

Scriptural References for Sunday the 28th

Acts 11:1-18

Revelation 21:1-6

John 13: 31-35

No Prejudice, Only Unconditional Love.

Acts 11:12

¹²The Spirit told me to go with them and ***not to make a distinction between them and us.*** These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man's house.

John 13:34, 35

³⁴***I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.*** ³⁵***By this*** everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.'

Introduction

Do we live by the royal law of love? Do we understand what unconditional love is? Do we allow our prejudices and personal views to get in the way of Christ's views?

I. God Works To Remove Our Prejudice and Hate.

In Acts 11 God had to use a vision in order to persuade Peter that he was to minister the good news to the gentiles, that group of people who were not a part of Jewish culture, religion, etc.. Prejudice was so ingrained in Jewish society that religious people of any ilk, stayed away from such a mixture of culture and creed. His confirmation of the gospel to the gentiles was necessary as he was the one who quote " held the keys " and was to confirm God's granting salvation to the gentiles.

Matthew 16:19

¹⁹I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.'

Christ placed trust in the life of someone who would deny his name three times. He places His trust in us today. The Church the body of Christ. To go out and share the good news of Christ's love and affirming grace.

Acts 8:4,5

4 Now those who were scattered went from place to place, proclaiming the word. ⁵Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed the Messiah to them.

The Holy Spirit did not lead the early church to hide the good news under a blanket of prejudice and comfortable cultural surroundings. God pushed them forward to minister to “ ALL “.

II. God's Love Is Universal And Unconditional.

God's love causes us to love unconditionally toward even those whom we would rather not to even associate with. For Christ taught this to his disciples, but it wasn't till after the empowerment of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, that they quote, “ Got It “.

Luke 6:27-36

27 'But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. ²⁹If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. ³⁰Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. ³¹Do to others as you would have them do to you. 32 'If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. ³⁴If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. ³⁵But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. ³⁶Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

III. History Paints A Picture Of Prejudice And Hate. We Need To Do Otherwise.

Abraham Lincoln and others had their prejudices, but realized some real moral issues and emancipated the slaves.

Men kept the right to vote from women for years, even after a years of the woman's suffrage movement. However, about the year 1920 Tennessee, in an awkward position became the state to give woman the right to vote universally in the United States.

Martin Luther King Jr. preached along with others to peaceably bring about the downfall of segregation. However, it took a lot of hard work and a former Texas governor and President of the United States to see it through. Despite how uncomfortable it was for a large part of our nation segregation was vanquished.

None of our judgmentalism and prejudice is easy to steer away from. My dad was no racist, but

growing up how he did he always found still remnants of racism that he had to battle in his life. God was kind of humorous, because he had my dad become the principal of two interracial schools outside of Chicago. Where during his tenure there Martin Luther King Jr. was shot. It forever touched his heart. Years later we would take in kids from the inner city during the summer and they'd stay with us, as part of a program with the Catholic Diocese of Peoria.

Removing prejudice and hatred from our lives is not always simple. Life has its scars and pain that linger it seems for so many years. However, the love salve of the Holy Spirit can do us all well as we bath in the presence of **God's Unconditional Love.**

Closing Statement.

(Read the Magnificant reading for this sunday on love.)