



God is Love

I know that I firmly stand within the statement that ‘God is Love’. And so those are the glasses that I will put on when I read the Bible. I interpret sacred scripture through that lens of love.

That means that I will never stand up here and preach a God of damnation. That means that I will not preach from a standpoint of judgement. That means that I reject atonement theology and theologies of hell and original sin. That means I will not read from the Bible and use texts to justify an action that is not of Love. That means that I will come down on the side of radical inclusion, forgiveness and reconciliation, again and again and again.

That does not mean that I believe there is no sin in this world. That does not mean that I have not experienced evil actions or am unaware of evil actions in this world. Instead, to confess God is Love means that I will try with all my being to see those evil actions through the lens of love.

And that is hard my friends, that is very hard. Because to confess that ‘God is Love’ is to choose the achingly difficult path to forgive and to trust in Grace.

As you have heard me preach before, I find forgiveness to be both an unconventional and the uncomfortable path. Forgiveness which never means mean forgetting or trying to bury the pain. Forgiveness which sometimes means reconciliation but not always. Forgiveness that does not excuse harm or allow it to continue.

But instead, forgiveness that looks at the face of the of the one who does the wounding and finds a way to see the person that God loves. It is the uncomfortable path. It is the hard path.

But it is the path that Christ calls us down. It is also the path that is offered to each of us by our loving God in the form of Grace. The great theologian, Paul Tillich describes grace as “the reunion of life with life...in spite of the abounding of sin, grace abounds much more”. Grace is experienced as that glorious moment of hearing the divine voice that says to every one of us, “You are accepted. You are accepted.”

The gift of God’s Grace is love that is not ‘in spite of’ what we have done or who we are. It is instead radical and unconditional love because of who we are. It is love that occurs because we are God’s beloved. God is love represents to me this abounding grace that is as Tillich describes, “wave of light that breaks into our darkness.”

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God is Love. This I believe. That love is unconditional, radically inclusive and forever accompanying us. That Love will hold us and sustain us and call us all forward into something more for this world. As a very wise woman said to me this week, “Love is what we came here for!”

And so, ‘God is Love’ is something that I will preach, and I will teach, and I will try very hard to live into in service to you all. Because this I believe. God is Love!

Amen

Pastor Marci