



**Joy Made  
Complete**



**ARISTIDES  
OF ATHENS  
B? – D 134  
AD**

**AUTHOR OF  
*APOLOGY*,  
WHICH HE  
PRESENTED  
TO  
EMPEROR  
HADRIAN**



## Which Says in Part:

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**they love one another,  
.....And if there is among  
them any that is poor and  
needy, and if they have no  
spare food, they fast two or  
three days in order to supply  
to the needy their lack of  
food.**



**TERTULLIAN  
AD 160-225**

**BISHOP OF  
NORTH  
AFRICA**

**WROTE HIS  
OWN  
*APOLOGY* IN  
AD 197**



# From the Mouths of Pagans

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But it is **mainly the deeds of a love** so noble that lead many to put a brand upon us “**Behold, (they say,) how they love one another,**” for they themselves are animated by mutual hatred. “**Behold, (they say about us,) how they are ready even to die for one another,**” for they themselves would sooner kill.



# To Be Very Clear

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- This doesn't say, “behold how they love one another, every Sunday morning from 10:30 AM to noon.”
- This kind of community impact and widespread notoriety could only happen as they shared life together at a deeply committed level **every day, day after day. But Why? How?**
- It was a **different kind of love!**



# Francis Chan Letters to the Church

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- As elders we came to the painful conclusion that when unbelievers came to our services, they weren't observing anything **supernatural** about the way we loved one another.
- What does that really **mean**?



# Original Church Brand Acts 2

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- 42 They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and [ao]to prayer.
- 43 [ap]Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and [aq]signs were taking place through the apostles. 44 And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; 45 and they *began* selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.





# Life Together

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- **46 Day by day** continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from **house to house, they were taking their [at]meals together with gladness and [au]sincerity of heart,** <sup>47</sup> praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding [av]to their number day by day those who were being saved.
- What is going on here???



# Let Me Remind You...

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- So, when you “get saved,” you **don’t** become a saved **but still individual** free moral agent, **still independent** but now better equipped to live your life with more blessings throughout eternity ....

- NO, no, no, no ... when we are born again and the Holy Spirit takes residence within us, it is for the **express purpose of becoming a part of HIS BODY**, filled with **His life** and gifted with supernatural abilities **from Him** so **He can LOVE the world through us**



# Paul Painted Us A Picture

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- **Philippians 2:** Therefore, if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any [a]affection and compassion, <sup>2</sup> **make my joy complete** [b]by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. *[which is ....?]*
- <sup>3</sup> Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves;



# Servanthood as Purpose

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- <sup>4</sup> do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.
- <sup>5</sup> Have this attitude [e] in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, although He existed in the form of God, **did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped** <sup>7</sup> but [g] **emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and** being made in the likeness of men.



# Humility is True Love

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- <sup>8</sup> Being found in appearance as a man, **He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death**, even death [h] on a cross.
- <sup>9</sup> For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, <sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father



# Verse 9 Is NOT the Point

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- When is the last time you were loved like this by someone else?
- Have you ever been loved like this by someone else?
- When was the last time YOU loved someone else like this?
- Have you EVER loved someone else like this?



# Refresh Your Memory

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- Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit
- Humbly regard others as more important than yourself
- Not protecting your own personal interests, but also protecting the interests of others (whether you like them or not)
- Relinquishing your own rights to sacrificially serve others
- Humbling yourself to become obedient to Him, even if the cost seems too great
- AS A WAY OF LIFE



# Uhh, This Sounds Impossible?

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- **12** So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; **13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure.**





# This is KINGDOM REALITY

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- “The Church is not a religious community of worshippers *of* Christ, but *is Christ himself* who has taken form among men.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer,
- **And this is what it looks like when the participating presence of Christ is producing the fruit of the Spirit in us ..... IN YOU!**



# Joy Made Complete

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- Less of us, Not about us
- His Love and Life working in and through us
- Emptying us of our self-centered, defensive, acquisitive, competitive narcissistic lives where even our acts of love are done to make us feel better about ourselves (all warm inside)
- Miracle of His life working in us Releases love that helps and heals and comforts and restores and produces Complete Joy



# Love IS Action

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■ MAKE ME LIKE  
CHARLIE



# Good News!, YOU Are

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- deeply loved by God,
- fully accepted by God,
- completely and permanently forgiven by God,
- lavishly blessed by God,
- and eternally, perfectly embraced by God as his child; a child who brings Him unspeakable JOY