

## 6<sup>th</sup> Week of Easter

In life it's important to know when to stop arguing with people- and simply let them be wrong.

The truth is that Sometimes you have to lose to win.  
Sometimes you have to lose a battle to win the war.

Several years ago, there was a Catholic man who worked in men's ministry in his parish and across the Archdiocese in the Cursillo movement. He shared with me the troubles he was having with his wife of over 20 years.

They had adopted 3 children as infants, through Catholic Charities, who were now in grade schools.

The man said that he and his wife had very different approaches to raising children.  
So they argued and fought a lot so they went to marriage counseling, which at least seemed to give them the opportunity to air their differences with a referee.

They were actually very close to divorce when one day during a fight, she said to him in a calm tone, you know I think that you would rather be right than to love.

That seemed to resonate deeply within him because he couldn't shake off her words.  
You'd rather be right than love.

He may have been right. But God prefers mercy over sacrifice.  
Sometimes It's easy to win and to be right.  
But if the cost of winning means losing love, then you're paying too much.

So Sometimes you have to lose to win.

Military Generals in battle know that sometimes you have to lose a battle in order to win the war.

Winning isn't everything. Not only is Failure sometimes the better option, but sometimes it's necessary.

Sometimes we have to let our pride lose in order for our heart to win.

These days We don't seem to know how to lose with dignity.

We've confused losing with rejection or we think failure means I'm being judged, or that my feelings present all of reality.

But Losing does not mean that I have no personal value.

Being rejected doesn't dictate my selfworth.

And emotions are not an indicator of all that is true or false.

Being sad, angry, afraid or joyful are just emotions. They aren't judges who pass a sentence on my actions or define who I am.

They just show me where the working wounds are in my spirit and where the Lord may need to visit for some healing.

So losing is an opportunity. It can help redirect us to our ultimate goal.

Thomas Edison tried 1000 times to invent the light bulb.  
What if he had given up? If he had seen failure as final, or a judgment of his abilities, he wouldn't have kept going and the world would have stayed in darkness.  
But he saw losing as an opportunity to improve and be better.

Each time he failed he tried something a little different. He kept trying until it worked. And changed the world forever.

The same is true for us.

"Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible." - Francis of Assisi quotes

So how do we do that? How do we get back up when we fall, or start over when we feel like we've lost or failed?

To remember the big picture. God Loves you beyond your successes or failures.

Jesus says it was not you who chose me, but I who chose you, to go and bear fruit that will remain.

If Jesus chooses to love me with all my shortcomings and failures, how can I justify not loving someone else?

Just because others may hurt me or I disagree with the way they see things or do things, that doesn't give me the right not love them.

We can get pretty indignant or self-righteous in our thinking sometimes.

If I choose who I will and will not love, then I limit Gods capacity to love through me.  
If I love winning for the sake of being right, then I may have won the battle but I've already lost the war.

We don't win on our own. And if we do then it's just a narcissistic achievement that says look at me.

But if we lose for a cause greater than ourselves then it's not about me but rather a higher good.

To help my fellow human sisters and brothers who still don't know that Jesus has chosen them.  
Jesus says that we are to go out and bear fruit that will last.

We are to go out and risk losing a battle to win the war.  
The war is to defeat the lie that everything relies on me.  
That My success as a business person, parent, or spouse, or high school graduate, all depends on me.

The lie is that My career moves, my ministry or my long term goals all depend on what others think of me, or how well I do financially. It all depends on me. That's not true. It's false pressure and  
That kind of isolationist thinking can often enslave us.

Jesus says it's not about success or failure but taking the risk to follow Him.

How do I tell if God has chosen me? how can I know?  
By the Spiritual fruits that I see around me.  
Healthy friendships, encouraging feedback, positive conversations, reassuring relationships that talk about God and how Jesus is part of your everyday plan.

God chooses you to go and bear fruit.

Most of us can see God in the blessings and joyful events, but how about during the hard times?  
If we can see God in the difficult times, then we can honestly know that God has chosen me.  
Because then I'm free to love in the good and the bad.

If winning and being right are the fruits of my life, then I may still be a slave to those things.

Jesus says that as long as we feel the need to control others He considers us to be enslaved.

Jesus says, It was not you who chose me but I who chose you, to go and  
be a loving disciple rather than a slave of being right.