

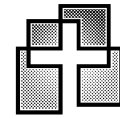
# The Gospel of John



## Notes From the Podium

*These notes are intended to augment your own reading and study of the lesson. Please use as an aid to help you incorporate the main message of the lesson into your lecture.*

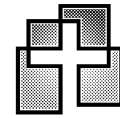
- I. First Approach – What is going on in this moment of the text?
  - a. The Last Supper continues.
    - i. Last week we heard Jesus say to His apostles, “rise, let us go hence.” V14:31 Yet, they do not leave and Jesus begins a whole new monologue about the vine and the branches.
      1. He says “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.” V15:1
      2. In other words He says to them, unless you abide in Me you cannot bear fruit.
      3. Through this analogy He once again illustrates how it is that He is our link to the Father – by abiding in He who abides in the Father we then will abide in the Father as well.
    - ii. Jesus offers them His commandment, “love one another as I have loved you.” V15:12
      1. He says, “no longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. V15:15
      2. “If they persecuted me, they will persecute you.” V15:20
      3. As for those who are persecuting, Jesus says, “if I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin . . . now they have seen and hated both me and my Father.” V15:22-25
    - iii. Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit who will come to them from the Father.
      1. He says that when the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, comes He will bear witness to Him. V26
      2. He confirms that they too are witnesses of Him as they have been with Him from the beginning.
- II. Second Approach – Pastoral Points
  - a. Last week focused upon the necessity of Faith and Hope in the Christian life. In fact, Our Lord seemed to enter into the very mechanics and inner workings of Faith and Hope. Love was referenced, but not overtly addressed. Now, after having addressed Faith and Hope, He jumps headlong into the mechanics of Christian Love, the superior of the three supernatural virtues – complete with a vivid image and the absolute necessity of Love in the Christian life.
    - i. He begins with the image of Christ as the true vine, His Father the vinedresser and we the branches. This serves to flesh out the mechanics and inner workings of Christian Love.



## Notes From the Podium (cont.)

## Catholic Scripture Study

1. We must live/abide in Christ if we are to bear fruit.
2. To live/abide in Christ is to live in His love.
3. To live/abide in His love is to love others as He loved us.
4. It is like a gear system – if one moves it must necessarily move the other.
  - a. Furthermore, the necessity of Love for the Christian becomes clear - Love is what binds us to Christ and in turn to the Father.
  - b. Without it there is no Christian life. In verse 12 He calls it His commandment.
5. Let us get practical...how does this practically affect you and me?
  - a. Living in a romantic age, we must begin by dispelling romantic imaginings...
  - b. Enter into the reality that is your life – your vocation.
    - i. Vocation – one’s calling – all vocations are a call to abide/live in a life of love in a particular way.
      1. Marriage, Religious Life, Priesthood, etc...
    - ii. What is your vocation? This is where you are called by Christ to live/abide in love. Not somewhere else.
    - iii. This is the fundamental principle of spiritual theology – holiness is found *within* one’s vocation. It the particular way in which each of us is called to love.
  - c. I would like to say a word about “alternate lifestyles” often referred to as one’s “orientation.”
    - i. It is telling that the word *orientation* is used.
    - ii. Do you know where this word comes from?
      1. Facing east – the posture of the Church in prayer as she awaits the coming of Christ – as the sun rises in the east so too will Christ the true light of the world return.
    - iii. The word orientation often refers to lifestyles that are not postured toward the coming of Christ and the world to come but are rather postured away from this inevitable future.
    - iv. To be truly oriented is to be truly postured toward the coming of Christ and His kingdom – *regardless* of anyone’s particular fancies whether they be attractions to the same sex; aberrant attractions to the opposite sex; attracted to sex outside of marital love; attracted to spoons or potatoes.
    - v. Everyone should be oriented toward Christ.



## Notes From the Podium (cont.)

## Catholic Scripture Study

- ii. Notice verse 15:2. (Read aloud)
  - 1. "...every branch that does bear fruit He *prunes*, that it may bear more fruit..."
    - a. Put it all together and one concludes that the Christian is a work in progress.
      - i. We learn how to love, in the loving, by following our call to love. We are being perfected as we move along.
      - ii. When I speak to married couples, I say "you will bring out the best in each other and the worst in each other."
      - iii. Marriage is a vocation, a call, to love through which one is being taught how to love and ones faults are exposed that they might be pruned.
      - iv. Pruning is unpleasant. We don't like love to be unpleasant. Yet, there is no other way. Love will be painful and unpleasant at time until we are sanctified.
      - v. This is why people can look back in their past and be grateful for the most challenging, unpleasant and difficult times of their lives – because by way of them they were pruned.
- iii. We see in this passage...
  - 1. ...the mechanics of Love.
    - a. How it unites us to Christ, and in turn to the Father.
  - 2. ...the necessity of Love in the life of the Christian.
    - a. Thus all paths/vocations that Christ leads us down are paths/vocations of love.
  - 3. ...and it is in and through our path/vocation where we not only exercise love, but we learn to love and we are purified that we might love more – we are pruned.

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