

Thursday, December 25, 2014

Rebecca Dix, Senior MDiv Student at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

Scripture

1 John 4:7-16

⁷Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. ¹⁰In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. ¹²No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. ¹³By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. ¹⁵God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. ¹⁶So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

Devotional

It can be deceiving to look at the pile of presents built up at the base of the tree or the decorations streamed from wall to wall or the half consumed dinner whose remnants can be witnessed in the bulging of bellies or the smeared, crumb stained faces, and think:

And so this is Christmas.

I'm not saying those things cannot contribute to the joy and festivities, because they do, but when the ripped wrapping paper is gathered and the leftovers put away, does the joy remain? Or do we pack away the Nativity with the tinsel and the snow globe collection? Beloved, the true joy of the season is in this revelation of God's love for us, a love so whole and perfect, a love that "sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him." It is in this Love we have joy, and we are called to live our lives as a litany of this hope, this joy, this love, witnessing to the Kingdom, so that we may all remember and in seeing these reminders that point us to the true hope and love, we all can say:

And so this is Christmas.

Prayer

Today Christ is born, O God, and your love is revealed among us. In Jesus Christ your light shines in our darkness. Fill us with the mystery of your Word made flesh, until our hearts overflow with praise and joy so that we, your church, may be a sign of your hope and love. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.