

Order of Worship for 11/11/12, title, “Love and Duty”, text, John 14:15-17, [Note that this is a change from before!!!!]

Opening Song
Welcome and Announcements
Ministry Moment: Ruthie

Invocation, Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Worship Theme: Walking in the fellowship and power of the Spirit

Sunday Evenings in the Word
Sermon on the Mount, The sanctity of our word(s), Matthew 5:33-37
5:30-7:00 pm, in the Library

Opening Song:

“How Great is Our God” Overhead

Invocation: Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Welcome and Announcements

Ministry Moment: Veteran’s Day, Ruth Bowen
“America the Beautiful” & “Heal Our Land”
By Sonflower Choir

Preparing the Heart in Song:

“Lord, I Lift Your Name on High” Overhead
“Amazing Love” Song # 351
“I Surrender All” Song # 596

Offering and Offertory: “The Unchanging Story”
By Mike Kokoletsos

Message: “Love and Duty” John 14:15-17
Pastor John Bronson

Response to the Word:

“The Steadfast Love of the Lord” Song # 576

Parting Word of Grace

Sunday Evening in the Word:

5:30 pm in the Library, Matthew 5:33-37
Sermon on the Mount, The Sanctity of our Word(s)

“The Prayer Closet”

November 11, 2012

“Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.”
(Colossians 4:2a)

This week let us be united in praying that:

Joel and Virginia Cook, AWANA Missionaries for Northern California and Northern Nevada: the Lord will give travel mercies to Branson, MO for the National AWANA Missionaries’ Conference; they will be encouraged in the ministry, the Lord will open many opportunities for new clubs

President Obama: the Lord will protect him and his family from all evil; the election will not distract him from his presidential responsibilities; the Spirit will direct him to seek truth, righteousness and justice for all

Women’s Ministries: Please pray that the women of EFC will be united in spirit; that we would learn to love one another as Jesus loves His father; that we would understand our need for one another in order to grow in our faith and to glorify our Savior. That God would teach us who He is through our meditations and we would learn to be good servants in our homes, our workplaces and in our church.

Military or Public Service Personnel of the Week: Jeremiah Gonzales, Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (husband of Jennifer): for safety for he and his crew while at work and during the commute

Young Adult of the Week: Lauren Jarboe at California Baptist University (daughter of Kurt and Glenda): teaching 5th grade at the International Christian School in Uijeongbu, South Korea, the majority of her students are unbelievers; pray that her students will see their need for Christ and accept Him as their personal Lord and Savior

Please pray for our homebound family members: Harley & Hilda Chapman , Carol Koehler, Gary & Ruth Lentz, Fred & Jean Pauly

(please call the office to request updates to this list)

1.

We continue today in our study of the Gospel of John. The title is “Love and Duty”. The text is John 14:15-17. I introduced this passage a couple of weeks ago. When I introduced it I indicated that there are five topics or subjects that are raised in these very few verses. I challenged us to actually memorize this section, because it is as profound in its teaching as the Book of Romans and the Book of Ephesians in terms of addressing what it means to walk as a Christian in this world. Here are the five topics that are touched on by the Lord Jesus Christ in this passage. First is “His works”. Then “The greater works” that He says followers will do. There are the works of Jesus and then there are the greater works that we are going to be doing. The third is the certainty of answered prayer. The fourth was the true nature or expression or behavior of love. Obviously you [cannot] cover all of these; you just have a bit of an introduction. Then the last is “The gift of the Holy Spirit as our Helper.” Those five topics are raised in these few verses. Let us look at the verses together and then we will make a few summary comments and then move on (John 14:12-17):

“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do [First statement]; and greater works than these will he do [Second statement], because I am going to the Father. Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do [Third statement], that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. If you love me, you will keep my commandments [Fourth statement]. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you [Fifth statement].”

These five topics are essential for living out our faith as Christians. Listening to Jesus here and throughout these discourses, all of John 13-17, we are introduced to the fundamentals of the Christian’s walk. These chapters of the Gospel of John are generally known as the “Upper Room Discourses” because they began in the upstairs room where Jesus met [with His disciples] to celebrate the Passover and then He introduced the celebration of the New Covenant which is the Lord’s Supper or Communion.

