

(English translation)

May 1994

Word of Life

If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. (Jn 15:10)

These words are taken from Jesus' Farewell Discourse in the Fourth Gospel (Jn 13:31 - 17:26), which he gave to his apostles after the last supper. It becomes clear that by keeping his commandments we remain in his love. These words also recall an earlier verse where Jesus tells his apostles, 'If you love me, you will keep my commandments' (Jn 14:15). Here it becomes clear that love for Jesus must be the moving force, the root for keeping his commandments.

The result is a circular motion between love for Jesus and keeping his commandments. Love for Jesus urges us to live his word always more faithfully and, at the same time, living the word of Jesus makes us abide in him and therefore grow always more in love for him.

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Abide, therefore, in his love. But what does Jesus mean by this?

Undoubtedly, he means that keeping his commandments is the sign, the proof that we are his true friends. It's the condition for Jesus to reciprocate and assure us of his friendship. But he seems to mean something else as well: namely, that keeping his commandments builds up in us the same love that Jesus has by nature. Keeping them communicates to us the particular way of loving we see displayed in all of Jesus' earthly life. It is a love that made Jesus one with the Father and at the same time urged him to identify with and be completely one with all his brothers and sisters, especially with the least, the weakest, the most marginalized.

Jesus' love was a love that healed every wound of the soul and of the body, gave peace and joy to every heart, overcame every division, rebuilding fraternity and unity among all.

If we put his word into practice, Jesus will live in us and will make us too instruments of his love.

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How then shall we live this month's Word of Life? By keeping in mind and aiming decisively at the good it proposes: a Christian life that does not rest content with keeping the commandments in a minimal, cold and outward way, but that is full of generosity. The saints acted like this. And they are the living Word of God.

This month let's take just one of his words, one of his commandments and try to translate it into life.

Since Jesus' New Commandment ('love one another as I have loved you' (Jn 15:12)) is like the heart, the summary of all his words, let's live it in an utterly radical way.

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