

**"EASTER HEARTS, ALIVE, ANEW, LOVED, TO LOVE!"
THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER – MAY 19, 2019
ACTS 11:1-18; REVELATION 21:1-6; JOHN 13:31-35**

Promises for your pocket or purse - Take notes and carry them with you.

How do you define the mystery, the majesty of "love?" How has love been expressed, shared, modeled, taught in your life? The Risen Christ knows real love is hard to explain, to express, to find, to accept, to trust. The Creator of life, the Creator of love, longs to make known his gift of love, yet his promise, his grace, are best summarized in these words: 'love one another as I have loved you.' Christ is telling us, if we need an example, if we wonder what gives God glory, if we question if we are loveable; we need look only to him, to his faithfulness. In Easter, Jesus is alive to perfectly, personally love you, to raise up in you an Easter heart, alive and anew, to: "Love one another as I have loved you!"

1. With Easter hearts, we spring forth with new life, alive and anew in The One who makes known one of the central commandments, examples, callings, promises, joys, and assurances of our Christian journey; as we share the grace, mystery and majesty of these words: "Love one another as I have loved you!" John 13:34
 - A. Love. What does this mean to you? Revelation 21:3
 - i. How do words like 'compassion,' 'affection,' 'adore,' 'attraction,' 'emotional attachment,' fit for you?
 - ii. Often even for those we love, and, 'one another,' we quickly move to judgment and arrogance. There may be no need to agree or approve, but we so often have little room for tolerance or acceptance, not to mention love.
 - iii. To know God in Christ loves us, is to know what love is. It is "agape," grace, spiritual, unconditional, complete, unexplainable, real, without question, ... it is perfect!
 - B. One another. What do you do with this part of Christ's calling? Acts 11:3,12,17; John 13:35
 - i. We are to love all others, not just those like you, who do what you do, who agree with you. Love one another includes those different, even our enemies.
 - ii. We are different, we can be such enemies, nothing like The Christ, we do not do what Jesus does. Christ has all the permission to pick and choose, and he chooses those who are different, the others, ... you and me!

- C. As. 'In likeness to.' 'In a similar way.' Revelation 21:3-4
 - i. Christ loves us to the fullest, completely, unconditionally.
 - ii. We are not Jesus, but we are to go beyond our comfort zone, otherwise Jesus would have said, 'Love one another as you are doing,' 'as you think good enough.'
 - D. I. The Christ. Not anyone else! John 13:31
 - E. Have. Jesus is not done loving us; we are to follow his ongoing, eternal, living, loving example, laying aside self. Revelation 21:5-6
 - F. Loved. Embraced, compassion, mystery, grace, agape, etc.
 - G. You. God's love in Christ is for the world, and yet, it is very personal. The crucifixion and resurrection are personal, they are for you. Do not ever feel unworthy of God's grace. Let God love you - it is what God does best!
John 13:31-32
2. Revelation 21:6; John 13:34-35 - To 'love one another as I have loved you,' may seem impossible, unlikely, not doable. Feeling loved, forgiven, saved, blessed, may seem impossible, unlikely, not doable at times. Be alive and anew, with an Easter heart, trust The Spirit; trust the resurrection; trust you are loved to love; trust grace. God's love lives, perfect and personal, for Christ is risen, and risen indeed! Alleluia!