

Keep Calm and Love Jesus John 14:15-31

Perhaps you have seen the popular slogan on memes, t-shirts, or billboards: “Keep Calm and fill in the blank.”

- Keep Calm and Carry On
- Keep Calm and Chill
- Keep Calm and Be My Valentine
- Keep Calm and Eat Kale
- Keep Calm and Eat a Donut
- Keep Calm and Put Bacon On
- Keep Calm and Avoid Zombies
- Keep Calm and Blame the Russians
- “I Can’t Keep Calm I’m Scottish”
- “If I see another ‘Keep Calm Slogan,’ I’m going to Scream”

We might summarize these verses as “**Keep Calm and Love Jesus.**”

- The disciples were **troubled & fearful**: “Let not your heart be troubled, neither let them be afraid” **14:27**.
 - Jesus comforts them (and us) by reminding them of many glorious **promises**.
 - There’s much that can trouble **us** (read the news, or in our own family)...
 - **We fight fear by trusting in the promises of God.**
 - We can keep calm not in our strength, but in the strength of our Triune God.
- Notice also the reoccurring emphasis on **loving Jesus** (**15, 21, 23-24**). \
- So we see the call of Christ (*to love him*) and we see the comfort of Christ (in this series of promises).

Jesus is preparing the disciples for his departure.

- He has spoken about the **distant** future (**14:2-6**).
- Now he speaks about the **immediate** future (to keep loving him, and living by the power of the Spirit, and to respond appropriately to his imminent death).

It is remarkable that in the face of his death, Jesus is focused on their good.

- He died with remarkable poise.

So let’s look at this text in two parts (1) Love Jesus, (2) Keep Calm (with four promises that can bring us peace in the midst of fearful circumstances).

#1: Love Jesus (14:15)

You see this theme: **v. 15, 21, 23-24**

V. 15: “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

- Verse 21: “Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me.”

- Verse 23: “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word.”
- Verse 24: “Whoever does not love me does not keep my words.”

Consider “**what**” “**how**” and “**why**” of loving Jesus.

A. **What** does it mean to love him?

- It means to **love the person, Jesus Christ.**
 - Don't just love a theological system.
 - **Jesus is not a math equation, but a person.**
 - Don't just love religious traditions. Love Jesus Christ.
- To love him means **to desire him, to enjoy him, to be satisfied in him, to enjoy fellowship with him.**
- It means **to prefer Jesus to everything else.**
 - **John 3:19**, people “love darkness rather than light.”
 - **Prefer Jesus to the darkness.**
 - **Jesus is better than sin!**
 - **John 12:43**: “for they loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God.”
 - **Prefer Jesus to human praise!**

*Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise
Thou mine Inheritance, now and always
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart
High King of Heaven, my Treasure Thou art*

How do we increase our love for him?

- (1) Get in the love-arousing Word of God.
- (2) Hear it preached and experience it in the Lord's Supper
- (3) Fill your mind with songs and truths about his glory and grace.
- (4) Be in community where people can stir up your affections when you're cold.
- (5) Pray until you've prayed.

B. **How** do we love him?

“**Honk if you love Jesus?**” – No. **Through obedience that springs from love.**

How will the disciples show their love for Jesus after he has gone?

By keeping his commandments. By keeping his word. (Jn 8:31)

- “If you love me” (**motivation**) “you will keep my commandments” (**result**).

If you are disobedient to Jesus, the remedy is to “love him.”

- “**Duty**” isn't a big enough engine to power long term obedience, but **delight** is.
- **We obey out of a heart of love.** It's our response to his great love for us.
- **We are not earning his love by obeying;**
- **We obey because we are loved and we love him.**
- **One of the primary commandments emphasized in the farewell discourse is to “love one another.”** (See **13:34-35; also 15:12**).

1 John 3:23-24

²³ And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. ²⁴ Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.

Another commandment later: **John 21:15ff – “Do you love me?” Feed my sheep.**

Notice also: **John 14:31-32**, “I do as the Father commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father.”

- So we might add that obedience is simply **Christ-likeness**.
- It is following **the way of Jesus**.

Do not merely love in “word and talk” but not in “deed and truth” (1Jn 3:18).

The point is that obedience is the result of loving Jesus.

It’s the fruit of abiding in Jesus.

If you say, “Oh I love Jesus” but never obey his commands, then that’s empty talk.

- If I say I love soccer, but never watch games, but spend all my time watching hockey, then do I really love soccer?
- If you say you love your wife, but never spend anytime with her, but spend all your time fishing, then do you really love her or do you love bass?
- We could say the same about the church: If you say your love the church, but never show up for gatherings, serve, give or invest, then it’s just talk.

