

Scripture Reading

A Reading from the Gospel according to Matthew (*Matthew 22:37-40*)

He said to him, "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments. The Gospel of the Lord. R. Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection – The Call to Holy Love

Only God can teach us disinterested love, love in its purest form. Disinterested love is love for other people for the sake of love of God. The two great commandments of love (cf. *Matthew 22:37-39*) are the solid foundation of the divine teachings of Christ. The first commandment of love commands us to love God above all things and people. Love for God should have no competing lesser loves as we are obliged to love God, our Highest Good, with all our heart, all our mind and all our soul. It is to be no superficial love but to even involve our inmost soul. It is to be no divided love. There must be no room in our heart for other lesser loves. **Paradoxically, it is precisely this overriding, all-consuming love for God that will empower our true love for other people.** Thus, the first commandment of love leads to the second one. When we adhere to the two commandments of love in the correct order, then our love for other people will be love in its purest form, a disinterested love that has its motivation not in the object of love but solely in the love of God alone. Disinterested love is unconditional and does not tire out no matter what happens because it is solidly rooted in love of God.

The length, breadth, height and depth of God's love. *That you, rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the holy ones what is the breadth and length and height and depth and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:17-19).* To have an insight into God's love, we must try to practise it. If we can really have a good grasp of it, we will be filled with great joy and inner happiness so that there will be no longer any inclination to sin as sin is but an act of rebellion and selfishness against the love of God. We sin because we feel incomplete, and seek solace, pleasure and fulfillment in other things as we do not fully understand the love God has for us and the power of His grace available to us. If we meditate and ponder often on Christ's Passion, our source of light and strength, we will gain a good understanding of the divine love God holds in His Heart for each and every one of us.

God's love covers everyone. We are called to love everyone and not just those near and dear to us. We are called to love even our enemies and especially those who are in need. In the order of grace, other souls are our brothers and sisters in Christ. We are not called to work solely on our own salvation but also to help Christ in His mission of salvation. Thus, we are called to be the light of the world and the salt of the earth. Through our Baptism, Christ gives us a share in His priesthood, His prophethood and His kingship. **The love of God forgives all repented sins.** *Therefore, I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven (Matthew 12:31).* Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit Who works continuously in our soul for our sanctification, involves the deliberate refusal to repent and accept God's mercy (cf. CCC 1864). God's mercy is without limit for the sinner who repents of his/her sins. We are called to forgive all who offend us if we are to receive forgiveness for our own sins. *If you forgive others their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions (Matthew 6:14-15).*

The strength of God's love. *What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? (Romans 8:35).* St Paul tells us that our love for God must be strong enough to withstand anything adverse that may happen to us. He listed some: anguish, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, the sword. It is to be a love with a strong immovable foundation because it is not rooted in human power but in the very power of God Himself. St Paul tells us that if we remain in God's love, we can overcome any of these adversities triumphantly (cf. *Romans 8:37*). **Yes, in Christ, we are more than conquerors!**

Conversation with Jesus: Precious Lord, through Your life on earth, You show me how to love God and others. Holy love is poured into my heart by Your Holy Spirit (cf. *Romans 5:5*). You are the personification of holy love. Holy love is Your command and is to be the sole motive of all my intentions, desires and will. Holy love is the barometer of my personal holiness and the criteria with which I will be judged by You on my last day. It is the measure by which my heart will be like Yours. The measure of it in my soul will be the degree to which I participate in Your joy (cf. *John 15:10-11*). Mary, Refuge of Holy Love, give me all the graces to root in holy love all my thoughts, words, deeds and every decision and choice that I make everyday so that holy love will be my way of life. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus. www.twohearts.hk