



# Come and See!

November 4, 2018

## The Word...

"Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD alone!  
Therefore, you shall love the LORD, your God,  
with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength.  
Take to heart these words which I enjoin on you today."  
*(from Dt 6:2-6)*

The scribe said to him, "Well said, teacher.  
You are right in saying, 'He is One and there is no other than he.'  
And 'to love him with all your heart,  
with all your understanding, with all your strength,  
and to love your neighbor as yourself'  
is worth more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices."  
*(from Mk 12: 28-34)*

## Pondering the Word...

What does it mean to love God with all my strength? I think I understand what it means to love God with all my heart—there can be no other person or thing that I love more than God. To love God with all my understanding and mind means that cognitively, I grasp and accept this truth, and continue to learn all I can about God. To love God with all my soul engages not just my emotional and mental faculties but my spiritual life as well—my imagination, my contemplation of Scripture and spiritual writings, my prayer life. But loving God with all my strength? That's just not as clear to me.

The Hebrew translation says the following: "*Love Yahweh Elohim in all the heart of you, in all the soul of you, in all of utterly you.*" I love that: '*all of utterly you.*' The whole of me. My body, through good works and the way I treat myself and others every day. The way I choose to respond in peace and acceptance to rejection, pain, and heartbreak. The way I turn to God in my weakness and failure (which paradoxically, is a sure sign of strength).

Loving--with all that is utterly me--the God who loves all that *IS* utterly me. Can you even imagine such wonder! Such love! It brings tears to my eyes and joy to my heart, soul, and mind!

## Living the Word...

Spend some time today basking in Divine Love. I wonder how many of us do that on the Sabbath. Remember, Jesus says the Sabbath is made for us--to reflect on God's mercy and love. God doesn't need us to keep the Sabbath—it is all for us to be grateful for all our gifts. It take strength to forgo the list of "to dos," or to decline the invitation in favor of spending time with God. As we begin to head into the holiday seasons of thanksgiving, anticipation, and joy, see if you can allow yourself the luxury of time spent in God's embrace.

(We send up fervent prayers for those killed in the hate crime shootings this past week, for those injured, and for all the families and communities impact by these terrible tragedies.)

Personal Reflections and Ideas: \_\_\_\_\_

**Nov 5:** *“Brothers and sisters: If there is any encouragement in Christ, any solace in love, any participation in the Spirit, any compassion and mercy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, with the same love, united in heart... Do nothing out of selfishness or vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves.”* (Phil 2:1-4)

Tomorrow is Election Day in the US, and as citizens, we are anything but united. Christians as well are far from being of the same mind and heart. I worry about the lack of compassion and mercy, and the vainglory so prevalent in our national politics. Let us pray all of us will vote, based not on hearsay or rumors, but on truth, using both our hearts and heads. If you are interested in praying a special examen prayer focused on civic duty and decision-making, go to: <https://ignatiansolidarity.net/ignatian-examen-for-civic-life/>

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**Nov 6:** *“I will fulfill my vows before those who fear him. The lowly shall eat their fill; they who seek the LORD shall praise him: ‘May your hearts be ever merry!’”* (Ps 22)

This is the end of the psalm that begins, *“My God, my God, Why have you forsaken me?”* We read it in Lent, and the first 22 verses are pretty miserable. But we hear in v. 26 that the one who has been pierced will ‘fulfill his vows before those who fear God.’ Jesus fulfilled his vow—his purpose, his call-- before everyone: the God-fearing people who believed in him and those that did not; Roman citizens who respected him and those who ordered his death. He was unafraid to answer his call. How easy is it for you to fulfill your call in front of others? It may be ok around church friends or Youth Group, but how about school or work friends? At athletic events with your buddies? A night out with the girls? Reflect today on your willingness to witness.

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**Nov 7:** *“Do everything without grumbling or questioning, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine like lights in the world...”* (Phil 2:12-18)

This is one of those verses that the Spirit uses to nudge me! I desire so much to ‘shine like a light,’ but more often I find myself grumbling and questioning and giving up on the idea that I can do anything to change this crooked and perverse time in which we live. I write this before election results are in, but I am challenging myself to try to be a light of peace and tolerance, whatever the results. If you too are struggling, pray the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Light, will give you the strength to shine.

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**Nov 8:** *The Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, “This man welcomes sinners.”... When he finds (the lost sheep), he sets it on his shoulders with great joy... ‘Rejoice with me--I have found my lost sheep.’* (Lk 15:1-10)

This parable breaks down for me, not because of what Jesus says, but because of human nature. So the lost sheep is home. Hurray! The sinner has repented. Let’s everyone be joyous... Ok, how long will that last? How sincere is the joy? I’m not sure the elders were that welcoming to those trying to return to the flock. I’d venture to say the returning sinner was viewed with some skepticism. We all probably know a few lost sheep. They tend to get lost again and again. Are we joyous each time they return? Or is our joy tempered by expectations of failure or by judgment? Do we view them with caution, skepticism, or even scorn? We are all sinners who fail over and over, yet heaven is joyous each time we return. Let’s try to do that for each other too.

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**Nov 9:** *“Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?...the temple of God, which you are, is holy.”* (1 Cor 3: 9-11; 16-17)

How do you act when you are in a holy temple of God? What kind of things do you do? We are often quieter, calmer than when we are on “the outside.” Perhaps we look around in awe and respond with joy. We celebrate. We pray. We treat the temple with care and respect. *“Do we not know that we are all temples of God?”*

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**Nov 10:** *“Jesus said to his disciples: “I tell you, make friends for yourselves with dishonest wealth, so that when it fails, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.”* (Lk 16:9-15)

This is one of those lines from Scripture NOT to be taken out of context. It’s pretty clear as the passage continues: *“If you are not trustworthy with dishonest wealth, who will trust you with true wealth?”* Jesus is not suggesting we engage in anything illegal. The Greek translation of dishonest wealth is ‘the mammon of unrighteousness’—earthly idols like money and power. If we cannot even be trusted with things of this earth, how can we be trusted with true wealth? How we act in trivial everyday events in our lives is a good predictor of how we will act when it comes to the big things. Worth some prayer and reflection, don’t you think?