



# Life Guide

applying God's Word to life

## Jesus Gives Blessings to Believers

May 25-28, 2019

(John 14:23-29)

<sup>23</sup> Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. <sup>24</sup> He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me. <sup>25</sup> "All this I have spoken while still with you. <sup>26</sup> But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. <sup>27</sup> Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. <sup>28</sup> "You heard me say, 'I am going away and I am coming back to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. <sup>28</sup> I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe.

**KIDS TOO!** 1. Share one thing you're thankful for. Share one thing you'd like prayers for.

Answers will vary. Consider praying for everyone a prayer of thanks and a request for God to help with our difficulties.

2. It is impossible to obey God without love for God. Why?

Obedience without love is legalism, conforming to the whims of a dictator is obedience. Many Pharisees tried to follow God's laws out of fear or self-righteousness and Jesus spent years showing how they failed to obey because they jacked love. Jesus summarized the law as "Love."

3. In verse 23 Jesus isn't challenging his disciples' love. He's describing his relationship with believers. Back up that claim with

3 reasons. (Hint: Respond based on the context of chapter 14. Respond based on the question in v. 22. Respond based on the fact that our love for Jesus doesn't need to be perfect to be real.)

John 14 is all about comfort. It would do violence to Jesus' message if he suddenly challenged his disciples' faithfulness to him.

In v. 22 Jesus' disciple asked about the difference between the world and the disciples. This reading is how Jesus describes those who follow him (disciples) vs. those who don't follow him (unbelievers/the world).

Jesus' love for us is perfect, complete, finished. Our love for Jesus is imperfect, incomplete and a work in progress. That's called sanctification. Just because we don't love Jesus perfectly and we don't obey Jesus' perfectly, doesn't mean our love and obedience is any less real. In this section Jesus is describing Christians.

4. God promises some blessings for everyone (Matthew 5:45), and some blessings for only believers (John 14:23-24). List a few differences between those two kinds of blessings.

God's gifts are given to all people: food and rain and sun. Only believers receive God's in-dwelling, his Holy Spirit, his peace of mind and conscience because only believers know that their sins are forgiven. (Jesus does take away the sins of unbelievers too, but they get no benefit from it because they don't believe it.) NOTE: unbelievers don't lack these gifts because God is holding out on them. They lack God's better gifts because they won't receive them in faith. Remember Jesus said "If ANYONE loves me he will keep my word... He who does not love me will not keep my word."

5. "My Father will love him." (v. 23) Luther said this should be our response to Satan's most destructive lies. What are Satan's lies and in what ways does Jesus' statement answer them?

Luther thought that this quote could answer many of Satan's lies because so many of them begin with the idea that God is angry at you, disappointed in you, expecting more from you. Answers about which lie Satan tells may vary. Jesus says that none of them are true for a Christian. "My Father will love him."

6. In what ways is God the Father and Jesus living within you (v. 23) similar to the worldly version of companionship? In what ways is it better?

There are many answers, all correct! Here are a few ideas: Both offer comfort in times of sadness or loneliness or fear. Both can make good times even better. Both help you stay humble and avoid self-centeredness. But only God living in you is actually able to overcome what you are facing. Only God can deal with your guilt and sin. Only God can stay with you in every situation even through death and into eternity.

7. John 14:26 gives the Holy Spirit's job description. In what ways does he accomplish that job?

He works through baptism, communion and God's Word. He comforts us with God's promises. He helped the disciples Matthew and John remember what happened during Jesus' life so they could write their biographies which we find in the Bible. He is active in our hearts to make us actually believe the things we hear in Scripture.

8. In what ways is the Holy Spirit teaching you (v. 26) similar to the worldly version of education? In what ways is it better?

Both use books and words and ideas. Both generally move from what you already know to what you don't yet know. Both can help you to understand other people. Both can help you see life more accurately. But only the Holy Spirit's teaching can create faith. Only the Holy Spirit get you to heaven. And it's Holy Spirit's wisdom that captivates the imaginations of the saints and angels in heaven (1 Peter 1:12).

9. In what ways is Jesus' peace (v. 27) similar to the worldly version of peace? In what ways is Jesus peace better?

Both make us feel good. Both are the opposite of commotion and anger. But the world's peace is the absence of troubles while Jesus' gives peace in the middle of troubles. Jesus has taken away our sins, calmed our consciences, and given us a deeper answer to all of life's deeply troubling questions. Even the slightest discomfort troubles worldly peace, but nothing can touch Jesus' peace.

10. Even though you know God's version of all these blessings is better, list some reasons you might long for earthly blessings more?

Earthly blessings are visible. Jesus' blessings are invisible. Earthly blessings are easily applicable to everyday life. Jesus' blessings require us to stop and meditate on what's important. Earthly blessings satisfy urgent needs in tangible ways. Jesus' blessings satisfy our more important needs even if they appear less pressing.

11. An alternate translation of v. 23 says, "if anyone loves me, he will keep my word." Then Jesus lists all his blessings. If your friend began to forget about Jesus' blessings, what are some practical ways you could help them remember?

So many of Jesus' blessings come through his word, so we get to know them better when we get to know his word. Texting your friend a Bible passage, inviting them to life group, reflecting on your favorite Bible passages, all of these could remind someone of Jesus' blessings. They may also need to remember their deep need for what Jesus offers. Only someone who recognizes the tragedy and trauma of sin along with the threat of death and hell can truly appreciate what Jesus has done for us.

12. Tomorrow someone asks, "What did you talk about at life group?" What will you tell them?

Answers will vary. If discussion is slow, reframe the question this way: "what part of our discussion can you remember right now?"