We know that Jesus [was], and we think of Jesus as the Lamb of God who died for our sins. That is correct; that is where you always begin [in any consideration of the grace of God towards us in Christ]. But we should be mindful that Jesus did not just come to die for us. He came and He lived out a life in front of us. We are to pay attention to that life. The title of the message is “Love and Duty.” There are a number of ways in which that comes home to us. The first is right here: our love for the Lord Jesus Christ creates a duty within us, and that duty is to model or shape our lives according to His. That is the relationship. It is a dynamic that grows up between those two: [that is, between “love” and “duty”.] For me to say that I love my wife and then proceed to live a life which fundamentally ignores her and pays no attention to her desires and runs contrary to her standards and expectations is to make a mockery of the word “love”. The same is true with us. If we say we love the Lord Jesus Christ and proceed to live a life that simply ignores what He has said to us [gesturing to the Bible], and act out values which are contrary to what He died for, we have made a mockery out of the statement, “I love Jesus”. That is the relationship between love and duty. We cannot deny in our behavior what our lips have confessed. So we should be thoughtful about this.

This is a critical part or reason that the Son of God became a man. He became a man, a human being so we could look at Him and say, “Ah, I can do that.” It is quite wrong when anybody lifts up the Lord Jesus Christ and says, “Oh, my, look at this; this is an impossibly righteous life. Nobody could ever live like this.” They send the wrong message, because Jesus came to be a model for us to follow. In Jesus we see man perfected under the conditions of a fallen world. The fallen world is the context for Jesus’ works. As we saw a couple of weeks ago, Jesus had said that His disciples would do the works that He had done, and that they would do greater works as well. This is why we need to know the works that He has done: studying the Word of God; how He treated or dealt with people; what He taught; the miracles that He performed; how He interacted with His disciples; how He interacted with the crowd; how He interacted with the authorities. All of these are lessons that are laid out for us and if we will pay

attention we will learn a great deal about how to conduct ourselves as Christians, that is as followers of God in a fallen world. That is the situation in which we find ourselves.

It is wise for us to rightly understand what Jesus is as the living man. Jesus is God’s truth and goodness entering into the realms of fallen humanity living under the dominion of Satan or the prince of the power of the air. I appreciated what was said this morning: what happens when our ear is attuned to the prince of the power of the air: fear, enticement, doubt, second thoughts, compromise; [it is] a long list of things. So we want to train ourselves not to listen to the prince of the power of the air, but instead to listen to God. Part of that listening is by concentrating our hearts and our minds on the model of the life that Jesus lived. It is not enough to say, “Jesus died for me on the cross and therefore I am saved.” The statement is true; it is just insufficient for living a life that reflects a devotion to the One who gave His life for you.

In an earlier message we saw that what Jesus does, what He accomplishes in the world against Satan and both for us and in us is not primarily an expression of God’s power. Rather what Jesus does for us is primarily an expression of God’s goodness. That is an essential thing for us to grab and hang on to. Our culture is obsessed with power. Christians, if I can put it this way, should be obsessed with being good, because it is goodness that is manifested through the living model of perfect maturity on the face of the earth. It is the goodness of Jesus that we want to focus on and ask that God would enable us to follow after. In meeting the challenge of sin, Jesus satisfies the justice of God and upholds the holiness of God through His death on the cross for the sin of humanity. That is not a power move. That is a “goodness” move. God does not overthrow Satan by an act of power. If power was all that it was about all God has to do is to cease to let us be, and He will create something altogether new, from nothing. Did you ever wonder why this whole business goes on and on and on? It is because goodness is the essence of God and He intends to recover all that has been touched and corrupted by sin. He will not let sin have the victory.

