

Home Group Reading for May 12-16, 2024

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him” John 3:16-17

“This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.” 1 John 3:16

“You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:6-8

Excerpts

“God Almighty, creator of Heaven and Earth, set aside his divine prerogative, His divine blessing and became a human being and died a God-forsaken death, taking on our sin and our curse, for a race of rebels who could not have deserved it less. That is love. That is the ultimate expression of love. And insofar as we live like that, we are living in love.” – Greg Boyd

“God defines love as a pursuing force that is not dependent upon the beloved’s inviting response. Love pursues and protects and nurtures, even when it is demeaned and rejected.” Jesus-Centred Study Bible

“I had a friend who took care of his dad who was dying, and he was quite old, and toward the end of his life, he would read him to sleep in the way that his father had done when he was a kid, but his father would just lie there and stare at his son with this smile and the son was quite tired...and the father would close his eyes but he couldn’t help himself, he’d pop one eye open. And then after he died, my friend said, I realized that he just couldn’t take his eyes off his kid.” Father Gregory Boyle in describing his understanding of God

Reflection Questions

1. Reflect on the question posed in the sermon: "How does God see us?" How does your perception of God's view of humanity align with the message of unconditional love discussed?
2. Discuss the tension between the biblical portrayal of God's love revealed through the cross and the conflicting depictions of wrath and judgment we see especially in the Old Testament. How do you reconcile these views?
3. What does it mean to love as Jesus loved, according to the definition provided in the message?
4. Reflect on the story shared about Father Gregory Boyle and his approach to unconditional love. How might this perspective inform your own understanding of God's love?
5. When you think about God’s love, are there any challenges that hold you back from embracing the love of God as described in this series?