

Easter 4 – A Meditation on I John 3¹⁶⁻²⁴

Genesis 7¹⁻¹⁸ p8, Genesis 8⁶⁻¹⁸ p9, Genesis 9⁸⁻¹³ p10, Acts 4⁵⁻¹² p1095, Psalm 23, John 10¹¹⁻¹⁸ p1076

Herby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life: for us and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. He sets us an example, the example Peter and John were prepared to follow when they testified of Jesus before the high priest.

But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him.

Christian loves is demonstrated in the way we meet everyday needs, not merely in a theoretical commitment to martyrdom.

My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

It is easy to say you love God or other people, but what matters is how you act, because how you act proves what you are.

And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.

A young woman was telling me the other day how, as a child and a teenager, she mixed with children who broke the law, shop-lifting etc., but somehow she didn't. "It's marvellous what difference a church upbringing makes," she said.

For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our hearts and knoweth all things.

I take this to mean that we may well feel utterly unworthy, but we are judged by a merciful God, not by our merciless selves. We can rest in Him, safe and secure.

Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then we have confidence toward God.

We ought not to condemn ourselves. We are set free from sin in Christ – free to serve Him without fear.

And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things which are pleasing in his sight.

The redeemed of the Lord have the rainbow promise. He does not forget us.

And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another as he gave us commandment.

To know God is to love. To love is to have eternal life. The people in Noah's day didn't believe. So they didn't love and ended up in a watery grave. We know and bear the Name of Jesus, the Name which sets us free from sin and death, the Name, in which, like Peter and John, we may accomplish God's healing purposes for the world.

And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us by the Spirit which he hath given us.

And this is what we are doing now as we break bread in the fellowship of the Church in attendance on His Holy Word.