

May 24, 2025

Daily Reflections

Journeying through Easter



Center for Spiritual Development

REMEMBER THE WORD I SPOKE TO YOU

By David C. Robinson, SJ

An Excerpt from Today's Gospel

"Remember the word I spoke to you, 'No slave is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours. And they will do all these things to you on account of my name, because they do not know the one who sent me."

JOHN 15:20-22

Reflection

As our exploration of Paul's missionary journeys continues, and the complexity of Jesus' ministry of love unfolds, we become witnesses to the inescapable twists and turns of life in diverse religious communities. As Paul travels in the region of Derbe and Lystra, he makes the acquaintance of a local couple, a Jewish wife and a Greek husband. Their son, Timothy, becomes a treasured

part of Paul's missionary cohort, and an invaluable companion as the odyssey continues west toward Ephesus, and finally crosses into Greece and the communities at Ephesus and beyond, ultimately arriving in Rome. Succumbing to the influence of the 'Judaizers,' Paul has Timothy circumcised, even though that contradicts his edicts on the primacy of faith over Law. This complicated history provides an indication of the wandering path the early Christians travel as they seek for unity and some sort of uniformity! These individual points of discord help us to learn perspective toward our contemporary efforts to create ecumenical harmony and religious inclusivity. How often do we assume that our perceptions of, and explanations for, the mysteries of God's reality among us are even remotely sufficient to exhaust the wonder of that endless bounty of divine life in our midst?

In John's rhapsodic narrative of Jesus' proclamation of the endless riches and dynamic energy of love to create and re-create us with unceasing grace and breathless discovery, he still alerts his disciples to the misinterpretations and deceptions that can derail the pure intentions of their faith. People may follow him or persecute him, revere his disciples or revile them, often for the same reasons. If they and we strive to encounter the depth of the love that Jesus incarnated, we might find a path beyond our endless meanderings of mind that lead us into wars of words and enmities, based more in vanity than fidelity.

Jesus recognizes the ways in which God's Spirit can gently guide each of us into the heart of love, without the artificial complexities of overheated minds (*When the Spirit of truth comes, he will lead you to all the truth* (Jn. 16:13)). With good reason, Jesus takes the little children and places them in the midst of his followers. He invites and exhorts them and us to put aside our theological and ideological flights of fancy that can lead us on roads to nowhere. The message of love is always as simple as a baby's smile and as profound as a galaxy of stars. As Jesus knows, simplicity must open the way to clear thinking and open perception of love if we are to receive the uncluttered and majestic life of God within. Our individual and communal paths can provide the richest of journeys while seeding in us the new growth of love that beautifies and fortifies all of our modes of living and worshiping. Then the family of God can finally be in love and at home.



Jesus and the Children
Image created by David Robinson, SJ

For Pondering

- How do you discover the riches of the love of God in the simple realities of your daily life?
- Have you discovered ways of sharing and relating in your faith community that awaken your sense of love as simple grace in each day?
- How would you portray your sense of love to a group of those who are new to the rhythms of life in a faith community?

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