starting to get tired. He often slows down dramatically. At this point, the spotter says words of encouragement (you got this, that's it, keep going, I will help you, etc...). When it is obvious that the lifter can no longer press the bar above his chest, the spotter reaches down and helps him lift the weight all the way up so that it can be safely put on the rack.

Sometimes, at the last minute the lifter will say in a panicked voice, "Help, help, help." I know someone who was recently benching by himself. He did not have a spotter. He was lifting too much weight and was pushing himself a little too far. On his 8 or 9th rep, he brought the 135-pound bar down and could not lift it up. He looked around in a panic and said to the closet person, "help, help, help." The stranger ran over and helped him lift the bar to the rack.

This is how many of us think about the Holy spirit. We only want to help us at the last minute when we are really in trouble. Most of the time we don't think we need that much help. I

can handle most of the reps myself. We think, "I got this." We don't! We need the Holy Spirit's help every moment of our lives.

Application:

John 14:15-16 (ESV) — 15 "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. **16** And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever,

The holy spirit is ready and willing to help us. He dwells inside of us all the time. He wants to help us to obey Christ's commands.

When do you need his help this week?

Do you need help to forgive?

Do you need help to flee sexual sin?

Do you need help to exercise costly love?

Do you need help to not be anxious?

Do you need help with being content with your current circumstances?

God has given you a divine helper. He is the holy Spirit, and he is a person who loves you and cares for you.

Don't wait until the last minute to ask for help. Rely on his help all the time. How do we rely on his help? Through prayer.

Another way that the holy spirit helps us is by giving us illumination from the Scriptures. As we see more and more of the glory of Christ by the power of the Spirit we are changed more and more into Christ's image.

Speaking of the son, he also empowers us for obedience. This brings us to the second point.

First, the Spirit empowers obedience!

Second, the son empowers obedience.

How does the son empower obedience? By reminding us of his presence!

John 14:18-20 (ESV) — 18 "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. **19** Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. **20** In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.

Jesus says in verse 18; "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you." This raises the question-when will he come to them?

Was he saying, "I will come to you in my resurrection body after I die and rise from the grave." In other words, he may have been referring to his post-resurrection appearances to the disciples (20:19-29).

Or was he saying, "I will come to you through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit."

After all, Jesus promised, just before He ascended, "I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matt. 28:20b). How was he with them? Through the Spirit.

According to John 4:13, Christ abides in us through the Spirit.

1 John 4:13 (ESV) — 13 By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.

Scholars are divided on which event Christ is referring to (his post resurrection sightings or Pentecost). Can't both be true? What is the point? Christ was with the disciples and he will be with us ALWAYS by the power of the Spirit.

Illustration:

Some people work *really* hard to be in the presence of famous people.

One article says,

"There is a 16-year-old girl living in the L.A. area who is famous amongst famous people. She's met everyone — *everyone* — from Miley to Oprah to Skrillex, and is on a first-name basis with teen heartthrobs like Justin Bieber... *and* the guys from One Direction. She's not an actress, she's not in the industry, nor is she the daughter of a celebrity. She's just a regular girl named Sarah, who has somehow managed to amass an enormous collection of photos — *over 4,600* — in which she's posing cheek-to-cheek with Hollywood stars. She... has earned her the nickname Stalker Sarah on the internet." (jezebel.com)

How does stalker Sarah manage to be in the presence of all these celebrities? Lots of really hard work, late nights, travel, and meticulous research... all this to be in the presence of other human beings that no one will remember 100 years from now.

If you are a Christian, you can be in the presence of Jesus all the time. Even better, he dwells inside of you all the time, through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Illustration:

Imagine learning that Jesus is in Jerusalem right now, physically, bodily present.

Every single airline to the middle East would be booked.

Every boat, train, and bus in Europe and the middle East heading to Jerusalem would be packed.

And even if you ever managed to get close to Jesus, there would be long lines and great crowds of people waiting in front of you.

It would be nearly impossible to get within one hundred feet of him.

But we can be in Christ's presence right now through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Application:

This means...

Christ is with us in the hard times.
He is with us in the good times.
He is with us when we are lonely.
He is with us when we are scared.
He is with us when we are tempted.
He is with us when we are mourning the loss of a child, a parent, or a sibling.
He is with us when we are depressed and discouraged.

He is with us when we think that no one else is watching!!!

He is with us when we need someone to talk to.

One author writes,

One of the most devastating thoughts anyone can entertain when he is going through trouble is, "I am alone." After that comes self-pity, and then the thought that "no one cares." These are common feelings but unnecessary for the believer... Even when we do not feel Christ's presence, he is within us. (K. Hughes)

How does the son empower obedience? By reminding us of his presence!

