

**1112 The status of love, Jesus, and John the Baptist – Book of John (1)**  
(Verses refer to those in NASB95 unless otherwise specified, and by Whirlwind.)

We have already and shared "faith" based on the Gospel of Luke, and we have just mentioned "hope" in the Book of Revelation. Because Christians want to live a life of faith, hope and love on earth, it is time to share some "love" related scriptures. In fact, faith, hope and love are not independent, but influence each other. Most of the word 'love' mentioned in the New Testament is about the love of God. Let's first look at the true meaning of this love. In fact, Christians have the indwelling Holy Spirit, and this love has been poured out on Christians through the Holy Spirit. Only by putting to death the old self can Christians demonstrate the love of God. Since John is called the apostle of love, we will study the Gospel of John and also look at some scriptures that talk about love.

First of all, we briefly explained why love has a lofty status among Christians, discussed the true meaning of love, and also saw that we should not eliminate the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. When there is no inspiration from the Holy Spirit, we must use the words of the Bible as our absolute standard to distinguish something and decide what the right thing to do or not. Important thing is that we still have to be on God's side even in this case. Second, let's take a look at the Trinity, where three of them have with the same dignity and glory as mentioned at the beginning of the Gospel of John. We also see that they all had a share in creation. Jesus is the true light, and we also explain why people don't accept that light. Third, we have seen that John the Baptist came to bear witness to the true light, and we have also seen that it talks about rebirth. Not only that, but also to embark on the road to sanctification and become an overcomer who can enter the New Jerusalem. Fourth, we said that both grace and truth come from Jesus Christ. John personally saw the incarnation of Jesus who was full of grace and truth. In the grace and truth of Jesus, He used keeping the Sabbath as an example, and told us that He was not keeping the Sabbath time specified in the law, but the true meaning of the Sabbath. As Luke says, "But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the Law to fail." (Luke 16:17) This refers to the true meaning of the law. Finally, we saw that John the Baptist was the pioneer of Jesus. What he brought to people was the baptism of repentance. Both Peter and Paul unanimously saw that in general, in addition to being baptized by water, a person must also be baptized by the Holy Spirit. Even in special circumstances, what is indispensable is the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

## **1. The status and practice of love**

"Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne;  
Lovingkindness and truth go before You." (Psalm 89:14) This is not just talk, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3:16) So what did Jesus say? "...a lawyer, asked Him a question, ..., 'Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?' And He said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments depend the whole Law and

the Prophets." (Matthew 22: 35-40) I didn't know what it meant to love your neighbor as yourself. At that time, I was in the middle of depression. I really didn't want others to suffer from depression like me. I suddenly realized that this is really about loving your neighbor as yourself. I don't want others to have depression similar to what I had, which implies that I don't want them to suffer from depression as much as I do. Isn't this loving others? Even though I still can't love my neighbor as myself completely, I finally figured it out at least in this event! Paul said it well, "But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love." (1 Corinthians 13:13) So there are quite a lot of scriptures about love.

Most of the word 'love' mentioned in the New Testament is about God's love (G26). G26 is a noun and G25 is a verb. Before we study the Book of John, let us first take a look at the true meaning of love, which is, "Love (G26) is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly G807, G807); it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails; ..." (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

First of all, we must notice that human love cannot be endured for a long time. We must have the love of God. Christians have the Holy Spirit as the scripture says, "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, ..." (1 Corinthians 6:19) We have the love of God, "...because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us." (Romans 5:5) What we have to do is, "...if you are living...by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live." (Romans 8:13) This is similar to crucifixion. If you cannot crucify yourself, others must crucify you. Therefore, without relying on the Holy Spirit, we cannot put to death our old self. Ezekiel prophesied well, "Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances." (Ezekiel 36:26-27) We know that the Holy Spirit will live in a place without sin. Although it is not explicitly stated here, He can only live in the new spirit, and He does not live in the heart of flesh. Although this fleshly heart is also new and has nothing to do with sin, it is of a different type from the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit will not be in the fleshly heart.