If you love Jesus, the result will be that you keep his word.

The greater your love grows, the more natural obedience becomes.

This is so fundamental: Who do you love supremely?

This is more important than anything.

If you love Jesus deeply, it will change your behavior dramatically.

When affections change, everything changes.

- **Example: Teenage boy with his first girlfriend.... Now he showers, buys clothes, washes the car, gets a job, etc. Why? He has a new love.**
 - When a person loves Jesus, you don’t have to tell them to do certain things in the Christian life, they want to.
 - **Delighting in the beauty of Jesus, leads to doing beautiful things for Jesus.**
- **Negative example: An idol/addiction – What’s going on? You love it, and so you want to serve it. You will lie. You will manipulate. You will hurt others. Why? Why do you sin? Because at the deepest level, you love it. How do you overcome it? Not merely by saying no to it, but by having a surpassing love.**

Your dominant love determines the direction of your life.

C. Why Do We Love Him?

- i. We love him “because he first loved us” (1 Jn 4:19).
 - Jesus is saying this in the shadow of his death.
 - **How could we not love him?! Ponder his cross daily.**
 - **Fill your affections with the cross of Christ and there will be no room for sin.**
- ii. We love him because we have a new heart.
 - A sign of genuine conversion is that you have new affections. (2 Cor 5:17)
- iii. We love him because He is infinitely worthy of being loved.
 - He is perfectly lovely.

#2: Keep Calm (14:16-31)

Consider four promises for fearful and troubled disciples....

A. *We Have the Spirit's Indwelling Presence (16-17)*

Keep Calm because we are not alone; The Spirit indwells all believers.

- You are not alone though you may live alone;
- you are not alone when you are in that hospital bed;
- you are not alone when you are given an opportunity to speak for Christ.
- Notice, “And.” – Jesus has not left them powerless. We have the Spirit to live out the life of discipleship.

V. 16-17: Jesus gives us the first statement about the Holy Spirit, the “Paraclete.”

i. “Another Helper” (16)

- The Father will give us “another *Helper*.”
- The word is “*paraklete*,” only used in John (14:16, 26, 15:26, 16:7, 16:12-14)
- ESV: “*Helper*.” Also translated as: **Counselor, Comforter, Advocate, or as the one who “comes alongside.”**
- **An** important word is the word “**another**.” *allos*, another of same kind, not *heteros*, another of a different kind.
- “I would like another cup of coffee (*allos*), versus I would like to go to another country (*heteros*).
- Another *paraclete* will come.
 - One just like him! One of the same divine essence. The Third person of the Trinity.
 - The NT even calls the Spirit, “**the Spirit of Christ**” (eg, Rom 8:9).
- John also calls Jesus the **paraclete elsewhere** (1 John 2:1)

The point is: The Holy Spirit will come and fulfill the role Jesus has been fulfilling.

The Holy Spirit will comfort, strengthen, and teach them, just as Jesus has been doing.

- John 16:7 — “It is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do. Not go away, the Helper will not come to you.”
- Advantage? Yes! That’s remarkable.
- They had Jesus *beside them* but he says you will actually have something more beneficial: The *Spirit in you*.

ii. He Will Be with You Forever, Even the Spirit of Truth (16b-17a)

- **Forever.** The Holy Spirit will never “unfriend you.”
- **The Spirit of Truth.** Jesus has been their teacher (cf., Jn 13:13)
- V. 26 – The Holy Spirit will teach you; give you recall.
- **There were going to lose their teacher**
- **Have you ever had a great teacher?** You don’t want to lose them. If you value what they’re teaching, you grieve when they depart.
- Jesus is assuring them **that the Spirit will be their teacher.**
- **The Spirit will take the gospel and apply it to our hearts.**
- **The Spirit will illuminate our minds to understand the written word.**
- **“I believe in the Holy Spirit” (John Stott)**

iii. The World Does Not Know Him (17b)

- The world cannot receive him because they don’t know him.
- You can’t receive the Spirit unless you believe in Christ.
- The world will **not “see” him, that is “perceive him”** (1 Cor 2:14; **Acts 2:13**, are these guys drunk?)

iv. He Dwells with You and Will Be in You (17c)

- The Spirit will not just be “among” God’s people, but “in them.” In every believer. (cf, Rom 8:9)
- This is a glorious new covenant promise.

Ezekiel 36:26-27

²⁶ And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

- **Jesus had promised them a home in heaven; now he promises that by the Spirit, the Spirit would make His home in them.**
- **This is everyone! DeYoung says (baptism of the Spirit) it’s like that waterfall of glaze on each krispy crime donut as it moves down the conveyer belt. Each get it, and each is better for it!**

B. We are united with Christ (18-20)

18: Jesus knows the disciples will be tempted to feel abandoned when he leaves, so he promises them, **“I will not leave you as orphans.”**

- He’s like a dying parent speaking to his children.
- **But Jesus says, “death will not separate us!”** (Rom 8:31-39)

“I will come to you.” How so?

