

Choosing Love

To be a disciple, to follow Jesus as He invites us to, is to embrace trust in God which deprives fear of its power over us in facing the challenges of life. Put another way, we surrender to the will of God by not allowing any and all other attractions and ambitions in life to hold sway over our hearts and decisions. Every person, in the pages of Scripture, who we look up to and admire, is rooted in this decision to trust God above all else. Therein is the essential challenge to faith living.

St. Paul expresses this beautifully and clearly: “Jesus set us free by His great love. It is for freedom that we stand firm against the yoke of slavery (sinfulness).” This freedom is a choice to serve



one another and all others through love which defines the life of Jesus and all who follow Him. The whole law is fulfilled in this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

Put another way, it is to live by the Spirit Who enlightens, inspires, and energizes us to be true witnesses by our own generosity of spirit in serving others rather than self. The “no one who sets a hand to the plow (makes a decision) and looks to what was left behind (regrets and rescinds the decision) is fit for the kingdom.”

These strong words are meant to encourage and strengthen our faith rather than lay a guilt trip on us. Choosing to love is open-ended and ever deepening, taking a person beyond

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the initial easiness and comfort of kindness and charity to the more demanding expressions of love found in resisting evil, undoing injustices, reconciling disputes, respecting differences, and a sincere willingness to forgive those who offend and hurt us. This decision to love is our taking up the cross found in every life when we seek to live as Jesus asks. It isn't easy and it's ever demanding. Ultimately, it is the path to the kingdom.