

COMPASSION OF GOD SERIES

DEVELOPMENT OF SPLANKNA

In John 15, Jesus moves through three levels of *phileo* or friendship. The first level is in verses 1-8, You are the branch and you are the vine. The relationship of the branch is that of command. The branch receives the nutrition from the roots through the vine. Receive and produce. The branch does not have a talking relationship with the roots. They only have a working relationship. That is the first level of *phileo* between the branch and the vine. Jesus gives the command and you do the work. He tells you, you listen. Listening to the vine will lead to a working relationship.

Jesus moves them further from verse 9 onwards. In verse 10 If you will keep my commandments you abide in my love as I have kept my Father's commandment and abide in my Father's love. Now all these lead to *agape* - abiding in His love.

He moves them further in verse 13, *Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.* Jesus is using the word *phileo*, the Greek word for friends. No longer will I call you servants for a servant does not know what his master is doing. The servant only receives the commands and fulfills it. Of course God wants you to be a servant. Do you know that the first level that God puts you through is servanthood? He tests your heart. He tests your willingness to serve. When you begin to serve, you progress to the second level of *phileo*, which is friendship.

I do not call you servants any longer for a servant does not know what his master is doing. But I call you friends for I have made known to you whatever I

have heard from the Father. In other words secret, infinite things are shared with you. That is the same second level that Jesus was bringing Peter to.

The third level is found in verse 18, *If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.* He is bringing them to the third step. Are you willing to share not only in the power of His resurrection but also in the fellowship of His sufferings? Are you willing not only to take His crown and wear it but also take His cross and carry it? Are you ready to share the rewards of being in Christ but also the ridicule and persecution of being in Christ? That is the third level. Are you ready to lay down your life and suffer for Him?

If you examine your relationship with different people, you will realize that there are different levels. With certain people, your relationship is that of *phileo*. With some others you begin to move into the level of relationship. With that it is very few where you could share the intimate things of your heart. But very few of us can move into the third area. For us the third area is found in I John 3:16. John 3:16 is Jesus for us: *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.* I John 3:16 is we for the others: *By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

Jesus talks about persecution in the third phase of John 15: 20 *Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.* At the different levels of relationship with people, you will find people willing to have fellowship with you. Because in the early days of the ministry, when you get a lot of flak and a lot of persecution, very few people wants to fellowship with you, because they will get the persecution that you get. Many people are willing to move into the first two levels of *phileo* but very few people are willing to move into the third level. Whenever a minister of God is controversial, whenever someone moves into the new things of God, very few will stand up for it. They will only stand up for it only when the controversy has died off and the controversy has become popular. In the early days when tongues speaking were new, there were many people who didn't want to associate with these tongues speaking people. They will look at you with a strange eye, and do not want to associate with you because you are a tongue talker. But now it has

become established and many people in high places now speak in tongues.

The real test of a friend is when you are in need and when you are unpopular but right. And not many people are willing to stand with you because of the persecution they will receive because of you. When you become friends, you not only partake of the fellowship but you partake of the other person's sufferings. If they say bad things about that person, they will also say bad things about you because you associate with him. That is why we need to discern what is right and what is wrong and what level of *phileo* we are willing to go through. The third level is difficult for most people.

But through these three levels will *splankna* develop to its fullest capacity. When you develop agape to its fullest, then you will experience *splankna* easier. Which is why to have specific love for one person is important. You develop love. In life there are relationship between husbands and wives, between family members, between working colleagues. In heaven all these cease to exist and we become a big family in God. In heaven there is no marriage but one big giant family in God. But God is teaching that in whatever relationship you are in, if you can love one human being then you even love the others. If we cannot love one human being you cannot love the other 5 billion. If you cannot show love to your loved ones, don't ever say you love the world – God's Word says you cannot. Usually those with family problems find it hard to relate to people. The moment they overcome their problems and begin to love with agape love, they begin to love the others

You will notice that those who are able to establish good relationship in the church have it flowing in the family. But if you have grief and hurts in your family, you will find it hard to relate to people in the church. You cannot run away. You find that you find new pastures, you will bring your problems into the new pastures, So if you have problem loving one individual, you will have problem loving all the rest That is why we have to learn to love individually and then multiply it not divide it Sometimes we find a particular individual who is our troublemaker but we must love him. But we say he is my enemy. Jesus says love your enemy. But I find it difficult. But is it commanded of you? But once you

overcome this one person and begin to love him, then you will develop *splankna* easier. Once you love a tough nut, you will love all the nuts easier. It is important to learn how to love people because we grow in love. But that guy is worse than a nut - then what is he? Spanner. Learn to love that spanner and then you will love all the other spanners in life.

