

Thursday, June 1, 2017 - Day 151 – II Chronicles 4-6, Psalm 122, Romans 13

Two Greatest Commandments

When questioned about the greatest commandments, Jesus replied that the first and greatest commandment is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. And the second commandment is like it, love your neighbor as yourself. All the law and the prophets are based on these two commandments. (Matthew 22:37-40)

And so our readings today reflect the two commandments Jesus holds forth as the greatest. In the reading from 11 Chronicles, we are given a glimpse of the beauty and art and wonder of the Temple to God completed by Solomon. It is a place built to honor God, to pray to God, to give thanks to God, to receive God's forgiveness, to give God our time, and to offer our gifts for all that God has done for us. The Temple is the place, like Church, like our own little prayer spots, where we can offer our love to God, fulfilling the greatest commandment.

Today's Psalm reflects the joy that comes when we worship God, when we offer our love to God, when we go to the place of worship where God promises to meet us. The gladness that fills our hearts in worship is reflected throughout this psalm.

St. Paul's writing in Romans 13 reflects the call to live into the second great commandment. The first directive is to honor those whom, God has put in authority over us. This has been a highly misused piece of scripture through the centuries for rulers and elected officials to do whatever they want. There are other scriptures and examples among the prophets that call us to submit, but only when the authority is living under God's rules. The remainder of the chapter reinforces Jesus' teaching to love our neighbors and that by loving we fulfill the whole of the law.

By The Rev. W. Frank Allen