

Saturday 20th July



Hold on to Love

*Don't lose your grip on Love and Loyalty.
Tie them around your neck;
carve their initials on your heart.*

Proverbs 3:3 [The Message]

The Bible speaks often of love; Paul's famous verses in 1 Corinthians 13 about love often come to people's minds. In both Paul's words and this saying from Proverbs, we read about love as valuable, the most precious thing of all. It is also a description of God: God is love. When we love someone, we have some idea what God is like. It is a powerful force, greater than fear, doubt, anger, which lasts beyond death.

I often encourage people to use the words from 1 Corinthians 13, replacing the word 'love' with the word 'God'. It paints a wonderful picture of what God is like. I believe that if more people understood God in this way the world would be a better place. If you would really like to challenge yourself, remember that we are to love God and our neighbours as ourselves, then re-read the 1 Corinthians 13 passage, but this time where it says 'love', insert your own name. I always find this very humbling, and a powerful reminder of the growing that I still need to do in Christ.

There are many hymns that speak of God's love. 'Love divine, all love's excelling' by Charles Wesley (*Singing the Faith*) reminds us of the power of God's love and how our love is an echo of it. A more contemporary hymn would be Stuart Tonwend's 'How deep the father's love for us' (*Singing the Faith*), which reminds us of God's love, so deep that it led to a cross, so vast we cannot measure it.

God of unfathomable love:

*in our lives, when we love someone, we get a glimpse of the love that you have for us,
the love you have for all your creation, even the parts and people we don't like.*

Your love is so deep, so vast, so immense that it is humbling.

You love us unconditionally, patiently, endlessly.

We are sorry that we don't always appreciate the love you have for us;

for the times when our love for others has been shallow or empty;

for the times when we have not loved at all.

Teach us the way you love, Lord,

that we may engrave it on our hearts and share it with the world.

Amen.

Prayers for July 2019 by Revd Claire Rawlinson
You can download this Prayer for the Week at www.mwib.org.uk

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