Sin separates people from God. When we are separated, because God will not have [anything] to do with evil, we then become totally vulnerable to Satan, his deceptions and his terrors. By dying for our sin the Son of God permits the love of God to reach the lost as grace, the unmerited favor of our heavenly Father. That, of course, is the signal and incomparable work of the Son. Nobody will ever duplicate that. When Jesus says, “You will do greater works than I,” He is not saying we will die on cross and make a greater sacrifice and secure a greater salvation. That is not what that statement is about. But Jesus goes on to say that His followers, the disciples in the upper room and all of us who have faith in His sacrifice for our sin, will do greater works that he did. So we need to study the works of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is in the context of seeking to do the works of Jesus and greater works that Jesus mentions prayer. What is prayer? Prayer is not the faithless noise of our souls directed toward heaven. In the class “Red Sea Rules”, the whole study is built on Exodus 14. Exodus 14 is the story of Israel leaving Egypt. You might recall that when they are leaving it is because the Egyptians have finally said, “Out!” They are all set to travel right straight to Canaan and then God intervenes and says, “Stop.” Turns them around and has them stuck in front of the Red Sea. They are sitting in front of the Red Sea and Pharaoh says, “Look, they are stupid; they don’t know how to get from here to Canaan.” Then he says, “Not only that, but I want them back!” So Pharaoh goes with his entire army and he is roaring over the desert plain and the Israelites look up and they say, “Why, look there, there comes Pharaoh and his entire army.” Do you know what it says? It says they cried to the Lord: “Yikes!” Then it says they turned to Moses and they said, “What do you think you’re doing taking us out here? We said we were better off in Egypt and that is exactly what we believe.” Was that a cry of faith? No. Prayer is not the faithless shout of our hearts to God. [Prayer] is faith-filled communion with God. We need to think about that difference a long time.

Jesus, in these few verses, gives an astounding affirmation regarding prayer. This is what He says: “*Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*” We looked at this before. There are

two qualifiers. If you want to have certainty in your prayers there are two qualifiers. The first is that they have to be in the name of Jesus. What that means is that [our prayer] has to conform to the character and the purposes of Jesus Christ. The second is this: [our prayer] must be for the glory of the Father in the Son. These will be the prayers which further the great work of salvation which the Father accomplishes through our sacrificial love for the Father and for all that the Father has made, in particular for sinners. Do my prayers spring out of and reflect the love of God for those on behalf of whom I am praying? Do I desire, are my prayers fashioned in order that the work of God’s redemptive grace would reach further, transforming lives and touching the lost that they might come to know the Lord Jesus Christ? Those are the kind of prayers [which gain the certainty of which Jesus is speaking.]

Now let me explain something: This does not mean that God doesn’t answer other kinds of prayers. We could take a little time this morning, maybe about ten or twenty hours, and have a record of the prayers you have prayed and God has answered. Please get me a job. Please resolve the relationship between me and my wife. Please get my neighbor to move because they are a pain in the neck. It is not [the case that] – I am not saying that that wide spectrum of prayer is not answered by God. God is gracious and He answers many prayers. But when you lift up those prayers you have no certainty regarding His answers. But when you lift up prayers that are dead centered on the purpose of God and the character of Christ and the salvation of men He has said, “I will answer.” We probably shouldn’t waste our time on a lot of other kinds of prayers.

That is a summary of the message of two weeks ago. In the fourteenth verse of this section Jesus repeats the compelling affirmation regarding answered prayer. Notice what He said: *“If you ask me anything in my name I will do it.”* The reason I went back and picked up all that is that it carries you forward and carries you right down to the next verse. The repetition is like an introduction to His next [statement]. That next [statement] is verse 15 where He says, *“If you love me you will keep my commandments.”* Here again we are touching on the relationship between love and duty. Here is a way that I paraphrased what I think is going on at this point. This is the relationship between Jesus and the commandments. It is as if Jesus was saying, “All of your requests, all that you seek and ask, will reflect your love for Me, and they will be part of your effort to keep My commandments.” This is wider than just increasing the spread of the gospel. This is saying our prayer lives, our relationship with God through prayer, is a continual endeavor to let the Spirit of God – this is the right relationship – take the Word of God and change me on the inside. I loved the song today, “The Unchanging Story that is still Changing Me”. All of us understand that it is a continual work, and our prayer lives, our appeal to God should never be far removed from that central focus: Lord I want to be like Jesus Christ. I want to have His characteristics. I want the purity of His character. I want the clarity of His spiritual commitments. Whatever my prayer is, even if I want to get rid of my neighbor – I have somebody in mind that has a horrible neighbor. We all could pray together to get rid of that person because they need to be gone: or saved! This is love and duty again. If I love the Lord Jesus Christ, I want to fulfill the model that He has lived before me.

