

April 22, 2018

4th Week of Easter

1 John 3:16-24

John argues humankind would not be capable of knowing the full extent of what love looks like without seeing it in Christ's self-sacrifice on the cross. It is by this we know what love is. The death of Christ was not a colossal accident; it had a purpose. His was a life given, not taken from Him. Christ's example calls His followers to live on behalf of our sisters and brothers (Rick Williamson, 2010).

¹⁷ “If a person has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need—and that person doesn’t care—how can the love of God remain in him?” The Greek phrase is stronger than most modern translations. This one says, “doesn’t care”, NIV says, “has no pity”. The actual meaning is “to close the bowels.” In this era, the intestines were considered the basis of compassion. To actively close off your emotion and action requires intention. If this is our response to the needs right in front of us, we’re lacking the love of Christ.

The world knows about love because Jesus actively and historically laid down His life for us. It was love demonstrated. Our faith in God comes with an accompanying compassion from Christ. To deny its demonstration requires deliberate interruption or termination of the Lord’s generous Spirit within us.

God gives to us what He commands us to give away.

Is our compassionate generosity active?

What helps our readiness to help others?

Next week: *1 John 4:7-21*

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SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THIS WEEK:

Today: *Psalm 131* (What is God saying to you?)

Monday: *Jeremiah 23*

Tuesday: *1 Peter 5:1-11*

Wednesday: *Ezekiel 34:11-16*

Thursday: *Isaiah 40:9-11*

Friday: *1 Timothy 3:1-13*

Saturday: *2 Corinthians 4*

Loving Shepherd, You love us and watch over us always, in our joys and in our pain. Help us not be deceived by the world around us. Thank You for the great gift of Your love and protection and for our faith in You, which shapes our lives. May our hearts be open to Your great love and may we carry that love to those we pass each day who need it most. In the Name of Christ, Amen.

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