

Trinity News

Pentecost XXIII Loving God and Loving People

“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength” (Deuteronomy 6:4).

“Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord” (Leviticus 19:18).

The Ten Commandments at Exodus 20:1-17 are summarized in these two great commandments.

An expert in the Law once replied to a question from Jesus about eternal life by reciting these summary commandments.

“Do this”, Jesus said to the expert in the Torah, “and you will live” (Luke 10:28). The expert in the Law then asked, “And who is my neighbour?” Jesus in response tells the story of the Good Samaritan.

Jesus incorporates commandments and principles into stories about the human journey: laws do not stand alone, separated from human realities.

We are living a story, the story of our life and the processes of our life within that story. We can make sense of commandments and directives only within the context of story. It is also in the context of the story of my family, my community, my people, my nation and my world. No one owns the world except God. There is no title deed for the world. There is no title deed for God.

As Hannah Haskell says, “Without others I cannot know myself”. But others do not own us. They do not own our story, which is unique in the universe.

Principles that are the connecting threads of stories:

With all your heart

Christ has an aching back from washing feet in an endless row; his heart speaks through his hands. The towel gets soiled but the water in the dish is still pure. So is Spirit.

With all your soul

“Soul” is the “life in the body”, the absolute assurance of who we are. We catch only fleeting glimpses of who we really are in ourselves. But the glimpses are immensely reassuring. One day the Dove of the Spirit whispers the secret of who we are to us , and then we always know.

With all your strength

Strength comes in many forms: spiritual, mental, physical. Strength to love consistently; strength to love when a beloved one no longer knows us; strength to love when faces have gone: unbearable.

Love your neighbour as yourself

Nothing enriches us more than loving others. Nothing diminishes us more than selfishness because it feeds hatred and reaction. As Haskell says of hatred, “Stop its growth...while you’re alive.”

The two Great Commandments are not just admonitions. They are shorthand for all the teachings of the Scriptures, and connecting threads in the scripts of every human story.

Bishop Arthur Jones

THIS WEEK:

Nov. 6, Tuesday

- Bible Study, 10am.
- Group Discussion @ the Tutton's, 7:30pm.

Nov. 8, Thursday.

- Midweek Eucharist, 10am, Chapel

TO PLAN:

- Next Sunday, Nov. 11. Remembrance Day. 9:30am

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:

1 Kings 17:8-16

Psalms 146

Hebrews 9:24-28

Mark 12:38-44