

Tuesday's Touch

...from Pastor Ed

...February 10, 2009

Love

(please read 1 Corinthians 13)

...let us love, ...everyone who loves is born of God. ...for God is love. 1John 4:7-8

By this we know love, because [God] laid down His life for us. 1John3:16

*...Love not the world, ... the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life- is not of the Father...
1John 2:16-16*

So fundamental is love to the Divine nature that John says that "God is love." Love is from everlasting to everlasting in the eternal interaction of the Triune God. How ironic that the truth of the Trinity - one God, undivided, existing as Father, Son and Holy Spirit- being a truth beyond human logic, is rejected by so many as nonsensical superstitious tradition. Yet it is this very attribute of God that yields the facet of His nature which men are most ready to accept: God is Love.

*It is into this eternal God-Love that man was created. Bearing the very image of God in his being, he was given the astonishing resources of all creation to use, in creativity and wisdom, to express that holy love, "glorifying God and enjoying Him forever."
(Westminster Shorter Catechism)*

But one choice changed everything. Love diverted toward self fractured into a million pieces the crystal perfection of reflected glory. Love, itself, became fractured and perverted. Absorbed with self, the beatific ecstasy of love was degraded into the momentary pleasures of carnal lust; selfless devotion, affectionately yearning for the glory of the other, became an insatiable neediness to be stroked and affirmed; the benevolent unmerited outpouring of grace became an insidious tool to manipulate others to the fulfilling of self-purpose. The fall was infinite... complete. All creation was defiled, having been twisted from its purpose.

Yet God was neither thwarted nor diminished. Still infinitely complete and self-sufficient, having no necessity, He chose according to the good pleasure of His own will (Ephesians 1:5) to endure with much longsuffering these vessels of wrath destined for destruction, that He might make known the riches of His glory on vessels of mercy which He had destined for glory. (Romans 9:22-23) Out of the vileness of man's rebellion and depravity, Grace, unmerited and free, becomes the crowning, glorious manifestation of Eternal Love.

So, the God of love sent forth the Son of His love to bring love restored into the darkness of this world. This pure Love embodied in the Heavenly Bridegroom, totally sacrificed self, enduring the wrath of eternal justice for the Bride of His love. All of history is revealed to be nothing less than the epic romance of Conquering Love, to the eternal glory of the Father.

You who are thirsty for love that is holy and infinite... all who truly despise the ravages of the rebellious pseudo-love that infinitely offends the Eternal Lover... Come! Come freely, without cost or merit. Embrace your heavenly Bridegroom, who has finished His perfecting love-work on your behalf. He will take you into His arms and never let go. He will lead you into His eternal Kingdom of Love where the Father's glory will shine undiminished in the unending consummation of the marriage of the Lamb.

Our Eternal Lover,

Teach us to love. May we embrace the glories of love in all of its ecstasy and hellish sacrifice; in its selfless giving of unmerited favor to those who spitefully use us; and in seeking the glory of others before self. May our carnal passions be reserved for, and sanctified in, marriage, which You have given to be the highest reflection of that love between Christ and His Church. Above all, grant us to love You with all of our heart, soul, and mind, seeking Your glory in all that we do.

*In our Blessed Bridegroom's matchless Name,
Amen*

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