- **Verses 19-20 make clear that the primary reference is to his post-resurrection appearance....**
- **But there’s application for everyone since our union with Christ is also made possible through this resurrection, and the subsequent outpouring of the Spirit.**
- **This statement applies to all believers!**
- **He has not left us as orphans, for the Spirit is in us.**

19: After the resurrection, he would not appear to the **world**—to unbelievers—but he would appear to his disciples. (1 Cor 15:1-11).

- **“Because I live, you will also live”** – this applies to all believers!

20: **“You will know that I am in the Father.”** They will see him again, and in such a way that they will never doubt Jesus is the Son of God.

“and you *in me, and I in you*”

- The union he has with the Father mirrors the union believers have with Christ.
- The resurrection would make this union with Christ possible.
- In Scripture, we find that we are **“in Christ”** (2 Cor 5:17); Christ is **“in you”** (“the hope of glory, Col 1). **“There are two of us!”**
- Through the Holy Spirit, we are united with the risen Christ.
- **Far from being orphans, we are united with him forever** (Vine and Branches).
- **Far from losing Jesus, the disciples would enjoy an ongoing relationship with Him, and so do we.**
- Nothing can separate believers from the love of God in Christ Jesus.
- Because he lives, we live – we are not orphans.

Keep Calm, you are united with Christ. Nothing can separate you from his love...

C. We Are Loved by the Father (21-24)

21: The call to obedience is like that in verse 15, and he adds that we will enjoy the Father’s love in this glorious relationship.

Borchert: **“This statement must not be interpreted to imply that a believer “earns” God’s love through obedience. Because love is a mark of the relationship of the Father to the Son (3:35, etc.), it also means that a loving relationship of the believer to the Son naturally implies a loving relationship of the believer with the Father.”**

- We don’t have a relationship with the Son but *not* the Father.
- Through our union with Christ, we are caught up in this Trinitarian love.

- **We are the Father's children.**
- **Jesus wants his disciples to be assured of the Father's love.**
- "If you want to judge how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much he makes of the thought of being God's child, and having God as his Father. If this is not the thought that prompts and controls his worship and prayers and his whole outlook on life, it means that he does not understand Christianity very well at all" (Packer).

"I will manifest myself to them" – could again refer to that post-resurrection appearance, but the following verses seem to point in another direction... for those who will love him (v. 23) he will show himself to them in a variety of ways.

- **He showed himself after the resurrection; he will show himself at his return; and through the Spirit, he will show himself to believers.**

22: Judas (not Iscariot): asks about the nature of this manifestation. How will it not be to the world?

23: Jesus does not answer the question, but points again to the priority of loving him (as if to say these are the people that I am pleased to manifest myself to)

- For a third time, Jesus talks about obedience as a result of loving him. That's the focus.
- **Out of divine love, by the Spirit, the Father and the Son will come to them and make their home with them.**
- **He is with us, not in a tabernacle or a tent, but in his people.**

It's one thing to know you have a home in heaven when you die; but the disciples were **still fearful**. So Jesus reminds them that God has made his home in them.

- **Whenever I used to leave town, my kids would be downhearted. Sometimes Joshua would say things like, "Papa, when you leave town, Mama's gonna boss us around."**
- **He didn't like it when I left town, leaving him with my sweet and ferocious wife.**
- **But our Father in heaven never leaves town.** He has made his home with us.
- Jesus is saying that he was not abandoning the disciples, and that the Father will never abandon his children.
- By the power of the Spirit, He is with us always. (John 16:32)
- **"Father" – Begg story – after coming to the States, he couldn't pray out loud for two weeks, because he wept when he said, "Father." But that's real prayer, isn't? He's with us. Even when you can't get a full prayer out!**
- **"God is our refuge, an ever present help in time of trouble, therefore we will not give way though the mountains be thrown into the heart of the sea." (Ps 46)**
- New covenant believers no this even better than the saints of old.

24: Those who do not love him, do not keep his word.

- They will not share this divine union.

How can they endure trouble?

By being assured of their ongoing relationship with the Father, through the Son, by the Spirit.

D. We Have an All-Sufficient God (25-31)

In this final portion of chapter 14, two ideas emerge: (1) the disciples weakness, inability, and fear, and (2) The Triune God's sufficiency.

