

“Your Best Life...Later”
CRAZY LOVE¹ – Chapter 7
HEBREWS 11:6

TRUST JESUS WITH ABANDON

1. It became obvious to me sometime ago that I had to make a decision whether to **float** through my Christian life or **passionately run** after Jesus (Heb. 11:6).
2. What does running toward Jesus and desiring to love Him with a *Crazy Love* **look like** in **daily** life?
 - ◆ It can't mean I have to be **perfect** because I am **not**.
 - ◆ I think it is doing what **others think** is **crazy**.
3. There have been others who stepped out in **faith** to **follow** God into some **dire** situation (Heb. 11:7, 17-19; James 5:17).

KEY THOUGHT: Something is wrong when my life makes **sense** to **unbelievers**.

I. WHAT IS MY NEXT STEP?

- A. First, stop **playing** it **safe** (1 John 2:6)!
 1. If I claim to be a Christian, I ought to live in **obedience** as **Jesus** did (John 6:38).
 2. My desire to live obediently to God's Word would cause me to minister to the **“broken”** in this **life** as I would to Jesus Himself (Matt. 25:34-45).
- B. Second, change my **nature** to that of a **servant** (Phil. 2:5-11).
 1. My problem is that my life is characterized by not only **comfort**, but also the pursuit of more **comfort** (Therefore, Phil. 2:3-4 is hard.).
 2. Emptying myself of my selfish **nature** and my **craving** for comfort demands that I trust Jesus to come through (Phil. 2:5-8).

KEY THOUGHT: God wants to be my **refuge** and wants me to **trust** Him (Heb. 11:6).

¹ Crazy Love, by Francis Chan; Publisher: David C. Cook, © 2008

II. HOW DO I STAY IN STEP (1 JOHN 3:16-20)?

- A. **Practice** meeting the **needs** of others (1 John 3:16-18).
1. Christian love should be self-sacrificing and **giving** (1 John 3:16).
 2. Genuine love is not just **words**, but it is shown through a lifestyle of **actions** (1 John 3:17-18).
- B. My lifestyle should **encourage** other Christians to love the Lord with a **crazy love** (John 10:11, 15, 17, 18).

KEY THOUGHT: My trust in Jesus and my love for Him is shown by how I live my life “with **actions** and in **truth**” (1 John 3:18).

TAKING THE NEXT STEP

- I agree with God that taking and **keeping** for myself is unattractive and imprudent.
- As I choose to love God more genuinely and deeply, **trusting** Him becomes my desired response.
- Presently, my most **abundant** resource to give back to the Lord is ...
- Time**
 - Talent
 - Treasure**
- This week, I am going to **stop** playing it safe and **start** ministering to others' needs.

FOR FURTHER STUDY AND PERSONAL GROWTH

May 16, 2010

SUNDAY: **Something is wrong when a Christian's life makes sense to unbelievers (Heb. 11:6)!** The Christian life is meant to be lived with a sense of abandonment regarding the allurements of this world. Every Christian has to make a pivotal decision whether to float through his Christian life or passionately run after Jesus (Heb. 11:6). The Bible tells us what this passionate run towards Jesus looks like. However, what does to like to desire such a deep love for Jesus that the world cannot understand your obsession? It cannot mean that I must live a perfect life because no human can do so. However, it appears to be living with a deep, abiding love for Christ that motivates such devotion in my life that nonbelievers cannot comprehend it. This is not an unreasonable goal to pursue because many men and women are recorded in scripture who have followed God in such a trustworthy manner (Heb. 11:7, 17-19; James 5:17). Pray that the Lord would grant you the grace and strength to follow Him with abandonment towards the world. ***May your lifestyle become an enigma to those that cannot understand the depth of love you have for God!***

MONDAY: **Stop playing it safe (1 John 2:6)!** How does a Christian begin to live a lifestyle of abandonment towards the world? The first step is to stop playing it safe (1 John 2:6). If you claim to be a Christian, then you should live a life of obedience just as Jesus did on earth (John 6:38). Though you will have failure and will require God's forgiveness, your heartfelt conviction should be to never commit that, or any other, sin again. Furthermore, your desire to live an obedient life to the standard of God's Word should cause you to minister to the "broken" people as if you were serving Jesus Himself (Matt. 25:34-45). There will be a cost to such a lifestyle that will demand an eye on eternity, or you will waver and falter. Ask the Holy Spirit to be the absolute leader in your life. See your life as being completely turned over to the Lord (Gal. 2:20). ***May you first steps of this decision be firm and resolute!***

