

The Lens of Love

“God loves each of us as if there were only one of us.”~ **Augustine**

I finally figured it out. Or should I say, God showed me something else.

There are many things about God that are good. In fact, everything about God is good. But there is one thing about God which colors everything else. It is a telescope of discovery, it is eyeglasses to sight, it is the lens of love.

Christians are called to know God’s love, and if we have it, we will share it with others. People know whether we have God’s love or not by our actions and words. There is no fooling them. We must not even try.

Our lives must be about discovering the length, breadth, nature, and all the qualities of God’s love. As we journey, we can discover our own failings, which prove we are sinners and will make mistakes, but God out of his love will forgive and change us.

Have you ever been truly amazed at God’s love? Just stunned when you finally see it?

Brennan Manning, author of an amazing book called *The Ragamuffin Gospel*, says, “We should be astonished at the goodness of God, stunned that He should bother to call us by name, our mouths wide open at His love, bewildered that at this very moment we are standing on holy ground.”

That holy ground, and God’s love which makes it possible, changes us. It improves us. It does not make us worse. It always makes us better.

Search for those moments in which you are truly astonished that God loves you, truly amazed that he forgives you, and truly surprised that he walks with you every step of every day. It takes that out of this world experience to be able to step back into time and be God’s authentic, loving, disciples.

Ironically, the path to discovering God’s love begins with admitting our finite thoughts and abilities. It is not because of our goodness, intelligence, or social standing that we can find God’s love. It is precisely when we can see our own unworthiness.

“But the man who is not afraid to admit everything that he sees to be wrong with himself, and yet recognizes that he may be the object of God's love precisely because of his shortcomings, can begin to be sincere. His sincerity is based on confidence, not in his own illusions about himself, but in the endless, unfailing mercy of God.” ~ **Thomas Merton**

If we can find a way to live our lives not based on who or what others think we may or might be, but who our loving, living God knows we are, our lives will take on new meaning. Anyone who

tries to live up to what others expect will always be disappointed. But walking in God's love gives a freedom and perspective that transcends earth.

Life for the Christian is not about us. It is about God. It is not about how much we love or what we do or not do. It is about discovering the eternal love of God and being so filled with it that it amazes all who see us.

One of the clearest ways to determine that we have found God's love is to be able to love those with whom we disagree. Jesus says we must even love our enemies. While that may not be possible for the human being, God can make it possible.

The Bible says, "if a man say, 'I love God,' and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also."~ John the Apostle

What a different world it would be if lives were based on the lens of love rather than exploiting one's advantage. Political parties would find common ground. Communities would once again be able to leave their doors unlocked. Nations would find areas of agreement rather than difference. Custodians of untold wealth would not be tempted to use it for their own gain.

If we want to see the extent of God's love for us, we only need look at the cross on which Jesus died for us. If we hold the cross in front of us, the lens of love colors everything. Maybe one day we will have enough of God's love so that there is no limit what we will do for God and others.

I hope and pray today, dear reader that you can find the grace, vision, and example that God's love makes possible for us. Use his love as a lens to look through to see what we really need to see.

God loved the world so much.....