

Maundy Thursday to Good Friday

“Jesus says I have loved you, you also should love one another.” John 13:34

“For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.” John 13:15

“Father forgive them; for they know not what they are doing”: Luke 23:34

The word maundy loosely translates to “commandment,” and Maundy Thursday is named for the message Jesus gave his disciples in the upper room during the Last Supper. His message in John 13:34 “...you also should love one another.” Before he gave this commandment, he washed his disciples’ feet, saying in John 13:15 “...you also should do as I have done to you.”

Mahatma Gandhi shared, “The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.” For that reason, people follow Jesus’ commandments to serve others. While serving others, we find the Christ presence in each one. As Youth Director at Casselberry UMC in Sanford, Florida, Sandy and I arranged spiritual outings with the youth to New Smyrna Beach. Usually, 30 students attended the retreats. The event was amazingly inspirational for all who attended the weekend retreats at Cor-Meth House. There were times we washed their feet. Those days developed into one of the most spiritual of all. Thanks be to God.

During times of struggle to forgive, we should remember the example of Jesus when He asked God to forgive those who crucified him. When we feel a pain too great to offer genuine forgiveness, Jesus asks us to affirm that the forgiving love of God is intended for everyone, no matter what they may have done. It doesn’t remove the responsibility of moving forward in life by being forgiving.

Practice self-forgiveness is a process and being gentle and patient with us improves each time we continue to forgive. Self-forgiveness happens when we remember it is human nature to be more critical of ourselves than we are of others.

God’s love heals all sorrow and helps humans to forgive self, and other people all situations. Nothing is beyond the ability to forgive because, in God, nothing is unforgivable. Practicing forgiveness helps us let go completely and, be aware we may not know what the future will hold. It’s not unusual to feel overwhelmed and discouraged, but no matter how life may appear to each of us, we know that in all things, and in all ways, God is the innermost foundation of faith.

Faith grants confidence in the omnipresence of God despite worldly circumstances that might cause despair. Think of Jesus’ followers after the crucifixion but before the third day’s dawn. How bleak the world must have seemed to them. They could not know what the next day would bring, but their faith sustained them during Jesus’ entombment. Today, we must look beyond anything troubling, and with faith affirm wholeness, peace, prosperity, and love, all of which are aspects in the birthright of spiritual being. Again, thanks be to God.

Peace always,

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