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves." (2 Corinthians 4:7) When the old self is put to death, the earthen vessel of me is broken, and God's power will be revealed. This is a narrow gate, and "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it." (Matthew 7:13-14) That is to say, we must discern that the inspiration is really from the Holy Spirit, and do not be like Eliphaz the Temanite, who did the work of Satan and thought he was working for God. (see Job 4 :12-21) We've talked about this before, so we won't say more.

Once we know that the inspiration comes from the Holy Spirit, we have to "Do not quench the Spirit." (1 Thessalonians 5:19) The inspiration of the Holy Spirit can be annihilated by

those who don't accept it, otherwise Paul would not have said this. Because life can only come from God, as the scripture says, "I (Paul) planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth." (1 Corinthians 3:6-7) If you want to have life, you must be led by the Holy Spirit.

If there is the guidance of the Holy Spirit, everything in our lives must be led by the Holy Spirit. So obviously, this also includes the fact that we must be led by the Holy Spirit when reading the Bible. Think about how many people will say that we are not ready to read the Bible in this way. This is from the perspective of human, since studying the Bible this way is to put studying in your own hands. How could this be killing the old self? If you study the Bible from the human perspective, once you have a different idea than what is described in the Bible, you may change the original meaning of the Bible or even the scriptures to suit your own ideas. We really need to look at things from the perspective of the Bible, because the Bible is inspired by God. This means looking at things from God's perspective. Don't be like the church in Laodicea, thinking that they have done many things but are worthless in the eyes of God, and even shut Jesus out without knowing it. (See Revelation 3:14-22)

Our God is not a God who commands every action. Everything must be moved by the Holy Spirit before we can move forward. Didn't we see that in Eliphaz, the Holy Spirit did not move him first, but let him make his own judgment and decision? Many people teach that if one isn't moved by the Holy Spirit, he should stay put. This is really not God's original intention, and it is inconsistent with what God wanted to do in Eliphaz's case. In fact, even though Eliphaz made a mistake, God was gracious and merciful, and gave him the opportunity to repent and forgive him. Just as the scripture says, "It came about after the LORD had spoken these words to Job, that the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My wrath is kindled against you and against your two friends, because you have not spoken of Me what is right as My servant Job has. Now therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, and go to My servant Job, and offer up a burnt offering for yourselves, and My servant Job will pray for you. For I will accept him so that I may not do with you according to your folly, because you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has." So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went and did as the LORD told them; ..." (Job 42:7-9) Eliphaz indeed repented because he did what the Lord commanded him to do.

The inspiration of the Holy Spirit sometimes comes at the last minute, in which case we need to wait. When we want to do something without the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we still have to stand on God's side, judge whether we should do it according to the biblical words that cannot be construed by oneself, and use the biblical words as the absolute criterion for our actions. Here we especially emphasize not to forcefully interpret the Bible or distort the original meaning of the Bible. We must know that God is infinite and humans are limited. Only with the guidance of the Holy Spirit can we not forcefully interpret the Bible.

Even if we accidentally make the wrong choice, don't we see in Eliphaz's case that God is a merciful and gracious God? It is even more clearly stated in the New Testament, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all

unrighteousness."(1 John 1:9) True repentance will definitely be accompanied by a desire to change. Although sometimes you will make the same mistakes due to your own weakness, you will also want to avoid making the same mistakes next time in a similar situation. Wrong, it is not that Christians will never be defeated, but they will get up again after being defeated, so Christians will have the attitude of fighting after repeated defeats.

Let's continue to look at the true meaning of love. The next three virtues are very clear and we won't go into details. So what does 'unbecomingly' (G807, G807) mean? Especially in the original text, the same word is used twice to strengthen the tone. In fact, this word only appears in one other scripture, that is, "But if any man thinks that he is acting unbecomingly (G807) toward his virgin daughter, if she is past her youth, and if it must be so, let him do what he wishes, he does not sin; let her marry."(1 Corinthians 7:36) This means that we do not do anything inappropriate or embarrassing.

