

WEDNESDAY EVENING BECAUSE OF LOVE

We have established the fact that we need God. What are some of the reasons we need Him? _____

No matter how much we need Him, however, we can't get to Him – not on our own. He must want us to get to Him; He must provide a way. He's the only one who can. We are entirely powerless.

What did God do to make a way for us? _____

Hopefully, you talked about Jesus's sacrifice for our sins – His willing choice to take our punishment to allow us to be forgiven and our relationships with God restored. But, here is a much harder question....WHY did He do it? Really think about it. WHY would He do such a thing to Himself for the sake of a creation that turned its back on Him ages ago?

Why? _____

The answer to that question is so simple, and yet SO complex. He LOVES us. I don't know why. I cannot explain why He does. There is nothing in us worth loving. In our lost condition, we do nothing but defile Him and His laws. Even once we're saved, we often live life like He's not even there. We take His love for granted. But He loves us still. The God who made the universe, who fashioned the stars in the heavens, who told the sea where to meet the shore, who needs nothing from anyone chooses to love you and me.

How do you feel about that? _____

There is a great story in Luke that many of you may be familiar with. It's the story of a young, spoiled, rich boy who asks his father to go ahead and give him his inheritance. The father consents and the son runs off with the money. Within a short period of time, the son had spent all of his father's money on "wild living". He has to find a job slopping pigs and is literally starving to death. He decides to go back home; he will ask his father to let him become one of his slaves. At least that way, he will have a place to live and food to eat.

Listen to what the father does when the boy returns (Luke 15:20, 23-24):

So he [the son] got up and went to his father. While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him, and kissed him...[The father said,] "Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate! For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!" So they began to celebrate.

How does this story that Jesus told illustrate God's love for us? _____

We, just like the prodigal son, don't deserve anything from God. He would be right in kicking us out! Think back to Monday when you made a list of people that it seems like it would be hard for God to love. He loves them anyways. Think of the darkest, most disgusting moment in your life when you said, thought, or did something so vile that it makes you sick to this day. He knows, and He loves you anyways. His love has nothing to do with us deserving or earning it. He gives us love in spite of our sin.

I have never been good at writing poetry. When we had to do it in school, I always picked the easy, lame rhyming words like "cat" and "hat" and "cool" and "school". I cannot eloquently express to you how vast God's love is. But read these words written around 1915; I think that this is one of the most beautiful statements about God's love ever written:

*"Could we with ink the oceans fill and were the skies of parchment made,
Were every stalk on earth a quill and every man a scribe by trade,
To write the love of God above would drain the ocean dry.
Nor could the scroll contain the whole, though stretched from sky to sky."*

What is the author of "The Love of God" saying about God's love for us? _____

Take a few minutes to write out a response to God's love. It can be a prayer, a psalm, a song, scripture, or even a poem (I hope you're better than me)! Just tell God how you feel about His love for you. If you usually take it for granted, ask Him to forgive you and remind you how amazing it really is!