Your Bible like my English Standard Version probably has a break between verses 14 and 15, but there really ought not to be one there. The reason, I think, so many editors see a break in the flow of Jesus’ thought here is because there seems to be such a large difference between the empowering quality or nature of what He has to say in verses twelve to fourteen, and the very sobering reality brought up in verse 15. Verses 12 to 14 he says ask and I will do, you are to do great works, and all is going to be wonderful, and then in verse 15 he says, “And Oh, by the way, keep all my commandments.” We then [are stunned]! Who can do that? Who can possibly keep all of Jesus’ commandments? A great deal of poor and misleading thinking and teaching has muddied the waters of faith and understanding at this point as most of us know. Again this touches on love and duty. “Isn’t it true [that] in the age of grace all we have to do is love our neighbors? Jesus swept aside the Law and He replaces it with love! That is wonderful. Surely we live under grace and not under law.” The assertion is made that the path of obedience is much easier now than it was in the Old Testament.

So we get this kind of comment: follow your heart; if it feels good, Nike says do it! The supposition in those people is that the heart, given its natural expression, is naturally good and seeks to bless others. These people don't know me. Were it not for the restraining grace of God and the transforming power of His Word, you would not want to know me. Some of you know there was a time when I didn't want to know me and contemplated getting rid of me, because a sober look into the depths of a fallen heart is a terrifying prospect. So oftentimes what happens when we say, “Operate according to love,” we mean little more than “Be nice to people.” But being nice to people does not meet the need of broken lives. Much more is required if we are to challenge the tyranny of sin in lost lives. It is not easier to love than it is to keep the law for a very simple reason: in order to love, you must keep the law.

To love: what Jesus says is that love does no wrong. That is my problem. Sometimes I can hardly get from the bed to the bathroom without doing wrong. I have an active mind. My mouth does not work in the morning, but my mind works at a high speed. Did you ever stub your toe and instantly say, “Lord, bless You. I am so thankful for the pain. It reminds me of my dependency upon You. And now I am just giving it all over to You in order that I would be a better person today because I just wacked my toe in the edge of the dresser”? No, you don't. You do what I do! Never mind!

If you want to understand what the law is about, what Jesus is about, you have to go where He goes or where He takes you. He takes you to the [Sermon on the Mount]. Jesus does not decrease the intensity of the righteous demand of God. He increases the intensity by revealing to us, by making it perfectly clear that the dictates of the law, the commandments that Jesus gives to us are applied to the conditions, the thoughts and the intentions of the heart, not just the outward behavior. I can be nice, I can say, “Hello, it is nice to see you!” But inside of myself I am saying, “I'm so frustrated with you! But I am just going to be nice.” Nice is an easy pretense. It is not adequate to be nice. I am to love. That is what [Jesus] says. I am to love. That means I am to embrace, I am to desire to bless. I am to long to see the full perfections of Christ formed in the person with whom I am dealing. I am to be desirous of seeing the light of the truth penetrating whatever darkness there might be. And in order that that might be, I want the light of God, the truth of God to illumine all that I am. Do you know what that means? How much of yourself would rather keep hidden forever? An essential aspect of our obedience is the humility of allowing others to see the way God has healed our brokenness and transformed us. That means we cannot pretend that we have always been good and righteous. How many have been good and righteous since birth?

Contemplating the real meaning of Jesus' words, of the challenge they set before us, the sensible person knows that far from being easier, the proper response is the same response the Israelites had when they saw Pharaoh and his armies coming: “Yikes!” Or, as I put it down, “We need help!” Notice that that is the logic of the passage. This is what He says, “*If you love me, you will keep my commandments.*” Then there is a little space there [between the sentences.] And in that little space we say, “O help!” And Jesus says, “*I will ask the Father and He will give you another Helper...*” Jesus knows. Who is sitting in the room with Him? If you have been walking along [with these studies] and you know the Gospel of John, you know the eleven guys that are left and you know the one that is gone. What kind of guys are they? They are as unstable as water. They contradict themselves, they pursue fantasies of power and they think about places of privilege. They are out of touch with Jesus and the depth of His sacrifice and His commitment to the righteousness and holiness of God [the Father]. Jesus looks at them and what does He see? He sees Peter and he knows that within about five hours Peter is going to say, “Jesus? Don't know who he is!” Peter needs help; how about you? How about me?