The next few items are very clear, so we won't go into details until the end when it says that love never fails. We know that in real life, even if you do something with love, things will fail, so it cannot be explained this way. So what does it mean? God loves the world and gave His only begotten Son. In salvation, the blood of Jesus is always effective, despite "...ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ."(Jude 1:4) But the blood of Jesus is for everyone no matter what. Therefore, God loves people forever, but he does not like the sins committed by people. So here it is said that once in love, that love will never fail to exist. That is to say, God's love will always exist, so love will never end. The translation of the Union Version is very good. Let's now start from the beginning of the Gospel of John.

## **2. The Trinity of God with the same dignity and glory**

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it."(John 1:1-5)

This is to say that before there was time, the Trinity God had the same dignity and glory. During the time of the incarnation, there was an obvious order. Father sent the Son, and the Holy Spirit would come only after the Son went. It is clearly stated here that Jehovah and Jesus (the Word) are God. The Holy Spirit is also God, because "...Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land? While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.""(Acts 5: 3-4) As for being one, we can see from this verse, "Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God (H3068), the LORD (H3058) is one!"(Deuteronomy 6:4) Please note that God and Lord here refer to the same, because the original text uses the same word, and the emphasis is on the word 'one.' Doesn't this mean that there is only one? The Trinity of Gods all had a share in the creation of the world. It is

clearly stated here that Jesus had a share, and the Holy Spirit also had a share, because "The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters." (Genesis 1:2) In fact, it says "In the beginning God (H430, plural) created the heavens and the earth." (Genesis 1:1) God here used plural.

Life is in Jesus, and this life is the light of men. "The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it." (John 1:5) As for the reason for this, the scripture is very clear, "This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed." (John 3:19-21)

### **3. John the Baptist came to bear witness to the true light**

"There came a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him. He was not the Light, but he came to testify about the Light. There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:6-13)

Jesus made it very clear, "He (John the Baptist) was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light." (John 5:35) John came to bear witness to the true light. But it is clear that even though He came into the world He had created, and the world nailed Him to the cross, however the plan of salvation was accomplished. So in the cross, "...when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, 'It is finished!'" And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit." (John 19:30)

"He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John 3:18) It is said here that whoever believes in His name is born of God, that is, he is reborn. This is what Jesus said when he answered Nicodemus, "...Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3) "Jesus answered, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.'" (John 3:5-8) This is the work of the Holy Spirit.

It's just that not everyone who has been regenerated may walk well, because "Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour." (1 Peter 5:8) Therefore, we must "Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. ..." (1 Peter 5:8) Even if we want

to embark on the road to sanctification, people will be weak. Not everyone will be the overcomers, that is to say, "Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city." (Revelation 22:14) Doesn't this mean that the Holy Spirit clearly says, "To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God." (Revelation 2:7)

The tree of life is in the city of New Jerusalem. This scripture makes it very clear, "Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." (Revelation 22:1-2) Therefore, this paradise of God refers to the city of New Jerusalem. Don't be weak and become a fallen Christian who cannot enter the city. When you are like what the Bible says, "Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying." (Revelation 22:15) Then you will regret it and can only gnash your teeth!

We can see such people on YouTube. There is a person who once believed in and became a professor of theology, but because he thought that the inerrancy of the Bible refers to the words, he fell because of this, even to the point of being anti-Christian. He wrote many books which are popular with some people. We have given quite a few examples in "1111 The True Meaning of Biblical Inerrancy" and discussed its true meaning in detail. You can go to the website "<https://a-christian-voice.com/>" and click "Understanding of Spiritual Life" to find this article.

#### **4. Grace and truth come from Jesus Christ**

"And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. John (the Baptist) testified about Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.'" For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him." (John 1:14-18)

(Old) John personally saw the incarnate Jesus, full of grace and truth, just as the angel Gabriel said, "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which translated means, "God with us." (Matthew 1:23) During the incarnation, even His flesh was with the people at that time just like (old) John. John the Baptist knew very clearly that he came only to bear witness to the true light that was born afterward, and he also knew that the true light was before him. We have indeed received the abundant grace from grace to grace. All we have to do is believe and let the Holy Spirit guide us. When there is no guidance from the Holy Spirit, we also believe that the words of the Bible are the absolute rules for our actions and use them to distinguish something to decide whether something is possible or not, always stand on God's side. We have said this before and we say it again because this attitude is so important.

