

How The Great Commandment fulfills the Law of Moses and the Prophets

The following is filled with the personal pronoun "I." As you read, the "I" invites you to take an inner journey into your mind, heart, and soul. Once "I" becomes familiar with God's way, it invites us to become "we." We are the Body of Christ. Every "I" makes "Us" unique and fulfilled.

At the Center of the Advent Wreath stands the Christ Candle. Although it stands unlit and dark, it reflects the beginning of creation. God said, "Let there be light." God's Light says let there be Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. Do not miss how the following addition equals One!

Hope in Jesus
+Peace of Mind
+Joy in my Heart
+ Love of God, self and neighbor
A Soul that reflects God's Image

How do I find **Hope** in Jesus Christ? Jesus tells us in many ways. The way that speaks to me most clearly is the way of prayer. Jesus says, "Ask and you shall receive. Seek and you will find. Knock and the door will be opened to you."

How do I make **Peace** with my mind? Jesus says, "Ask and you shall receive." Ask God to teach you to be a Peacemaker. God taught Joseph how to make Peace with his fear of not being righteous according to his keeping with the Law of Moses. The enemy in Joseph's mind, and ours, is fear of not being right and good. God told Joseph not to be afraid to take Mary as his wife. Fear is overcome by facing it with God in prayer. Prayer quietens the mind to hear God's voice. Ask God and wait until you hear God's answer. (Describe the difference between asking God for an answer and telling God what you expect?)

How do I have **Joy** in my heart? Jesus says, "Seek and you will find." It is said that actions speak louder than words. An answered prayer without action keeps us in our heads. God told Joseph to take Mary as his wife and "find" that his fear of her and God was filled with the joy of thanksgiving. (Have you discovered the difference between reading God's Word and hearing God's voice in prayer? Joseph experience the value of both!)

How do I **Love** God, self, and neighbor? Jesus says, "Knock and the door shall be opened to you." Jesus identifies the "door" saying, "repent, the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Joseph discovered the Kingdom of Heaven in the least likely place. He found it in his mind, heart, and soul. Joseph experienced Peace of Mind, lead by heartfelt Joy, restored to his soul to reflect the image of God. (Notice that Joseph continued to face various trials. King Herod, life in Egypt, and finding a safe place when the Family returned home presented him with an opportunity to live in the world as a reflection of God's love.)

Love is risky business! Love patiently waited for Joseph to pray. Love kindly waited for Joseph to take Mary as his wife. Love did not insist on its own way when King Herod sought to kill the child. Joseph prayed. God spoke. Joseph took the child and the Magi's gifts and escaped to Egypt. What would have happened if Joseph had not learned to ask, seek, and knock? Look at the suffering around you. Love is risky. Many seek it, few find it, and even fewer share it. Here I am, Lord let it be with me...Amen.