

Thursday's Gospel: To Obey Is To Love

Gospel for Thursday in the 5th
Week of Easter, and
commentary.

Gospel (*Jn* 15:9-11)

Jesus said to his disciples: “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.”

Commentary

These words of Jesus, spoken during the Last Supper, are as it were his spiritual testament, addressed to his closest disciples. We can imagine how He looks intently at each one as He confides what He holds deepest in his Heart, so that it will remain engraved in ours as well. Jesus has also just spoken about his complete union with the Father; therefore, the Father and the Son share the same Love. This Love has been poured into our hearts (cf. *Rom* 5:5), so that we may respond to it. To love is to desire the good of the loved one. Jesus, with his Love, desires our good and we, with that same Love, also desire his good. How important it is never to leave that current of love!

To abide in it, we need to strive to keep Jesus' commandments, which He himself practiced before preaching them: continuous prayer,

good works done facing God, forgiving one's enemies, purity of heart, a clean look, being attentive to others' needs as if they were our own, detachment from earthly goods, etc. To practice all these teachings, which we can find summarized in the Sermon on the Mount (cf. *Mt* 5-7), is to abide in God's love.

We may see ourselves as worth every little, and even less what we can do to correspond to that Love. As Saint Josemaría said in point 420 in *The Way*: “How little a life is to offer to God!” But Jesus doesn't expect great deeds from us. What's more, he feels a love of predilection for those who are little, incapable of almost anything by themselves. That is why we are comforted by the parable of the talents: “Well done, good and faithful servant. Because you have been faithful in what is little, I will entrust you with much: enter into the joy of your master” (cf. *Mt* 25:21),

into the ineffable joy of divine Love. We will never lack the grace of the Holy Spirit in order to remain faithful, and thus be able to pray with the Psalmist: “You teach me the path of life, overflowing joy in your presence, everlasting joy at your right hand” (cf. *Ps 16:11*).

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