

K. I. S. S.

Roughly 1,500 years before the birth of Christ, Moses went up on the mountain to talk with God. God established a contract (Covenant, Testament) with the Israelites : “I will be your God and you will be my people.” He went on to give Moses the Ten Commandments to show how God’s people should act. In the 1,500 years that followed, the Israelites repeatedly went wandering away from God and He repeatedly sent Prophets to call them back. In addition, they “refined” the Ten Commandments into 613 rules. And they came to believe that if they were following the rules, they were worshipping God.

So God came down to Earth in the person of Jesus to once and for all (hopefully) show all what it means to be God’s people. And, since the Ten Commandments were apparently too complex, He reverted to the K.I.S.S. (Keep It Simple Stupid) principle. He gave us ONE commandment; “Love One Another As I Have Love You”. If He had simply said “Love One Another” we could get into discussions of what “Love” means. There is maternal love, brotherly love, tough love, and the list goes on. But He says Love One Another AS I HAVE LOVE YOU”. This is Agape love, the love we are to feel for each other as members of the body of Christ, the church. Agape love reflects the love of God. It is this love that Christ COMMANDS us to have for each other.

And so, here we are 2,100 years later. The Christian church is divided into innumerable denominations, all convinced that theirs is the way, the truth, the life. And all losing God in an attempt to follow those pesky rules that we as humans seem determined to make up. I am convinced that if Jesus came back today, He would say “What part of ‘Love One Another’ don’t you understand?”.

I reflect on all this as this nation is being torn apart by hate and violence and, I fear, evil. And everyone is absolutely sure that they are right and God is on their side. Yet I cannot see Agape love, the love that reflects the love of God, being manifested anywhere. If we START with loving each other as God loves us in all our imperfections, we will be following Christ’s commandments. And we will be assured that God’s will WILL be done. And if we are driven by hate, pride, or self interest, we cannot do God’s work.

The following is a prayer that I say frequently for our great nation:

For our Country

Almighty God, who has given us this good land for our heritage: We humbly beseech you that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of your favor and glad to do your will. Bless our land with honorable industry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion; from pride and arrogance, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties, and fashion into one united people the multitudes brought here out of many kindreds and tongues. Endue with the spirit of wisdom those to whom in your Name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that, through obedience to your law, we may show forth your praise among the nations of the earth. In the time of prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, suffer not our trust in you to fail; all which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*