The capacity develops differently. It starts with people staying under the same roof. If you have not resolve a difference with a brother or sister, forever you will never love the others deeply. You ask why don't God give me easier persons to love. Don't ask God to change circumstances, ask God to change you. Be thankful, for there are others in worse situations than you.

In order to understand the development of into agape, we need to understand the Old Testament word for compassion, which is *rahamim* or mercies. There is another word for mercy, which is *aleo*. But *racham* has a tenderness which *aleo* doesn't have. The Hebrew word for *splankna* is *rahamim*, and it is used to refer to the womb or inward part.

Genesis 49 When God told Moses He will have mercy on whom He choose to have mercy, He uses the word *racham*. Just to show from an example from the Bible how *splankna* can develop into agape love, it goes through all the three processes of *phileo*. Gen 49:22 *Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a well. His branches run over the wall.* We will see how *splankna* develops in Joseph's life. The key word is in v 25 when Jacob speaks a blessing on Joseph. *"By the God of your father who will help you, and by the Almighty who will bless you, with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lies beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb."* The word *womb* is from the Hebrew word *rahamim*. *Splankna* and *rahamim* are creative force. We have seen how *splankna* refers to loins, womb and reion. Blessings of *splankna* and *rahamim*, Jacob is pronouncing a powerful blessing on Joseph. You know that in Israel, Joseph had two tribes coming from his loins. And Manasseh and Ephraim became the numerous and the largest tribes in Israel fulfilling the blessings of God. *Rahamim* will produce works of God, will produce fruitfulness, power of God.

We know from these verses Joseph develop the seed of *rahamim* or *splankna* in his life. Despite the fact that Joseph's brothers tried to kill him and he could have been annihilated, Joseph became two tribes in Israel. These are powerful blessings from God. We are not talking about developing physical seed, but developing from your spirit. Do you know why the children of Abraham became numerous? It is because Abraham had it in his spirit. The children of Abraham were in Abraham's spirit. Abraham saw the stars and the dust and he saw the multitude of his children. We are not just talking of biological seed but spiritual seed - the seed of *splankna*. The seed of your works, the seeds of your ministry, the seed of your future success, the seed of what your life will do to other people's lives is in your spirit. And if you want it to develop, it has to flow in *splankna* for nothing can flow without *splankna*. We are the compassion of God. That seed is dry, and take that seed and put in a place without water, air and that seed will not grow. It may die. But when that seed is planted in our spirit and that seed grows, that *splankna* will produce anything in life.

Joseph at the peak of his life and work struggled to develop *splankna* or *rahamim* in his life. There were three records of his relationship with his brothers after he was made governor of Egypt. Genesis 42: 7 Joseph had to learn to develop compassion. *Splankna* includes mercy but mercy does not include *splankna*. Joseph when he was 17 was rejected and sold by his brothers. If anyone had to struggle with unforgiveness, Joseph was the one. Would it be easy to forgive your flesh and blood brothers and sisters who sold you off as a slave and almost killed you. He was partly responsible for this, but there was tremendous rejection that he went through. Not only was he severed from his brothers but also he was severed from his father's umbilical cord. His father loved him like a pet. Slightly spoilt, but deeply loved. When sold to the Ishmaelite, he was cut off from the protection, from the companionship. Joseph started reigning at the age of thirty. At the time of the famine seven years later, he may have seen his brothers when he was thirty-nine years old, two years later. Here come his brothers who did not recognize him. When Joseph saw them, he acted like a stranger to them. And he spoke roughly to them. He remembered the hurts, the grief, and the rejection. You can be kind or rude when you carry out your job. Many are rude in their secular jobs. Friendliness is not automatic. It is something you learn. And there he is, his brothers came, and "YES, WHAT DO YOU WANT?!!" When you meet such a person like that you would rather not do business. But the brothers needed food, so they have to put up with this rude Egyptian governor.

