

Daily Discipleship

Sixth Sunday of Easter (A) – John 14:15-21

Discipleship: *An Instrument of Change*

Focus Question: *This week how might you be an instrument of change?*

word of life

“If you love me, you will keep the commandments.” John 14:15 (NRSV)

Read John 14:15-21

Jesus does not simply ask his followers to speak of their love for him. He wants them to show love by living a consistent life based on his commandments. The preceding chapter in John’s Gospel describes Jesus washing the feet of his disciples and commanding them to love one another.

1. *What is the connection between love and obedience?*
2. *What happens when a disciple commits to love without an attitude of obedience?*

This section of verses begins with a key word *if*. It would follow that *if* a person does not love Jesus, then that person would have no desire to follow his teachings or commandments. Conversely, a person who loves Jesus would choose a lived response of obedience to the teachings of Jesus.

Jesus promises not to leave his followers alone and orphaned, but asks for the Advocate to be with his followers forever. This Advocate is understood to be the Holy Spirit present in the lives of his disciples.

3. *What does it mean personally for you to have the Advocate given to you?*
4. *What do you understand the role of the Advocate?*

Jesus describes the Advocate as the Spirit of Truth. It is one thing to have an advocate to speak on our behalf and to support; it is something entirely different to expand the role of advocate to include truth. So, what is truth? That is Pilate’s question to Jesus in John 18:38 before Jesus is sentenced to death.

5. *What does truth have to do with obedience to Jesus and love for him?*
6. *How do you answer the question, “What is truth?”*

Jesus embodies the truth of God. He sees clearly the motives behind people’s actions – whether it is for good or harm. His connection with God provides clarity, but also consistency of living.

Jesus recognizes the world will not understand any of this because the world is not connected to God. Consequently, it is difficult to remain on a path of discipleship without having Jesus right beside on the journey. Even with Jesus walking with the disciples through the streets of Jerusalem, Galilee, and other towns, the disciples become confused. There is no doubt a disciple living at all times in history needs God’s presence of the Holy Spirit to pursue a path of truth.

The words of Jesus are intended to reassure the disciples. It is the Spirit who helps a person to follow the commandments of Jesus and to love. The disciples are to trust in Jesus and his promise to be with them through the work of the Holy Spirit.

7. *Would Jesus’ words be reassuring to the disciples? How so?*
8. *What questions might the words of Jesus stir in the disciples?*

word among us

Have you heard that expression? “The only person who likes *change* is a baby.”

1. *How do you respond to change?*
2. *Are you a change agent? Why or why not?*
3. *Is there a difference between choosing change and having change forced upon you? Give examples.*

When Jesus gathered his disciples together in the upper room for his final Passover meal with them, he began to change things. He took the bread of the Passover meal and said, “‘This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.’” In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” (1 Corinthians 11:24-25) Words such as these had never been uttered before. Jesus was bringing something new to the tradition of Passover.

4. *How might the disciples have responded to Jesus changing the words of the Passover meal?*
5. *How have the changes made to the Passover meal by Jesus become a blessing for us?*

Jesus also wanted the disciples to change their behavior and adopt an attitude of obedience to Jesus in all phases of life. He wanted his disciples to demonstrate their love for him by living a life of love. No doubt this would mean a certain degree of change.

6. *What does it mean for you to be obedient to Jesus?*
7. *What areas of your life do not reflect an obedient attitude towards Jesus?*
8. *Take a moment to prayerfully and silently ponder those areas of your life needing to be changed in order to walk and live closer to Jesus Christ. Write down on a piece of paper one change which you feel called to begin today.*

Change can be tough. Sometimes it can get lonely. Fortunately, Jesus sends his very own Spirit to reside in our lives and to serve as our Advocate.

We are not orphaned, but are given the Advocate as well as a family of Christ to support and encourage us. That family of Christ is the church. When the church operates at its best, it is an open, supportive and welcoming body of Christ which recognizes each person as one being shaped by the Holy Spirit. We encourage each other at the same time we are being changed and transformed by that same Spirit.

9. *How do you know God’s Spirit wants you to change?*
10. *What does it feel like to change and grow closer to Christ?*
11. *Will God ever get content with us and stop trying to change us? Why or why not?*
12. *Would it be a good thing for the Spirit to stop trying to change us? Why or why not?*
13. *How can we support each other through change?*

Prayer

Gracious God, let me be open to change in my life. Amen

Dig Deeper

1 Peter 3:13-22

last word

Pray each day the Serenity Prayer:
God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
courage to change the things I can,
and wisdom to know the difference.



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