**It is very clear here that Jesus brought grace and truth, and the legal provisions of the Old Testament were passed down through Moses. "No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him."(John 1:18) This scripture is what Jesus said, "I and the Father are one."(John 10:30) So (old) John knew that seeing Jesus was like seeing God the Father, and we now know these things through the Bible.**

**In the grace and truth of Jesus, He used Sabbath keeping as an example, telling us that He was not keeping the time for resting in the law, but keeping the true meaning of the Sabbath, just like "And a man was there whose hand was withered. And they questioned Jesus, asking, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"—so that they might accuse Him. And He said to them, "What man is there among you who has a sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will he not take hold of it and lift it out? How much more valuable then is a man than a sheep! So then, it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath."(Matthew 12:10-12)**

**At other times, it was clearly stated, "...The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."(Mark 2:27-28) Isaiah quoted the words of the Lord himself: "If because of the sabbath, you turn your foot From doing your own pleasure on My holy day, And call the sabbath a delight, the holy day of the LORD honorable, And honor it, desisting from your own ways, From seeking your own pleasure And speaking your own word, Then you will take delight in the LORD, And I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; And I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."(Isaiah 58:13-14) The true meaning of the Sabbath was already stated at that time. Didn't Jesus do this? What God tells us through the Bible is consistent, so the verse below refers to the true meaning of the law, not the letter. "But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the Law to fail."(Luke 16:17)**

## **5. John the Baptist was the forerunner of Jesus**

**"This is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent to him priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" And he confessed and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ." They asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" And he said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you, so that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am a voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as Isaiah the prophet said." Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, and said to him, "Why then are you baptizing, if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" John answered them saying, "I baptize in water, but among you stands One whom you do not know. It is He who comes after me, the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie." These things took place in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing."(John 1:19-28)**

**In the human world, before the king comes, there is always someone who opens the way for everyone to let him pass. At least China has this tradition. For the incarnate appearance of the true light, Jesus, John the Baptist came to open the way and pave the way for the king. So the beginning of this passage says that John the Baptist was the forerunner of Jesus, speaking of the prophecy of this passage, "A voice is calling, "Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness; Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God. "Let every valley be lifted up, And every mountain and hill be made low; And let the rough ground become a plain, And the rugged terrain a broad valley; Then the glory of the LORD will be revealed, And all flesh will see it together; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.""(Isaiah 40:3-5)**

**John the Baptist made it clear that he could only baptize with water. This is what Paul said to the twelve disciples in Ephesus, "Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus.""(Acts 19:4) We need to read the entire Bible together, because one way of writing in the Bible is "a little here and a little there", as this scripture says, "So the word of the LORD to them will be, "Order on order, order on order, Line on line, line on line, A little here, a little there," ..." (Isaiah 28:13)**

**Jesus had to go to the cross and shed His blood for us to complete our salvation. Just as Paul said, "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace."(Ephesians 1:7) Only the blood of Jesus can take away sin. He clearly knew, "...it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you."(John 16:7) So there was a sequence during the time when Jesus became flesh. The Father sent the Son, and the Holy Spirit would not come until the Son went. This is what Peter said to the brothers when he baptized Cornelius and other gentiles in the name of Jesus Christ, "And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He used to say, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' Therefore if God gave to them the same gift as He gave to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?"(Acts 11:16-17, and see Acts 11:1-18) Since the Holy Spirit had baptized the Gentiles, Peter caused them to also be baptized with water.**

**"When they (the twelve) heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying."(Acts 19:5-6) So they not only need to be baptized with the water of repentance, but also need to be baptized with the Holy Spirit. Just as Peter said, what God tells us through the Bible is consistent. In a special situation, Jesus said to one of the criminals who were crucified with Him, "...Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise."(Luke 23:43) The criminal had no opportunity to be baptized in water, but he was baptized by the Holy Spirit because Jesus, the Trinity God, personally told him that he could go to paradise after death. This is a special case, and the Bible does not say that every Christ will be like this. We must believe that what God tells us through the Bible is consistent.**