

Chapter 3:

We Follow Jesus' Message of Love



Introduction

What is the most important thing you will do today? Will you brush your teeth? Will you wash your hands before eating? Will you pick up your things and put them away? All of these tasks are important. But what do you think Jesus said was the most important thing to do in our lives? Let's listen to the Word of God and hear what Jesus said.

Scripture Story: Love Is the Greatest Commandment

In this Scripture passage, we find out what Jesus thinks is the most important thing we could ever do. He answered a very important question. Let's read together:

A teacher of the Law . . . came to [Jesus] with a question: "Which commandment is the most important of all?"

Jesus replied, "The most important one is this: 'Listen, Israel! The Lord our God is the only Lord. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second most important commandment is this: 'Love your neighbor as you love yourself.' There is no other commandment more important than these two." (Mark 12:28-31)

When we say something is "the most important," we mean that it should be taken seriously. We will be learning about other commandments. We are not to lie or steal or be mean to others. But all of those commandments are included in the commandment to love God and love our neighbor. If we love God and others, we will be sure to be following all the other commandments as well.

Jesus Teaches Us to Love

At the end of our lives, Jesus will not care how much money we made or how smart we were. But he will ask us, "How much did you love?" The greatest thing we can do in life is to love God and to love our neighbor as much as we love ourselves.

How does the commandment to love help us in our families at home? It helps us to remember what Jesus taught about love. It helps us to remember not to start fights with our brothers and sisters. It helps us remember to share. How does it help us with our friends? It helps us to remember that we must treat others as we ourselves would like to be treated. It helps us to remember to be kind and helpful to others.

Love is not just a good feeling. Love is a good action toward God and others. Love is praying to God, honoring God, and helping others.

God's Treasure of Forgiveness

We learn about God in the Bible. Another name for the Bible is **Sacred Scripture**.

When we read Sacred Scripture, we are reading God's Word. Today's Scripture story is not just another story. It is God's Word to us today. We hear God's Word in every Sacrament. We hear God's Word at Mass. We will also hear God's Word in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

After the priest greet us, we make the Sign of the Cross with the priest. Then he says a few words to encourage us to trust in God's mercy. Next we may hear God's Word from the Bible. The priest may read a short passage from Sacred Scripture, or he may ask us to read the passage.

Reading from the Bible helps us to hear about God's love and forgiveness and helps us to love God and one another better. Sacred Scripture can help us see when we may not have loved as fully as we are called to, or when we may have sinned. It tells us that we can trust in God's loving-kindness and that we can ask for forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Things to Remember

- We follow Jesus by following the most important commandment to love God and others.
- We learn about love in Sacred Scripture.
- We can ask God's forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation when we fail to love fully.