

TRINITY NEWS

Easter IV Walking to God with Jesus - John 10:22-30

Jesus was at **The Feast of the Dedication**. It celebrated a great victory that was provoked by the placing an idolatrous image in the Temple. Now the true image of God was walking around. Jesus appears at Jewish festivals and transforms them by his presence and his concepts that go beyond the Jewish festival to recreate something freshly minted. He liked celebrations of Israel's past and institutions and the processes that enable them to perceive how life really is if they believe in God and act as if it were a reality.

The word **Messiah** collects up all of the expectations of a personal Redeemer for the Jewish people in the face of oppression and occupation. The ever-present threat to their way of life and their commitment to the living God, the God of their fathers, was a given in their daily life.

Jesus' relationship with Abba, his heavenly Father, ultimately decides his identity for him. The Jews cannot define him because their concepts are bound to nation and communal identity. Jesus seems to be finding his own way in defining who his followers are and what makes up the community that he is developing around himself. What Paul will famously call a "New Israel" is being crafted in this encounter in some way. Jesus was behaving very much like a prophet gathering together his prophetic band. It is personal, and interchanges are in known voices. This may be a hint that they relied on such a code in protecting their own safety and well-being when interlopers came around.

It is noteworthy that **Jesus points to his works** as testimony of his personal identity. Jesus and the Jews felt that good works in God's name could be held up like a piece of cardboard to the sun, and that the bigger the piece of cardboard the more sun it would catch. Good works done in God's name with the full emphasis on doing it not for oneself but for the glory of God are necessary outcomes of faith in Christ. We all know that we are

unworthy and that our works do not replace our flaws and our failings, or indeed substitute for them. But it is nevertheless true that a deep faith should lead to good works that are done in the name of God and not for the glorification of oneself. Genuine faith, "love unfeigned," requires outcomes.

What people make of our speech is important because it configures our traces of love and clarity of mind. It also conveys anti-love messages and sloppy thinking. But what **people believe about us** does not ultimately decide who we are. God alone knows who we are and that DOES matter to us.

How do we back up what we say? By love unfeigned (II Corinthians 6:6), "without hypocrisy", without pretence or seeking gain.

What does our **voice** convey? Its tone carries the freight of our being and identity. People **judge** us by what we say and do, not what we believe, although what we believe will affect what we do. Certainly, it affects how we relate to God. **Jesus combines belief in God with outcomes.** That combination shapes our destiny and our legacy in the world. He is always looking at us with eyes that are a gaze of love that expects our best responses and also heals our self-inflicted wounds.

Bishop Arthur Jones

THIS WEEK:

Monday.

- Finance committee meeting, 5:30pm, Parish office
- Vestry meeting, 6:30pm, Parish office.

Wednesday.

- Bible Study, 10:00am
- Group Discussion, 7:30pm

Thursday.

- Midweek Eucharist, 10:00am, Chapel

NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS:

Acts 13:44-52; Psalm 145
Revelation 19:1,4-9; John 13:31-35