Jesus immediately says, “*I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth whom, the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. You know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.*” Notice in that statement the intimacy of the presence of the Holy Spirit. No one, I think, who has with sober thought and conviction undertaken to live out the Christian life, a life of righteousness and holiness, would for a moment doubt or deny the believer's need for help from God. “Help”, of

course, is a rather broad term. Reading verses 12-17 together it seems that the first application or expectation of the Spirit's help is in our prayers, guiding us in what we ask in Jesus' name so that the Father will be glorified. This, by the way is [virtually] the same thing that Paul says in Romans 8:26-27. This is what he writes, "*Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is in the mind of the spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.*" This is the action of the Holy Spirit within us. When you and I wish to approach the Father in prayer, you and I should do two things. The first thing we should do is we should say, "Father, I have no intention of seeking your face on my own. I wish to rely upon the indwelling presence and power of the Holy Spirit to clarify my mind and to focus my heart so that I am pursuing the things that You want me to pursue." That is the first thing we should do. That is the same thing we should do when we want to study the Word of God also. We are reminded, aren't we: the certainty of answered prayer lies in the fact that they are prayers informed and empowered by the Spirit and they are prayers devoted to the will and glory of God. "That is what I want!"

So let's go back to that moment in the morning when I rammed my toe into the dresser. "Ach!" The day does not end at that moment. So if in fact, as perhaps could be the case, the tongue lashed out in its pain at the nearest living object, called my wife, and I made some perfectly rational and reasonable observations, such as, "Why did you ever put the dresser here in the first place?" – This by the way is not a confession! – I have opportunity, don't I, to gather up all that brokenness and put it together as a gift to God by going to my wife and asking her to forgive me, so that she and I can live out the relationship that God has established with all of broken humanity through Jesus Christ? Oh yeah, that is right! There can be love and forgiveness and the affirmation of grace and truth and righteousness in my home where brokenness suddenly appeared because pain suddenly overwhelmed my self-control. Have you ever been there? This is the promise that is given to us through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit to remind us who we are, who we are following, what is the model lived before us, and what is the ultimate purpose of my life as we glorify God. I remind my wife now and then, if we need it, "Don't ever forget, the angels of heaven and the demons as well are observing what happens in our home." We are to be a living proof of the triumph of the righteousness of God even in the hiddenness places of our hearts.

Answers to prayer: did you ever wonder about why God is reluctant to answer our desire for greater power for this or for that or for the other thing? There are few places more important for us than Genesis 11. There is a profound lesson here when it comes to our prayers that we need to know. Genesis 11 is the story of the few generations after the Great Flood. We are told that the rapidly growing human tribe moved en masse to the plains of Shinar. We usually think that is someplace around Babylon, but we don't know that for certain. There they built the first city and they decided to build a great tower to the heavens. They had the desire, the hope that that tower would do two things. First that it would keep them from scattering over the land. Secondly, that it would allow them to make a name for themselves. That sounds like good things, right? Under normal circumstances we would say that would be super. Keep us together, unity, community, closeness: that's a good thing, and then establishing a name for ourselves. The trouble is you have to read Genesis 11 in the context of the rest of the Bible. What you have to understand is that what they wanted to do at the Tower of Babel was diametrically opposed to the will of God. God repeatedly said, "I want you to multiply, scatter and fill the earth." They said, "No, no, no: we are going to be right here!" The second thing is in some ways more profound. It is God Who gives all things their names. The naming of a thing is to designate its true essence, nature or character. This is the real significance of God asking Adam to name the animals. Nothing that the Bible could have said would have more clearly and powerfully emphasized the dominion of man over every other creature than the fact that He said, "Adam, name the animals." That is what that means in the biblical context. For them to make a name for themselves was to reject what God have given.

