

Fourth Sunday in Easter

We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us-- and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him. And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

1 John 3:16-24

The creation, everything we can see and know and touch and so much more that even that lies beyond our perception, comes from God. And since it is, in some way, of God, all of creation is imbued with God's essence and character. And the primary truth of God is that God is a relationship. God is not just the father or just Jesus or just the Spirit; God is the relationship of the three persons of the Trinity. And so, creation therefore must reflect this.

Through science we know that subatomic particles can be linked across vast expanses of space; we call this Quantum Entanglement. This relationship is so confounding that Einstein famously described this entanglement phenomenon as "spooky action at a distance."

It is also true for humans, we are intimately connected to one another and the actions of one can affect all the rest. As the poet John Donne wrote, "no man is an island," we are all connected. And so the true fundamental teaching of the scriptures is about the integrity of relationships. For us to thrive in the creation we must align ourselves with its core characteristic, we must pay attention to and seek to strengthen the relationships in our lives.

That's what the author of this passage meant when they wrote; "*How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. And by this we will know that we are from the truth.*" We cannot claim to be followers of Jesus unless we are committed to loving one another. And what we mean by love here isn't some kind of dewy-eyed romanticism, or the passion of a passing fancy, but a deep commitment to the well-being of another and the willingness to commit ourselves to that goal.

And if all of us, every person alive right now committed themselves in that way, then not only would we fulfill God's deepest desires, but we would live in a heaven made manifest on earth.