

Drawing God Sunday – Part 3 LOVE
United Church of Broomfield
November 6, 2022

John 14:23-29 (Common English Bible)

²³ Jesus answered, “Whoever loves me will keep my word. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.²⁴ Whoever doesn’t love me doesn’t keep my words. The word that you hear isn’t mine. It is the word of the Father who sent me.

²⁵ “I have spoken these things to you while I am with you. ²⁶ The Companion,^[a] the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I told you.

²⁷ **“Peace I leave with you. My peace I give you. I give to you not as the world gives. Don’t be troubled or afraid.** ²⁸ You have heard me tell you, ‘I’m going away and returning to you.’ If you loved me, you would be happy that I am going to the Father, because the Father is greater than me. ²⁹ I have told you before it happens so that when it happens you will believe.

Today’s text comes from a discussion that Jesus had with his disciples that made them very uncomfortable. Jesus was talking to them about his coming departure, and what they needed to expect once he was gone.

In the context of this particular story, Jesus’ disciples were still not entirely sure how “the kingdom of heaven” was going to manifest itself. The Roman occupation of Jerusalem had been going on for nearly 100 years, and the Jewish people were longing to see this brutal regime come to an end. As Jesus’ popularity grew, some assumed that he was going to be the political Messiah everyone had been hoping for.

Jesus, however, was more concerned that his followers carry on the work of God, and he told them that three things would characterize their lives while he was not physically present with them.

First, Jesus said to his disciples, “If anyone loves me, [they] will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.”

Jesus wants us to obey as an expression of our love for him. Unlike a tyrant, military officer or workplace supervisor, Jesus cannot give “an order” that is anything less than benevolent. Because of our love for Christ, and because we can trust him totally, moving forward in the life of obedience is clearly the best course of action because we know and love the one who commands us.

The second thing that should characterize the life of a believer while Jesus is not physically present with us is a growing dependence on the Holy Spirit as our teacher. This is especially important as the Spirit brings to remembrance those things we’ve learned during our walk with Christ.

Of course, we have the Bible readily available for consultation, guidance, and direction, but the Holy Spirit helps us as a faith community to know how to understand and apply those words in ways that clearly honor God. The prophet Isaiah spoke of the Spirit’s influence when he said, “Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, ‘This is the way; walk in it’” (Isa. 30:21).

Finally, Jesus promised a sense of peace that the world simply cannot offer us. He said to his original disciples, and now says to us, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

The world's peace seems to be driven by a sense of "loss prevention" The world says that money will help to bring you peace, because if you have "enough" and you lose your house to some disaster or your car in an accident or your job because of downsizing, the loss will be mitigated because you'll have enough money to cover those losses. Or if you have enough friends, or the perfect soul mate, or walk in the right social circles, then you will be at least partially sheltered from the loss that loneliness can bring.

When you extend this type of thinking to its logical conclusion, we can see how empty it becomes, because there will never be enough money or people to truly give us sense of well-being deep inside our souls.

Instead, Jesus tells us to rest in the peace that he has left with us -- one that is based on nothing less than his authority. The Bible is filled with stories of saints who experienced devastating losses, but would anyone say that God's love for them diminished in the least? No. In fact, the apostle Paul makes it clear "that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 8:38-39).

So, as we move forward in our walk with Christ, may we be motivated to obey him out of love, to trust the Holy Spirit to teach and remind us of what is true, and to place our sense of well-being in the unwavering love of God that can overcome any conceivable human loss.

As you draw God during this section, think of how you might see God in the following:

- What does PEACE look like?
- What does FEAR look like? What SCARES you or makes you SAD?
- What does COMFORT and/or HAPPINESS looks like?
- What does LOVE look like?

DRAWING GOD SUNDAY - GUIDANCE & QUESTIONS FOR AT-HOME/ONLINE WORSHIP

(print this bulletin and use the back for drawing or use additional pages as you need)

Draw God 1 – PRAYER

“Draw near to God and God will draw near to you.”

As you draw God during this section, think of how you might see God in the following:

- How do you draw close to God?
- What is a favorite prayer of yours?
- Draw how you pray for ...
 - those who are SICK
 - for God’s CREATION
 - for the WORLD

Draw God 2 – FRIENDSHIP

“It can be hard to find God, and even harder to find yourself. But if you find a friend, you find all three.”

As you draw God during this section, think of how you might see God in the following:

- Friends and Family Members
- Strangers
- Someone who has hurt you

Draw God 3 – LOVE

“Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”

As you draw God during this section, think of how you might see God in the following:

- What does PEACE look like?
- What does FEAR look like? What SCARES you or makes you SAD?
- What does COMFORT and/or HAPPINESS look like?
- What does LOVE look like?