Beyond that matter of their rebellion, God stated another reason for confusing the peoples tongues so they could not understand. If you are in Genesis 11, notice this verse: Genesis 11:6-7, *“The Lord said, ‘Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another’s speech.’”* Do you pray for the peace of the world? Do we pray for peace in the United States of America? Do we pray for peace in Butte County? Be very careful. If we reflect on this episode occurring in the primeval past of humanity’s relationship with God and with itself, we may realize that there are other and perhaps deeper reasons for the dysfunction not only in international agencies and the perennial efforts to bring about international peace and cooperation, but also of international corporations and even of interfaith agencies. We rightly stress the need for mutual understanding; we expend great effort at removing sources of conflict and even irritation between the diverse peoples, organization, nations and so on of the world, just as we work very hard to eliminate conflict, controversy in our homes: right? I hope so. We know that misunderstanding almost always arises out of a failure of communication. So we concentrate on improving our communications. This is precisely what we ought to do.

But success may not be what God intends. Do we hear that? Success may not be what God intends. That is, success as achieving cooperation and unity. On the contrary, I think that if a person reviews the record of human efforts and the failure of those efforts a great deal is learned about the fallenness of humanity and how that plays out both in individual hearts and lives and in the patterns and cycles of human behavior, both constructive and destructive through which organizations at every level of life seem to go. There is a place for division. There is a place for faction. There is a place for conflict, as long as the world is fallen. You and I need to know how to embrace the reality of those divisions and factions and conflicts and pray that God through His Holy Spirit would reveal the conditions of our own hearts, would make clear the places of our own sin, and give us the ability to deal patiently with those who are still held in the grip of unrighteousness and evil desire. We should recognize that achieving complete agreement and unity among all is not going to happen until what event: the return of the Lord Jesus Christ and the elimination of the wicked from face of the earth and the establishment of the righteous kingdom. And do you know what the scriptures tell us, that in that day Jesus will use what instrument in order to rule the nations: a rod of iron. What this tells us, beloved, is how deep is the stain of sin upon the human heart. We cannot afford to deal lightly or trivially with the reality of human sin. That is what has gripped the church of America today. In the day of Jeremiah the comment was made: [they] say “peace, peace, and seek to heal My people lightly.” But it is death that dwells in the heart of man, and we should never take it lightly. If you were as dismayed as I at the results of our recent elections – my issue is not who knows how to handle the deficit; my issue is what is the moral character of a country that does not know how to exercise self-control and that is beginning to pass laws that endorse every form of sexual perversion and immorality. We are a nation in profound degeneration. If you ever wanted to know about the reality of sin and its grip on the human heart, we are living in the resurrection of the darkness. You and I need to know how to pray, relying upon the Holy Spirit, pleading with God in heaven, “Please grant to Your Body the church the inner strength to be a coherent people who love you and will do whatever needs to be done that You would be glorified.

Please pray with me: Father in heaven, we thank you that we are not a powerless people. You have given to us Your Spirit and the model of Jesus and the instruction of the Word and the fellowship of the Body of Christ that we would be strong for goodness sake. So may it be true of us we ask, in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Questions for Understanding and Application:

1. Would it be accurate to say that you model your Christian faith on the life of Jesus? How has this model proved helpful and what makes it difficult?
2. Does evil in the world, or perhaps Satan behind that evil, frighten you? Should it?
3. When you think about the life of faith what most attracts or intrigues you, goodness or power?
4. Do our prayers reflect an understanding of the two limiting factors regarding assured answers to prayer: that they are in Jesus’ name and they are for God’s glory through Christ? What do these limits or guidelines mean for us?
5. How do people generally relate love and duty to each other? How should they relate? Does this harmonize well with Jesus’ statement that if we love Him we will keep His commandments?
6. If you were to keep a list of your prayers, what portion would be in line with keeping Jesus’ commandments and what portion would be devoted to other sorts of personal concerns?
7. In what areas of your life do you most feel the need for the Spirit’s help? Do you sense a need for His help in your prayer life?
8. What is idolatry? Why is claiming the right to decide for ourselves what is good and what is evil a big step towards idolatry? Is the desire for power idolatrous?
9. Why might worldwide or universal unity be a bad idea?
10. What are some of the greatest challenges for loving others in the church as ourselves? What are some of the greatest challenges in loving our neighbors? How might the Spirit help us to meet these challenges?