

Conversation Starter

For the week of October 26 to November 1, 2008

This week's theme: One Love
Current sermon series: Living For Jesus
Sunday's Readings: 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8 Matthew 22:34-46

In Sunday's gospel reading, we find Jesus describing the two greatest commandments in this way: *Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbour as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments. (Matthew 22:37-40)* In Luke's gospel the two great commandments are written in this way: *'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind' ; and, 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'* (Luke 10:27) So what does it mean to love God with our whole heart, soul, mind and strength? It means that we are to love God completely, fully and absolutely. It means that God is to be our first love. It means that our friendship with God needs to be above all other friendships. The above mentioned words of Jesus certainly remind us that there is no place for competing loyalties. OR to use the words of the current sermon series, living for Jesus requires that we completely and fully love God. Living for Jesus means that we love God with our whole heart, soul, mind and strength. Living for Jesus is about holding nothing back in our friendship with God. And why? Because God calls us to one love. With Him there is no negotiation about this matter. And this one love is demonstrated in how we live every aspect of our lives. So, how is loving God with our whole heart, soul, mind and strength made possible? Allow the Holy Spirit to search your heart and show you what is blocking your ability to love the Lord your God completely.

1. Of all the commandments that exist, why would Jesus declare that these are the greatest?
2. What does it mean to love your neighbor? What does it mean to love yourself?
3. Describe a time when it was difficult to love/like yourself?
4. Who is your neighbor?
5. In what ways can you demonstrate love for your neighbor?
6. In what ways can you show your love for God?

If time permits, continue past this point for further discussion:

7. What does it mean that all the Law and the Prophets "hang" on the two greatest commandments?
8. READ Mark 10:17-22. What kept this young man from being able to love God completely? Why do you think it was so hard for him to give up what was keeping him from loving God?
9. What is idolatry?
10. What are some modern day idols?
11. Why does idolatry or idols keep us from loving God completely?