

## “THIS IS . . .”

Submitted by Rev. Julia Schwert

Have you ever noticed that of all the times when Jesus spoke He did not give a suggestion to the people, He did not give His opinion, He didn't even give the people a choice. He simply said: “**This is.**” He stated facts. When Jesus spoke, He didn't ask for my input or my thoughts on the matter. His statements many times go against my own ‘human’ thinking. They may go against my desires and how I think things should be done. They have even gone against ‘my grain’ and make me upset!

St. John 15:12: *“This is my commandment (my **directive** – no questions asked!) that ye (the people claiming to be my followers—the church) love one another (love the people in the church), **as I have loved you.**”* Do you realize that in order for Jesus to love us He **had to do one thing**? He had to **forgive**! No questions asked – it was imperative for Him to first forgive. It is **impossible** to love and not forgive! **Without forgiveness love cannot exist!** Not with God, not with a family, not with a church. **Forgiveness** is the foundation that makes **love possible!** Without forgiveness, we cannot show forth God's love to anyone! If God, the creator of the universe, had to forgive us **before** He could show love and send His Son to die for our unrighteousness, what makes us think we can hold on to un-forgiveness and at the same time ‘love’ others.

St. John 15:10 & 11 prefaces the above verse: *“If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide (**stay**) in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that **your joy** might be full.”* Do you desire joy in spite of what may be happening in your life? That joy that bubbles up when

things go wrong? That joy that builds your faith because you know everything will be ok because God is **your Father** – a Father of Love for His children? The only way, the Bible says, that you can have this type of joy is for you to keep God's (and Jesus') commandments. His basic commandment is to **Love your brothers and sisters in the Lord!**

*“If ye love me, keep my commandments.” St. John 14:15.* Read John chapters 14 and 15; how many times does Jesus say: “Keep my commandments”? How many times does He repeat, ‘if you love me, you will do what I tell you to do: love the church?’ Oh, Lord, search me: am I guilty of showing love to the people in the world but not extending that same love to my brothers and sisters who are working beside me in the church? Father, forgive me. I am deceiving myself! If I cannot show love to others who I see daily in the church worshipping you, then I am not **your child!** Satan, the worker of iniquity, get behind me! You will not work through me to hinder the move of God. You will not work through me to deceive my own self and miss out with God.

*“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” John 15:35.* Everyone will know because of the consistent love you extend to everyone, whether sinner or a saint, or even a saint who is yielding to the ‘flesh nature.’ Jesus didn't say, “I think I will forgive this person and not forgive that one.” He extended His forgiveness and His love to **ALL**. He extended it to those who followed Him; He extended it to those who spoke against Him; He extended it to those who crucified Him. Jesus **did not discriminate**. He could have, but chose not to! The ‘flesh nature’ says discriminate; the ‘God nature’ says do unto others as you want them to do unto you. Let us **daily live** the God nature so others may see that we truly are ‘one of God's children’ and glorify God.