

CRIBBS NOTE – AUGUST 5, 2007

It is a mistake to concentrate only on our love for God. While it is important “to love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength, and to love our neighbors as we love ourselves,” we must not lose sight of God’s love for us. It is God’s love that makes life and all things possible. That may sound like a nuance or semantic difference; it is much more and requires constant reiteration.

We cannot measure the depth and extent of God’s love. We are the object of divine affection. Throughout the Scriptures, we are given clues about how much God loves us as human beings. In fact, there are reminders of God’s love for the entire Creation and everything that is part of it. The ancient stories in which the prophets remind the people of faith of their Covenant with God give some insight into God’s faithfulness and love. Even when humanity disappoints and disobeys God, there is an expression of mercy and restoration.

God wants us to experience life fully. God instructs us about being in right relationship with each other so we don’t waste our lives bickering, warring, and threatening each other with reckless acts. God desires for us to enjoy the fleeting moments we are given on earth. When we are busy and forget to pause long enough to inhale fresh air, God reminds us to slow down and stop.

The love of God may include disciplinary measures to call us back to right living. Sometimes we may get sick or break a leg just to get our attention. On a happier note, someone may walk into our life and offer a helping hand just when we thought we were all alone. Divine love is beyond our imagination, yet, small events can focus us to realize we are wrapped in the cloth of sacred devotion.

Why is it so important to be aware of God’s love? It has a humbling effect and provides sufficient space to make room for others to peaceably co-exist. When we think about how much God loves us, we are able to recognize God’s presence in the faces of others. God forgives us when we make mistakes, big and small. By remembering God’s mercy, we are able to forgive others who make mistakes. The thought of God’s love makes it more difficult for us to render harsh judgments.

Truly, there is a wonderful gift found in knowing God loves us for who we are. To the extent we are able to receive God’s love, we become capable of extending our love to others. And that, ultimately, is the point. God loves us just because we are human beings. In turn, God wants us to love each other out of our human experience. Just because we are human beings is enough reason to be an anointed recipient of God’s affection.

When the sun rises, the moon turns full, or rain sprinkles the earth, we are reminded that God’s love is extended to all of us. It would be a moment for great celebration if everybody felt the spontaneous power of God’s love all at once. It would overwhelm us and transform life as we know it.

-Pastor Art Cribbs

