

International House of Prayer of Greater Fort Wayne

...a day and night , city-wide, multi-church prayer and worship ministry

Kingdom Posture in the 21st Century

Recently, while sharing with a friend, I heard him reflect Jesus' confessions as recorded in John 5:19 and 12:49. Jesus never did anything apart from what He saw or heard the Father do or say. It was then that I reflected something like this 'fascinating - I have always imagined that confession of Jesus as Him gazing 'upward' to the Father' but what if this was Jesus' confession of His observation of the Father as He walked in His humanity?' What if Jesus lived with an expectant anticipation to see what the Father was saying and doing in the world around Him? What if this is the posture we are invited to consider as we walk in our humanity? Beloved I believe it surely is the posture we are invited to embrace! It was just a short time later that I came across this piece. Ponder, Consider, Be Challenged, Enjoy!

Love Never Ends: A Meditation by Brian Zahnd

Why is there something instead of nothing?

The only answer I can imagine is Genesis 1:1. In the beginning God...

But why would God say, "Let there be light" and initiate Creation?

The only answer I can imagine is God is love.

What is light? God's love in the form of photons.

What is water? A liquid expression of God's love.

What is a mountain? God's love in granite, so much older than human sorrow.

What is a tree? God's love growing up from the ground.

What is a bull moose? God's love sporting spectacular antlers.

What is a whale? Fifty tons of God's love swimming in the ocean.

As we learn to see Creation as goodness flowing from God's own love—

We begin to see the sacredness of all things.

As Dylan and Dostoevsky say, in every grain of sand.

All of creation is a gift — a gift flowing from the self-giving love of God.

Why is there light and oceans and trees and moose and whales and every grain of sand?

Because God is love — love seeking expression in self-giving creativity.

Unless we understand this we'll misunderstand everything and misspend our lives.

In our misunderstanding and misspent lives we harm Creation—

Including our sisters and brothers, all of whom bear the image of God.

Love never ends.

At the end of all things there is love. Love abides. Love endures.

When the last star burns out, God's love will be there for whatever comes after.

In the end it all adds up to love. So when you are calculating the meaning of life—

If it doesn't add up to love, recalculate, because you've made a serious mistake!

Existence only makes sense when seen through the lens of love.

At the beginning of time there is love.

At the bottom of the universe there is love.

It's in God's ocean of endless love that we live and move and have our being.

Admittedly freedom allows for other things too (from cancer cells to atomic bombs)—

But at the bottom of the universe it's love all the way down.

Cancer cells and atomic bombs will not have the final say. Love alone has the last word.

"Unless you love, your life will flash by."

(Thank you, Terrence Malick.)

Love alone gives meaning to our fleeting fourscore sojourn.

Why? Because everything else returns to dust. It's love alone that never ends.

It's love alone that is greater than the grave. Death severs all save love.

We remain connected to our departed loved ones by the un-severable bond of love.

Love remembers.

God's love is great enough to remember all and to remember all.

If Creation is an explosion (or rapid expansion) of God's love (and I believe it is)—

New Creation (or resurrection) is the triumph of God's endless love over death.

This is the question: Which is endless, Love or Death?

The answer is Love.

If God is love and if love never ends and if the meaning of being is love...

And if Jesus is the supreme incarnation of God's eternal love...

Then that should tell us something about what it looks like to follow Jesus.

Following Jesus is a journey toward perfection in the love of God.

It's a journey that will take us a lifetime, and perhaps longer.

But the trajectory is clear: We are always moving toward the way of love.

Phone: 260-403-4948 Email: ben@bouwersfam.com

And the secret is simply this: **Christ in you!**

Yes, Christ in you bringing with him the hope of all glorious things to come. Col 1:27b, JB Phillips

If what we're doing, praying, preaching, saying, isn't moving us toward love...

Then it's not the true way of following the love of God who is Jesus Christ.

This needs to be said, because it is too easily forgotten.

Loveless orthodoxy is death.

We've all seen those who in the name of Jesus have perfected meanness.

The iconic and tragic-comic example would be the Westboro Baptist folk...

But there are plenty of other less egregious, but still tragic, examples.

The journey of faith almost always begins as somewhat elitist (I'm saved!)—

But it always moves toward becoming egalitarian. (Peter learning Gentiles are accepted by God.)

Love triggers the divine and deep (but often repressed) instinct that all things belong.

(All God has created is good. Sin is the corruption, the hole, in the fabric of God's goodness.)

You too belong. You too are accepted. I will make room for you.

Over time, as we are properly formed, love will elicit this kind of language.

Love is open. Love is expansive. There is a largeness to love.

Sin is mean, petty, and small.

The whole world of Hell in C.S. Lewis' *The Great Divorce* was no bigger than a grain of sand.

Selah.

If Creation comes from the explosive expansion of God's love—

Then I find it significant that we live in an ever expanding universe.

The universe is not shrinking, it's not static, it's expanding...at the speed of light!

God is love. God is light. God's love is expanding at the speed of light.

And what is the wrath of God? The love of God wrongly received.

Either we go with the grain of love or we suffer the shards of self-inflicted harm.

(And that you "did it to yourself" by resisting God's love makes it no less of a judgment.)

What about the borders of your love? Are they shrinking? Static? Expanding?

Who are you embracing in love. Fewer people? The same people? More people?

I'm not worried about having borders of love that are too broad.

Loving too many people will hardly be a crime at the judgment seat of Christ.

In my earliest days of following Jesus I had an air of triumphalism. (I'm on the winning team!)

But as I mature I find triumphalism shrinking and love expanding.

Today I find it much easier to love people who are very different from me.

I've learned to genuinely love people of other religions. (And still confess Jesus is Lord.)

Jews...Muslims...Hindus...Buddhists...Atheists.

I'm thinking of specific people...friends.

But will they be saved?!

That's not my business. My business is to love and point to Jesus.

(I do believe that no one who loves the way of grace ever comes to a bad end.)

Back to the question about our borders of love...

Why would our borders of love shrink and not expand?

Only one answer: Fear.

As I observe the world — politically, socially, economically, religiously...

I observe there really are only two forces that move people: Fear and Love.

So when you observe the events that make news (especially if there's controversy)—

Ask this simple question: What's at work here? Fear or Love?

Then ask yourself another question: What's moving me? Fear or Love?

Finally, make the decision to move with love and refuse to respond to fear.

You can afford to make that risky move because...

God is love and love never ends. BZ

With gratitude and integrity we steward your gifts. Thank you for partnering with the mission the Lord has given us in this hour as we partner with Him for His kingdom to be established.

Please make your **tax deductible** contribution to:

**IHOP Fort Wayne
5907 West Wallen Road,
Fort Wayne, IN 46818**

Ben and Denise, Please agree with us over these prayer needs for the next month...

5907 W Wallen Rd, Fort Wayne, IN 46818

Phone: 260-403-4948 Email: ben@bouwersfam.com

And the secret is simply this: **Christ in you!**

Yes, Christ in you bringing with him the hope of all glorious things to come. Col 1:27b, JB Phillips