

Mosaic Teaching Guide

Third Sunday in Lent

27 March 2011

Teaching Series: *Journey to the Cross*

Teaching Three: *Jesus Teaches his Disciples about Love*

John 15.1-17

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

Question for Everyone: On a scale of 1-10 I am (1) a person who gives love and affirmation easily to (10) I am a person who has rather exacting standards for those who receive my love and affirmation. Where are you on this "love" scale?

True Love

“Love is perhaps the most elastic word in the English vocabulary. All of the loves of our lives serve as sacramental sign posts pointing to the great Love that is the Source of all that we experience as love . . .” Think of all the people and things you love, name a few of them.

This Seems Rather Impossible

“Jesus commands us to love one another as he loves us. . . . My first response this command is protest. How is it that a mere mortal can love as God loves, to embody such self-giving, self-denying love?” What must one assume by the fact that Jesus “commands” us to love one another as He loves us? *Laying down one’s life for another is often done, most authentically, when no one else is watching.* Is this true? Why is this true?

A Command for the Church

“Within the Christian community the most important virtue isn’t tolerance or justice or righteousness, it is love.” Is this true? If this is true than consider possible implications.

“The truth is I think this commandment (to love one another) is perhaps the most disobeyed commandment in the all of the scriptures.” Is this just pastoral hyperbole or is there some truth to be considered here?

Abide

“The Christian life is unthinkable except in union with Christ” (C.K. Barrett, *The Fourth Gospel*). . . . *Abiding is the strongly relational word that describes the way one clings to, remains in, or attaches oneself to the Divine presence so as to bear the fruit of love. My question is what kind of gathering, what kind of experiences, what quality of worship, how much face time will bear the fruit of self-giving love in our community? How would you answer this rather awkward question?*