TUESDAY: **Change your nature to that of a servant (Phil. 2:6-11)!** Perspective is everything if you are going to honor the Lord in your Christian life. If you are ready to stop living a safe life then you can ask for a change in your nature to that of a servant (Phil. 2:6-11). You will have to overcome the American problem of not only desiring the comforts of this life, but the all-out pursuit of them (see the ideal in Phil. 2:3-4). This transformation by the Holy Spirit demands that you empty yourself of your selfish nature and your craving for comfort through choosing to trust Jesus to come through (Phil. 2:5-8). Unless your nature is transformed by the Holy Spirit's direction and control, you will be unable to be a Christ-like servant. Quietly pray and ask the Lord to identify the "comfort idols", to help you put them behind with your old nature. Continue to seek to be filled with the Holy Spirit and emptied of your own selfishness. ***May the example of Jesus as a servant bring a clear pattern for your behavior, words, and even your thoughts!***

WEDNESDAY: ***God wants me to trust Him (Heb. 11:6)!*** Living with abandonment towards the world is not an act of asceticism. It is not attempting to flee the world to live on an island. Rather, the goal is to free yourself to be able to trust the Lord *more* than yourself or the allurements of worldly treasures. God wants to be your refuge and for you to feel you can completely trust Him (Heb. 11:6). The depth of your love for the Lord will create a desire to please and honor Him. In fact, the Lord will use your love for Him and the life you are leading to impact many lives around you for Him. Ask the Lord to help you begin and sustain your commitment to love Him with this intensity of love. ***May the depth of your love for the Lord grow a little deeper every day!***

THURSDAY: ***Practice meeting the needs of others (1 John 3:16-18)!*** As you cultivate a deep, abiding love of the Lord, it will still require that you practice the actions of such great love (1 John 3:16). Living the life of a servant patterned after Jesus means loving others in a self-sacrificing manner and giving generously of your time, talent, and treasure. Genuine, Christian love is not just words and platitudes, but it is fleshed out through a lifestyle of consistent actions (1 John 3:17-18). Are there items from Tuesday's list of "comfort idols" that make it difficult to give of yourself in this manner? What is the first item on your list that would make it easier to give of yourself to others? Bring that before the Lord and continue to seek the power of the Holy Spirit to grow in this specific area. ***May this week bring a measure of victory as you begin to grow to become the servant that will please and honor Jesus!***

FRIDAY: ***Love the Lord with a "Crazy Love" (John 10:11)!*** Jesus is our Good Shepherd. He provided care, nurturing, protection, and guidance for His sheep on earth (John 10:11). Now, the Holy Spirit provides those functions with His indwelling presence in my life (John 14:16-17). The ***Crazy Love*** of which we are speaking will have a profound impact on so many around you. Those who are Christians will be encouraged to live a more vibrant faith (John 10:11, 15, 17, 18). Unbelievers will see the ideal of the Christian faith lived out before their eyes, and the movement of the Holy Spirit upon their lives may produce many new Christians. Praise the Lord for any success in walking close to Him! Proclaim His name blessed and adore Him through personal worship! ***May the power of the Holy Spirit overshadow you as you seek to walk diligently and passionately with your Lord Jesus!***

SATURDAY: ***Your life should reflect godly actions and biblical truth to demonstrate your love for him (1 John 3:18)!*** The Christian life is one of radical transformation. It is not something that you earn through a degree program or by saving enough "brownie" points. The motivation for living close to God is not to be a better person. The lasting motivation is the cultivation of a ***Crazy Love*** for God mentioned throughout scripture (Deut. 6:5). It involves the constant pursuit of Jesus and a relinquishing of the world's charms and "fool's" gold. The journey is best taken with several devoted friends and partners who will encourage you along the way as you will encourage them. You have the "right stuff" to make this journey and to make it successfully! Do not sell yourself short because the power of the Holy Spirit is what will propel and empower you. Stop and review your list from Tuesday of afflicting "comforts" that you still seek. Begin to lay one or two of these before the Lord and seek release from their hold as you desire to be consumed with His presence in your life (Gal. 2:20). ***May each step of your path with the Lord bring you greater joy and fulfillment as you are transformed into His servant to others!***