

“TAKE 10”- Worship While Away! (Sunday, January 20, 2019)

Share:

God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son so that everyone who believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

This Sunday we will investigate the concept of God’s steadfast love (hesed) and how it can empower the people of God. Important to our discussion will be trying to discern how human love and divine love are similar and how they differ.

Read this scripture: Psalm 36:5-7

Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the clouds.
Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains,
your judgements are like the great deep;
you save humans and animals alike, O LORD.
How precious is your steadfast love, O God!
All people may take refuge in the shadow of your wings.

Here a story to read with your family.

Tom, a member of our congregation, told me a story. Several nights earlier, Tom’s 6-year-old son, Benjamin, protested his bedtime. Frustrated by his father’s refusal to budge, Benjamin finally became so frustrated that he said, “Daddy, I hate you!”

Tom, possessing the presence of mind I wish I more frequently had — especially when dealing with my children — replied, “I’m sorry you feel that way, Ben, but I love you.” And then what do you think Benjamin said? “Oh, it’s okay.” Or maybe, “Sorry, Dad. I love you, too.” Nope.

When Tom told his son that he loved him, Benjamin yelled back, “Don’t say that!”

Surprised, Tom continued, “But, Ben, but it’s true — I love you.”

“Don’t say that, Daddy.”

“But I love you, Ben.”

“Stop saying that, Daddy! Stop saying it right now!”

And then it came, Tom reported, almost completely unbidden: “Benjamin, now listen to me: I love you ... like it or not!”

Even at 6 years old, you see, Benjamin realized that in the face of unconditional love he was powerless. If Tom had been willing to negotiate — “I’ll love you if you go to bed nicely” — then Benjamin would have been a player: “Okay, this time, but I’m not eating my vegetables at dinner tomorrow.” But once Tom refused to negotiate, refused to make his love for his son conditional on something Benjamin did, then Ben could do nothing but accept or flee that love.

The same is true with us. If God makes God's great love for the world and us conditional, then we, suddenly, have tremendous power. We can negotiate. We can threaten to reject God's love. We can even tell God to go take a hike if we don't care for God's terms. But when God just loves us — completely and unconditionally — and when God just goes and dies for us, well, then the jig is up; there's just nothing we can do to influence God.

—David Lose, "Like it or not," sermon on John 3:14-21, posted on Day1.org for 4th Sunday in Lent, Year B, March 18, 2012. Retrieved July 25, 2018.

Pray together:

Holy One, come into my heart this morning and give me eyes to see throughout this day all the ways that you love us. Put your Holy Spirit power to work in my life and empower me to be a witness to Christ, that my life may be a song of thanksgiving to you. Strengthen my hope and bless the work of my hands that I may live as a member of Christ's body in this world. Amen.

Bless one another:

Take each person's hand and say. "God's grace is for you, God's love is upon you, God's call is within you. Be kind to yourself and others this week as a child of God."