We may break it down in three parts:

1. Though the disciples were unable to remember everything, the Spirit would bring remembrance. (25-26)

Notice the Trinitarian language: "The Father will send the Spirit in Jesus' name."

- **Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will come in his name and "bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you."**
- The Spirit would lead them to a right understanding of Christ's person, work, and teaching, and would carry them along to write it for us (2 Pet 1:20-21).
- **This is no ordinary book [The Bible]**
- These disciples had not only eyewitness testimony, but also the Spirit's divine help to pen for us the words that Jesus wanted us to know.
- **Now we should pray that the same Spirit who inspired the writing of Scripture, would illuminate our minds to understand the written word.**

2. Though the disciples were fearful, Jesus left them his peace (27)

Jesus didn't have a fat bank account or a trust fund to leave his disciples, but what he left them was something infinitely more valuable: his peace.

Modern people love the idea of peace.

- But it's usually a therapeutic feeling of peace.
- The peace Christ gives is different than **stretching exercises, deep breathing activities, the smell of essential oils, calm walks beside creeks, or peaceful bike rides in the woods.**
- Christian peace is rooted in something else: a relationship w/ God through Jesus Christ.

In Jesus we can know "**shalom**" – healing, wholeness, peace.

"Sin is the vandalism of shalom" - it has broken it.

Jesus came to restore what was lost, and bring us peace.

- **In Jesus, we can say, "It is well with my soul."**
- Jesus has provided **peace with God** through his death on the cross, and by the power of the Spirit he gives us the experience of the **peace of God.**
- **It's a peace not available in this world.**
- **Keeping calm *in Christ*, and simply "keeping calm" in some other way, are different kinds of peace.**
- **Through Christ, we can know an other-worldly peace.**

This peace is available because **Christ defeated our foes: sin, death, and Satan....**

3. *Though the disciples Teacher and Master would be crucified, His death would lead to the ultimate victory and his glorious reunion with the Father. (28-31)*

28: “you would have rejoiced because I am going to the Father”

- **Their love for him should lead to rejoicing because he is returning to where it all began, back to the Father.**
- He is finishing his mission.
- And one result of that is the sending of the Spirit.

- **“The father is greater than I”**
- This does not mean that Jesus is not fully divine in essence (that would contradict everything in John’s gospel), but is **an expression of his incarnate state.**
- The Sender has sent the Son on a mission.

29: He is assuring them of what is happening before hand; so that **they may believe in him.**

30: “Ruler the world” — this is a cosmic battle.

- **The** battle at the cross was about to begin.
- The battle had been going on for ages.
- It was a battle promised as early as **Genesis 3:15.**
- The outcome was decided long ago. Satan is not in control.
- John has been preparing us for it: **12:31, 13:8, 13:27**

31: Satan has nothing to bring against Jesus because he has obeyed the Father his whole life.

31b: “Rise, let us go from here.”

- There is no indicator in the text of any physical relocation (though there may have been).
- It puzzles scholars.
- The language John uses here, outside the Greek NT, is used in military contexts, for marching against an enemy (Ferguson).
- **What Jesus is clearly saying in the passage is that he is about to march into the final conflict against the powers of darkness.**
- It’s time to crush the head of the serpent.
- But to do that, he would have to enter enemy occupied territory.

Our peace with God, and the peace of God, would come to us at great expense to Christ Jesus, our Victor over Satan. The story of salvation is a wartime story (Rev. 14).

Rise, let’s go crush his head.

He is not a pathetic man dying at the hands of Romans.

He is Christus Victor!

Carson reflects on this great irony:

The pax Romana (peace of Rome) was won and maintained by a brutal sword; not a few Jews thought the Messianic peace would have to be secured by a still mightier sword. Instead, it was secured by an innocent man who suffered and died at the hands of the Romans, of the Jews, and of all of us. And by his death he effected for his own followers peace with God, and therefore “the peace of God, which transcends all understanding.”

Oh, the wonder of the gospel.

- **We have peace because Jesus won the war.**

So my friends, love Jesus, keep calm, and gospel on.

We Have the Holy Spirit’s Indwelling Presence.

We Are United with Christ.

We Are Love by the Father.

We have an all-sufficient God.

Abide in this love; be assured of his love.

The Children’s song says it well, “Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so.”

At the height of persecution in Communist China, a Christian sent a message to a friend. The message escaped the attention of the censors, because it said simply: “The *this I know people* are well”—but that phrase, the “this I know people” clearly identifies the community in China. (Wredberg, Carter)

It’s true. The “This I know people” are well because we have the promise of God.

- **We know he loves us because we’ve experienced his love.**
- **God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit he has given us.**
- **And our love for him drives everything we do, and overflows into acts of obedience, especially acts of love toward one another.**