

Listening and Talking . . .

We have started a new sermon series entitled **Avenues of The Holy Spirit**. Two weeks ago, we discussed how we can be released from a prison of negativism and feeding on defeat. I stated that “we are already with God and in God. Jesus Christ came to show us that God is all love and mercy. We are victors, not victims. It’s the greatest news ever heard . . . and the greatest promise ever given! It’s the promise of victory!”

A week ago, we discussed how we can be freed from a cage of hatred involving jealousy and resentment. Most importantly, we emphasized that “love burns out hatred, and if we love each other enough, we will forgive.”

This past Sunday, August 21, we discussed how totally obeying God’s law of Love and ‘Letting Go and Letting God’ can free us from addictions such as, prejudice, envy, bad temper, worry, drugs, caffeine, food, possessiveness and other appetites we find ourselves encaged in. Love is the only solution to our problems!

Our natural instinct is trying to fix pain, to control it, or even, foolishly, attempting to understand it. The ego insists on understanding. That’s why Jesus praises a certain quality even more than love, and he calls it *faith*.

The full life of faith becomes a life of deep joy and rest (prayer). Once we are ‘attached to the Vine (Christ)’ to use Jesus’ words (see John 15:4-5), we don’t have to be anxious about many things (see Luke 10:41). We don’t have to be worried about the next moment or about tomorrow (see Matthew 6:34). We can trust that we are being guided; in fact, almost everything is seen as guidance! Basically, we switch from the fixing, fully understanding, and controlling mode to the trusting, listening, and allowing mode.



This does not mean we do nothing: quite the contrary. “Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). Faith is much closer to our words “trust” and “confidence” than it is about believing doctrines to be true. Holding confidence that *God is good, God can be trusted, and God can be actively involved in my life* are the practical features of biblical faith. Faith-filled people are, quite simply, usable for larger purposes because they live in and listen to a much Larger Self.

When we can experience God in the moment and see God’s guidance in the events of our lives, our heart’s and soul’s response to God is a “yes.” If there are changes and fixes that have to be made, we can now take care to them in an appropriate, calm, and positive way. We can trust in God’s way of love. That is what characterizes a mature believer.

Blessings on all as we journey together,
Pastor Tom Cici