“WHERE DO YOU COME FROM?” “We come from the land of Canaan to buy food.” When Joseph recognized his brothers, he remembered the dream. He was struggling with compassion. Compassion is not automatic. It was something you have to release from your spirit and allow God's spirit to work in you. He was struggling to love his brothers. He didn't show love when he met his brothers. When he recognized his brothers, Joseph said, “You are spies.” They were shocked. They had a rough treatment. “You have come to see the nakedness of the land.” “No, no, my lord, we have come to buy food.” Verse 14, *It is as I spoke to you, you are spies.* Verse 17 *So he put them all together in prison three days.* He gave them the rough prison treatment. Now this is his chance to get back his own. His brothers now miserable, worn out, broken down and were really humbled. V 21 *Then they said to one another, “We are truly guilty concerning our brother, for we saw the anguish of his soul when he pleaded with us, and we would not hear; therefore this distress has come upon us.”* They were fearful, and talking about the wrong things they have done. They didn't know that Joseph understood their language. But something started happening in Joseph's life. Verse 24 *And he turned himself away from them and wept.* It is recorded that he cried for the first time. Crying. You know why? Because compassion, *rahamim* is now coming out. He cried because he was touched and because he saw that his brothers knew right from wrong.

The brothers were discussing in the Hebrew language, look what we have done to our little brother, and this is what is happening to us, When the brothers discussed their wrong ways, he was touched in the core of his being. The anger, the rejection he suffered now faded away before his eyes. All the hardness of the heart melted in his heart and now became tender mercies. You can be sure that from that day onwards he was not rough with his brothers anymore. Because he began to move in the first level where when persons began moving in right commandments, you began to feel compassion for them. He was the first level of *phileo*, where he gave the orders and the brothers did the doing. He gave them the food, and that was the first level he felt *rahamim* flowing out.

Some years later his brothers came back with the youngest brother Benjamin. When Benjamin came back, Joseph began to experience a deeper level of *phileo* coming out. Do you know that when you start hating one person, you begin to hate

all the others? Many of these serial killers show a history of a life of deprivation, of rejection, of deeply wounded by others. When all those things are happening, the anger is seeping inside. Because of one ill treatment by one person, father, mother, uncle etc, that anger is channeled out to a multitude of innocent victims. Innocent people die just because they are angry with one person. Learn this principle - if you are angry at one person, you will be angry at the world. Love one person, and you will love the world. Joseph began to feel the second level of *phileo* love.

In 43:29 he didn't speak roughly with them but asked about their father. He lifted his eyes and he saw Benjamin, his mother's son. Benjamin was his little brother when Joseph was sold. Now when he sees his little brother again, that tender love started welling up in him. If you will succeed to love one person, you will love the rest. That is why do not talk about your ministry to the world unless you get your love right to your own family members. V29-30 *Is this your younger brother of whom you spoke to me? God be gracious to you, my son. Now his heart yearned for his brother.* His *phileo* love is growing. He began to feel that love for his brother. So Joseph made haste and sought somewhere to weep. Second time he cried.

The second time he cried had a different reason from the first time he cried. The first time he cried was because of the wrong things his brothers did and how they have amended their ways. The second time he cried was because he felt love for his brother. How he wanted to hold his brother. He quickly made haste and cried, washed his face and then came back. You know what was happening - *splankna* beginning to burst forth and grow. The: fountain of love is growing stronger. Joseph had no intention of going back to his father if he could keep his younger brother with him. He had a plan to keep his younger brother with him. But something took place that touched his heart further and finally released the storehouses of *rahamim*, compassion, and *splankna* in his life. In Gen 44 Joseph trapped Benjamin by secretly concealing a silver cup in his bag and arrested him. V17 *But he said, far be it from me that I should do so, the man in whose hand the cup was found, he shall be my slave. And as for you, go up in peace to your father.* Joseph was now able to love his younger brother so much that he wanted him, by hook or by crook. V18-34 Judah wanted to take the place of Benjamin. If Benjamin had to be a slave, Judah will be a slave. If Benjamin has to die, then Judah will die. This touched Joseph's heart the most. Joseph saw a love that was willing to lay down his life for others - third level of *phileo* love. When Joseph saw that love that was

willing to suffer and die, Joseph could not stand it anymore. In 45:1 Joseph could not restrain himself before all those who stood by him and he cried out, "Make everyone go out from me." And he wept aloud. The third cry is when the *phileo* love burst out into the *agape* love that God wants, because *agape* love is the kind of love that can lay down his life for others. And when Joseph saw Judah confront with love, the very opposite of what they have done to him, the floodgates of his soul opened, and the *splankna* of his life flowed out. He has reached the third level of *phileo* love, which is the end result of *splankna* and *rahamim*.