

March 18, 2010

Scripture Reading: 1 John 4:7-21

"And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love."

Faith, hope, and love form the heart of Christian life. We know we are supposed have all three. We can easily affirm how important they are, and most of us want to be known as people of faith, hope, and love. But faith seems to have taken a leading role, despite the words from the New Testament quoted above.

Love, it often seems, is either a romantic experience or simple a nice feeling about someone. Literature, movies, and television have affected the way we use the word "love." We think of violins playing and lovers running in slow-motion on the beach.

But Christian love is something else. Christian love is an act of will -- an act of obedience. We love one another because God says so, not because we feel good. We seek the best for others (which is an important part of what it means to love) because God loves them and seeks the best for them. The truth is: we love others (whether we *like* them or not) because God loves us. When we accept God's love for us, we are given the ability to love one another.

When we discover that God loves us and we love God, then we love one another. In today's reading the instructions are clear, "The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also."

As you spend time in prayer today, open your heart, mind, soul, and strength to receive the love of God. Then consider the relationships in your life. Are they marked by the love of God? Is God's love evident in all your relationships? Do you seek the best for your brothers and sisters?

"Since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another."