

WHAT PROVES ONE'S LOVE FOR JESUS?

John 21:15-17

Introduction: Jesus asked Peter three times "do you love me?" Jesus didn't ask Peter what he thought about the Kingdom of God or about the teachings Jesus had given or anything about the new thoughts and ideas Jesus had brought to the people or even did Peter trust him. Jesus asked the question that tested the soul as a doctor tests the pulse of one's heart beat. "Peter, do you love me?" What if Jesus asked YOU the same question today how would you answer? The same as Peter? Remember why Jesus asked Peter about his love in the first place? Peter had denied three times knowing Jesus. Is there any reason for Jesus to wonder about YOUR love for Him?

I. LOVE FOR JESUS MAY BE ABSENT BECAUSE:

1. Outward visible acts do not necessarily prove love.
 - Too often one's life is filled with non-essentials.
 - Ever spend a night in tears and prayer over the lost?
2. A church position does not necessarily prove love.
 - Remember one of Jesus' disciples betrayed Him.
 - Peter even denied knowing Him
 - Eventually all but one of the disciples left when Jesus was captured and crucified.
 - Being admired by others does not mean you have a sincere love for Jesus.
3. Being a church member does not prove love.
 - Three of Jesus' disciples followed Him closer than the others (Peter, James, John) but all twelve did follow Him.
 - 75% of the membership of most churches is not in worship on any given Sunday, where is their love?
 - Being a church member for all one's life does not alone prove love for Jesus.
 - Some have been church members for years and then were gloriously saved. Where was their love for all those years?
4. Being active in a church does not prove love.
 - Of the disciples, who was the most verbal, most active? Peter! Yet Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him.
 - Why is a person active in his/her church anyhow? Because nobody else will do whatever it is that he/she is doing? What motivates one to serve in his/her church? Is it love for Jesus or is it devotion to the Pastor or a staff member?
5. Outward acts can reveal an obedient heart, but not all outward acts are from an obedient heart. Therefore love for Jesus can be absent from outward acts.

II. LOVE FOR JESUS IS NECESSARY FOR SALVATION

1. Every promise of God to man involving salvation is made in Jesus.
 - Pardon, forgiveness, eternal life, joint heir, new body, heaven, being a child of God, and acceptance by God is only through Jesus, God's Son.
2. Every spiritual act is either of love or mockery.
 - Whether it be worship, observing the ordinances, praying, Bible study or anything else associated with God's Church,
 - If there is an absence of compassion, of tears, of concern, of obedience, then whatever is done as a spiritual act is mockery and not of love.

III. WHAT PROVES THAT A PERSON LOVES JESUS?

1. There will be a desire to be active for Jesus doing whatever He wants.
 - One will not be content to waste away his/her time and opportunities.
2. There will be a desire to experience, receive more from Jesus.
 - One will be faithful in studying the Bible, in praying, in witnessing.
3. There will be a desire to love others.
 - One will love those nobody else would love, the unruly, the hateful, the lost, the backslidden Christian, and make that love known to those people.
 - The love of Christ will actually flow through that person who loves Him.

CONCLUSION:

1. *"...not everyone who saith unto me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of the Father."*
2. *"...if ye love me, keep my commandments..."*
3. A person can **appear** to love Jesus and yet not have sincere love in his/her heart.
4. Anybody who does not obey and serve the Lord Jesus proves that there is no real love for Jesus in his/her heart.
5. If Jesus asked **you** that question, "Lovest thou Me?" Could you honestly say "Yes Lord, I do with all my heart." Remember, the Lord knows the truth.