

Incorruptible Love of a Friend

Let's gather together. It is always through gathering together that anything happens. Nothing ever happens unless we are gathered together in one mind. The Holy Spirit would not have been able to come to earth at Pentecost if they had not been gathered together (Acts 2:1). When the day of Pentecost had fully come they were all together in one mind and one place. You can imagine how those who really loved our Master were together, how they stuck close together for the next ten days after he entered into heaven. And after he ascended, it says that the apostles were continually in the temple courts praising and worshipping. They were together, not out fishing. Lk 24:49-53 — "...blessing and extolling God." There were always places in the temple courts where they could gather — like this [like the courts of Naphtali].

And then in Eph 6:23-24 it says, "Shalom to the brothers, and love joined with faith from God the Father of our Master Yahshua the Messiah, the Anointed One. Grace, His favor, be with all those who love our Messiah and Savior Yahshua with an undying and incorruptible love — a love that does not wane, it does not disintegrate." Actually it says grace be to those who have contagious love. (Sometimes there are these little bugs that get on people and they are contagious. In community you have to exercise a great deal of caution so that they are not passed on to everyone, because they are contagious.) Well, this talks about contagious love. How is your love? Is your love contagious? It is that love for a friend that you will never let down. There is no greater love than for a man to lay down his life for his friend. In a way, working like this [baking bread all night for the fair] you are laying down your life for your friend, because if you didn't do it, it wouldn't get done and nothing would be accomplished. But we are called to lay our lives down in a greater way than baking all night. Our Master laid His life down for his friends. Jn 15:12-13 — "No one has greater love than he who lays his life down for his friends."

We are developing a friendship, knowing really who our friends are and who they are not. It is done by testing. If the seed went down deep into our heart in the fertile soil, we would never fall away when hard times come (Mt 13:23).

Like with being purified, this testing is the testing of our faith. It is the salvation of our souls (1 Pet 1:9). He has our spirit, but now He is interested in our souls. "Come back, come back man." [Like He's been calling man back to Him ever since Adam fell. (See story 21 November.)] 1 Pet 1:7-9 — Being purified is the goal of our faith. It cannot happen unless we have this kind of love that we would love our friend so much that we would lay our life down for him. It's the goal of our faith — it's the goal line (verse 22). We are purified by obeying the truth. It hurts us to obey the truth sometimes, but by that we are purified. Then, above all, what does 1 Pet 4:7-8 say? "The end, culmination of all things is at hand, therefore keep sound-minded, self-controlled so you can pray and, above all things, have an intense unfailing love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins." If you are not self-controlled, you cannot pray. Laying down your life for your friend is what you are called to do. Who is your friend? If you really have a friend, you will lay down your life for him. You will love that friend. A friend is the one who sticks closer than a brother. We have many brothers, but how many friends do you have? We have a friendship. It is a miraculous thing to come into that friendship. We've seen a few come into this who did not have that love in their hearts (they are not of us). But grace be to those who have an unfailing love for our Master. This is the covenant.