

## **ONLY THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT – PART 1 (LOVE AND FORGIVENESS)**

Romans 8:11 ... “But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.”

Today we start a series of devotionals to illustrate that many of God’s expectations for us, cannot be achieved except through his Holy Spirit living in us and through us.

**LOVING OTHERS** – In John 13:34 Jesus says: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.”

Jesus loves you enough to die for you and he did exactly that. He gave up his throne in heaven to save you. He suffered torture and hardship to save you. That is what Jesus did for you. Now, let us ask ourselves what we would do for another. Is there someone on earth who you would NOT die for? Perhaps your worst enemy, the bully in school, the man who raped you, the woman who stole from you, the drug dealer who got your son hooked on Shabu? It would be very hard to die for such persons, would it not? But Christ died for you while you were still a sinner, while you were still living an immoral lifestyle, while you were still cheating your customers or lying to your wife. There are people in this world who you will find impossible to love, unless you allow the Holy Spirit to empower you with such an ability.

**FORGIVENESS** – Jesus said in Matthew 6:12 and 15: “And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors...if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

Forgiving others is one of the pillars of our faith. So much so that Jesus tells us that God will not forgive us if we do not forgive others. Your faith has no possibility of growing, and your relationship with Christ has no possibility of maturing as long as there are people you refuse to forgive. But how do you genuinely forgive the wife who abandoned you and your children, the drunk driver who killed your father, or the man who raped your daughter? In these difficult situations you must allow the Holy Spirit to guide you to a place of forgiveness, because you alone may not be able to do it.

This and the next two devotionals look at the expectations of God that can only be met by giving the Holy Spirit the freedom to live through you. I want you to evaluate your own life and ask yourself if the Holy Spirit is truly free to do through you, what may be impossible to do under your own power. If you are a believer who resists letting the Holy Spirit live God’s purpose through you, I urge you to prayerfully reconsider your decision. In our next devotional we will address persecution and joy.

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