

True and pure love is the most powerful motivator known to mankind. If we think about it, many things motivate us to act. Some good, others not so good. For example: hunger, greed, desire for revenge, popularity or fame, pride, peer pressure, pleasure, intellectual curiosity, the instinct for survival, and the list could go on and on. Yet, true love is more powerful than any other motivation.



For example, consider the case of a man who sacrifices his life rather than betray a loved one. Would we not immediately describe this man's action as good and noble? On the other hand, if the man betrayed his friend to save his own life, would we not consider this man to be less than noble, and his love, in some way, defective? The truth is, love is the greatest of the virtues (cf. 1 Cor 13); it is stronger than death; perfect love casts out fear; in fact, God IS Love! With this in mind, we can understand the simple, yet profound, statement of our Lord Jesus in this week's Gospel, "If you love me, you will keep my

commandments" (John 14:15-21). The implication of Jesus's statement is clear: our fidelity, or lack of fidelity, to Jesus' commandments is an indicator of the depth of our love for God – if we want to be more faithful, we must somehow deepen our love for Jesus.

So, we have the most powerful motivation known to mankind (true and pure love – divine love!) at our disposal to enable us to keep God's commandments. In light of this, perhaps a good prayer for us who struggle to keep God's commandments would be: "Lord Jesus, I need to love you more. Teach me, show me how to purify and strengthen my love for you, so that I might more faithfully follow you." How important is this? The dividends for doing God's will are eternal.

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. . . .  
Whoever has my commandments and observes them is the  
one who loves me. And whoever loves me will be loved by  
my Father, and I will love him and reveal myself to him."

John 14:15, 21

This week, may the good Lord help us all to ponder and understand with mind and heart the simple, yet profound and challenging, words of our Savior: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." By the grace of God, may we all cry out to God, "My Lord and my God, teach me how to love you more!"

Your Servant in Christ,  
Fr. Terry Staples