



Daily Reflections

May 24, 2019

Scripture

John 15: 12-17

Jesus said to his disciples:

"This is my commandment: love one another as I love 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 no longer call you slaves,

because a slave does not know what his master is doing.

I have called you friends,

because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father.

It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you

and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain,

so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you.

This I command you: love one another."

Our Scripture Reflection

No other religion in human history has held a teaching whereby the adherents of the religion are called by their Deity, "Friend"! Let that sink in. And how is that possible? Because Jesus, Our God, became a man, one like us in all things but sin. He died for us and wants us to be His Friends. All it requires of us is to love as He loved. Isn't our Friendship with Him worth it?

Food for your Journey

Holiness, the Spirit-filled life, is a life of good works done in Jesus' name with the intent to bring honor to him. I see in the Word that those who believe and are filled with the Spirit are to make a difference in their world. If, somehow, Christians are not having a positive influence in our homes, schools, communities, workplaces, government and local congregations -- wherever we come into contact with the world -- then there at least must be the suspicion that our claim to Christianity is self-deception at best, or an outright lie at worst. Holiness is a verb. The Spirit-filled life is not a philosophical belief as much as a lifestyle. The power of the Cross is the power for a changed life which sees others' needs and responds to those needs. Too many who call themselves by the name of Christ know little of what it truly means to be in him. Yesterday, I was at a conference where pastors and church leaders of many different denominations from all over Toledo had gathered. While there, I witnessed an exchange between one of those leaders and a lady taking orders for the material being promoted. I was shocked as I heard the dignified, well-dressed church leader respond with rude speech and an obnoxious attitude. We are the Highway of Holiness for the world. It is our lives, our service, our positive impact which points to Christ or validates the world's opinion that Christianity is a hoax and Christians are hypocrites.

Sheldon Vanauken in *A Severe Mercy* writes: "The best argument for Christianity is Christians: their joy, their certainty, their completeness. But the strongest argument against Christianity is also Christians -- when they are somber and joyless, when they are self-righteous and smug in complacent consecration, when they are narrow and repressive, then Christianity dies a thousand deaths."

Forget your schedule. Forget your personal preferences. What are you doing to bring glory to God? In what ways are you being the Highway of Holiness to the world in which you live? Are you a road sign pointing to the narrow gate of life, or merely part of the herd heading to a horrendous hell?

--Rick L. Upchurch,

Devotionals For Living a Holy Life in a Postmodern Age

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear God, Thank You for showing the depth of Your love for me by sending Your Son Jesus to live and to die for me. With gratitude in my heart, may I strive day to day to live as a True Friend of Jesus. Amen