

Worship Matters  
Ps 66:8-20 ; John 14:15-21 (Yr A)  
Easter VI    May 17, 2020

---



Is Love really **ALL** we need? Can it really be that simple? Can we call it KISS? I'm happy to say – emphatically and unequivocally – YES!

Please note: I did **not** say it would be easy. Neither did Jesus. Here's what He did say: “**If you love me, keep my commands.**”

**IF:** conjunction meaning, in the event that; allowing that; on the assumption that; on condition that (Merriam Webster).

And He said, “**They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by [God], and I will love them and reveal myself to them**” (v. 21).

Here's what I see:

To know and keep Jesus' commands is to love Jesus (*Jesus' command: love one another*);

To love Jesus is to be loved by God;

To love Jesus and be loved by God is to be loved and sought by Jesus.

To quote Lin-Manuel Miranda in his Tony Award acceptance speech, “Love is love is love is love is love is love is love is love *cannot be killed or swept aside.*”

So yes, the simple-sounding saying of Jesus, *Love one another*, is followed by being promised that after Jesus leaves, *another* Advocate will be sent – the Spirit of Truth. Another advocate, comforter, companion, another like Jesus to help us manage our crazy, unpredictable lives. That sounds to me like He knew how much we would need and rely on the Spirit of Truth.

There will be times in our lives when it feels like we're carrying the weight of the world on our shoulders and doing so all on our own; times when we just can't seem to get a break. The spirit of falsehood loves working overtime, stirring up lies and conflict and doubt wherever and whenever possible. We, with the power of the Spirit of Truth, can break the spirit of lies and send it packing.

It is easy to get overwhelmed by negativity. There's plenty to worry about in our current lives. It's easy to give in to the lies that our lives will never be better, we're not good enough or don't deserve good things or whatever lies bring us down the lowest. I know. It happens. Life is messy, and I'm tired of cleaning it up!

Here's the key to what Jesus taught and still teaches us today: He knew we would face difficult times, horrible sadness, betrayal, loss, anger. And so he sent us another Advocate to bolster our defenses against the gut-wrenching anguish. On our own we struggle; with the Spirit of Truth we bravely face and defeat the struggles. Not easily, but worth every bit of our fight.

Here's what I encourage you to remember: "The indwelling love of God and the Spirit's enduring presence is with us always – no matter what"

*(Seasons of the Spirit Fusion Lent/Easter 2020).* We are never alone. We have never been abandoned.

Believe it or not. That's Faith. If and when you doubt or forget or turn aside a little too long, remember. **The indwelling love of God is always in you.** You cannot be rid of God's love. Return to God by inhaling a deep breath of God's love. Choose love. Choose to see good in the world, in your life.

Further, work at faithing – your faith, your work – faith is a very active verb. Choose to feed your faith and starve your fear.

Feed your faith because loving and worshiping God rather than the human desires and comforts of this world, will lead us into suffering with and for the sake of others. But we're not alone. We're never alone in our loving. The Advocate, Spirit of Truth walks alongside us.

Who and what do you worship?

That which is of human origin, created by human desire, OR...

That which is always bigger than we are, always beyond where we are, that which unites us with all Creation?

Will you give your attention, your time, your energy, to your own stuff, or to God?

Spiritual Checkup time! Let's evaluate what we worship. What occupies more of your thinking – God or \_\_\_\_\_ (pick a hobby)? Do you worship God or Netflix? Do random thoughts about people and situations cross your mind, reminding you to pray? Do you? Or do you put it off?

When you see something breath-takingly beautiful in nature, do you praise God for creating it?

What is it that you worship, and what is it that keeps you from the love Jesus preached?

Where do you need to be reminded of the abiding presence of the Spirit to give you reassurance that this difficult life is made bearable by the indwelling love of God?

**Worship Matters.** Keep your eyes and heart tuned to Jesus.

Please continue reading if you wish to participate in a prayer exercise.

[The Practice of Prayerful Reflection](#) (*Seasons of the Spirit Fusion Lent/Easter 2020 p. 166*).

Jesus assures us that He will not leave us orphaned. We can, though, walk away from or cut ourselves off from God and, in a sense, “orphan” ourselves from God. Think about times in your life when you have separated yourself from God. You might like to reflect on the following questions:

- ∞ What led to your decision? Or was it simply that you drifted away?
- ∞ How did being distanced from God feel?
- ∞ What brought You back?
- ∞ What keeps you connected to God now? What keeps you from God now?

Write about, or draw, or respond artistically if you wish about these times.

What would you say to someone about working through times of “orphaning ourselves from God”?