
THANK YOU

For the Life You Lived

Today we start a short three-part series entitled 'Thank You'. As we lead up to Thanksgiving Sunday – a time we set apart every year to give God glory and share testimony of where we have seen God at work, I thought one of the things that we are continually thankful for is the life, death and eternal reign of our Saviour Jesus.

Over the next few weeks, we are going to look at being thankful for the life Jesus lived, the price He paid and for the eternal life He offers.

Image Bearers

As humans we are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). We are designed to reflect God's glory.

Jesus is our model of what it looks like to live in complete obedience and intimacy with God as a human.

This is the life to which He calls us. How He lived His life makes a difference for us and how we live ours.

Adam and Jesus

Because of the life of Jesus, and the cross and the resurrection we can live the way we were designed to live.

The problem is our sinful nature and how we continue to work out our salvation. To allow the wealth of spiritual blessings we have in Christ to make their way to the surface of our lives (Ephesians 1:3-6).

Jesus needed to step in and live the life He did because of the broken relationship with the Father through the sin that entered in through Adam (Romans 5:17-19).

Adam's disobedience is attributed to the world. Jesus's obedience is attributed to the world.

Because of Adam's sin, the entire human race is guilty and stands condemned before God. Because of Jesus's obedience, the entire human race can be acquitted and become right before God.

Adam's sin changed the nature of all those born according to the flesh. Jesus' obedience changed the nature of all those born again by the Holy Spirit.

The same Spirit that led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil leads us to Jesus, clothes us with Christ, reckons to us the righteousness of Christ, forgives us all our sins and empowers us to live holy lives in imitation of Him who resisted the devil's temptation with the almighty word of God.

The Holy Spirit takes away Adam's failure and replaces it with Jesus' success.

The life, death and resurrection of Jesus makes it possible for you and me to live a life that looks a lot like His and His life was a life lived in submission and obedience to the Father.

A Life of Submission

Submission is quietly choosing to let another be in control. Biblical submission is self-denial out of love for God and others. It's the way of Jesus' Cross and it's the way He lived every day of His life. Submission is how Jesus teaches us to pray in the Lord's Prayer: "Your kingdom come; your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Jesus lived a life of submission. Submission is demonstrated in the Godhead. Jesus is co-equal with the Father and the Spirit in the Trinity and yet He chose to live His life on earth in submission to God in all things, at all times. And this brought Him great joy and peace and power! Jesus's submission to the Father models to us how we are to walk in relationship with Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The Bible is clear that Jesus came to do the Father's will (John 6:38; Hebrews 10:7). It says He did nothing by Himself; He did only what He saw the Father doing (John 5:19,30). The life He lived, His works were those the Father gave Him to finish (John 5:36).

A life of submission to God the Father and Jesus is empowered by the Holy Spirit. By living in submission to God, His word, and other people, Jesus shows us that humility leads to true power, love for others is the path to true freedom.

Jesus' Greatest Desire

Jesus' greatest desire is that He would be in us like the Father was with Him so that we will be mature in this oneness, so that the whole world would know that Jesus came, sent by the Father that they might experience His love (John 17:20-26).

Abiding in Love

We can't just hope to copy Jesus in the way He lived. We cannot force fruit to grow, just as a branch cannot bear fruit by itself (John 15:4). We cannot bear fruit that lasts unless we learn how to abide in Jesus (John 15:5). It's as we worship Him and enjoy His love that He creates the fruit. We cannot create fruit, but we can live in intimacy! A tree produces fruit by simply abiding, not striving.

When we abide in Jesus, the true vine, it just happens (John 15:1). Our one desire is to be in love with Jesus, to love Him well and to abide in that love until it flows from us and touches every man, woman and child we meet each day. To live like Jesus is to learn how to love!

What Does Love Look Like?

To be the love of Christ to those around us, to express our thanks for the life He lived is to live like Him. We need to ask Jesus to give us eyes to see what their needs are and reach out to them with His heart. This is how we see Jesus living in obedience to the Father and meeting the needs of the people out of an overflow of love from the Father.

Discussion Questions

1. In what ways do you feel you reflect God's glory in your daily life? Can you share a personal experience where you felt you were living as an image bearer of God?
2. How does understanding the contrast between Adam's disobedience and Jesus' obedience influence your perspective on sin and redemption?
3. What does biblical submission look like in your own life? Can you share an example of a situation where you chose to submit to God's will, even when it was difficult?
4. What are you personally thankful for in how Jesus lived His life?
5. In John 15, Jesus talks about the importance of abiding in Him. What practices help you to remain connected to Jesus? How do you experience His love flowing through you?
6. How can you actively demonstrate the love of Christ to those around you this week? What specific needs do you see in your community that you feel called to address? Heidi Baker says, "This should be our daily question: what does it look like to manifest the love of Christ to those that I meet today?"