How else does the son empower obedience? By motivating us with revelation!

John 14:21-25 (ESV) — 21 Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him." **22** Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, "Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?" **23** Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. **24** Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me. **25** "These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you.

These verses are packed. I want to go back to verse 21, a great summary of verses 21-25.

John 14:21 (ESV) — 21 Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him."

Here is the logic of this difficult passage...

Jesus says, "If you keep my commandments, it proves that you love me. If you love me that proves that you are a Christian, which means that you are a child of God. If you are a child of God, then God the father loves you as much as I love you.

The rest of the NT is very clear—we don't earn God's love by our obedience. Our obedience proves we are Christians, which proves that he already loves us. We become children of God not through obedience, but through faith in Christ alone.

Let me read the verse again.

John 14:21 (ESV) — 21 Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”

Here is the takeaway. The more we obey Christ’s commands, proving that we love him, the more Christ will manifest himself to us.

This is the thing that we need the most!!!

The older I get the more I realize that I only need one thing. I need to see more of Christ’s glory. When we see Christ’s glory we become more like him.

2 Corinthians 3:17–18 (ESV) — 17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. **18** And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

Christ manifests more of his glory to us as we increasingly obey his commands. Where do we see his glory? In the Scriptures!

Application:

I don’t need more money.
I don’t need more friends.
I don’t need more things.
I don’t need more achievements.

The thing that you and I need the most is to see the glory of Christ!!! Christ reveals this to us as we obey his commands.

James Montgomery Boice writes,

Many Christians would be willing to do spectacular things if by that means they could come to know Christ better. But they are unwilling to do the commonplace things that are involved in simple obedience. Will you do them? If you will, you will most certainly grow in God’s grace. If you obey, Christ will increasingly unveil his heart to you.

Does God seem distant to you?
Do you feel very unconnected to Jesus?
Are you lacking in passion for the church and spiritual things?

Maybe, just maybe, it is because there is an area of unconfessed sin in your life. That thing that you think no one knows about.

Love for God leads to obedience to God, and obedience to God leads to more revelation of Christ’s glory which leads to increased joy.

We don’t obey to get stuff from God. But when we obey, God promises to reveal more of his glory to us.

I know we are supposed to obey, but what do we obey? This brings us to the third and final point.

*First, the spirit empowers obedience.
Second, the son empowers obedience.*

Third, the Scriptures guide obedience.

John 14:25–26 (ESV) — 25 “These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. **26** But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things

Does this mean that the Spirit will teach them about chemistry, calculus, and differential equations? No! The spirit will teach them “all the things” they need to know to fulfill their apostolic mission of preaching the gospel to the nations (16:13).

Read verse 26 again.

and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

Have you ever wondered how the disciples were able to right down everything that Jesus said and did so accurately? Here is how—Jesus promised that he would send them the Holy Spirit to give them supernatural power to remember all the things that he said to them. Amazing!

This is one of the reasons that we affirm the doctrine of verbal plenary inspiration. Every word and every part of the NT (and the OT for that matter) is from the Holy Spirit. God gave the apostles supernatural Holy Spirit endowed capabilities to remember all the things he said. Those things were recorded for us in the gospels. Then the apostles or their close associates wrote most of the rest of the NT. Explain the theory of organic inspiration.

A similar promise is made to the disciples in John 16:13-15.

Application:

Christ says that those who love him will obey his commands.

Where are his commands found? They are found in the Bible.

How can we trust the Bible to accurately portray Christ’s commands? Because the Holy Spirit gave the authors of the Bible supernatural ability to remember and record all the things that he taught them.

This means that the Bible contains the very words of God.

Let me ask you a question.

How well do we know his words and thoughts?

If the Bible confuses you, ask the author for help in understanding it.

Here is the good news! God has not left us in the dark. He tells us exactly what he expects from us in the pages of sacred Scripture.

When we obey his commands, he reveals more and more of himself to us.

Conclusion:

The spirit empowers obedience.

The son empowers obedience.

The Scriptures guide obedience.

When someone says,

“Lebron James is the greatest basketball player of all time.” Someone else will probably say “prove it.”

When someone says,

“DeLeon’s is the best Mexican food in Spokane.” Someone else will probably say, “prove it.”

When someone says,

“Toyota’s are the most reliable car on the road.” Someone else will probably say, “prove it.”

Bold claims need to be substantiated with proof.

When someone says,

“I love Jesus.” Jesus says, “prove it.” How do we prove it? By obeying his commands.

Let’s pray...