



ST. ANDREW'S IN THE PINES EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Sermon

2-14-16

- I. Listening to love songs on radio – let's get real, let's claim this holiday from Hallmark and named for a fictional saint and put it where it truly should be.
 - a. Right here, in the church, is the celebration of true love. We came here to recognize the steadfast, eternal love of God with Jesus and the Holy Spirit.
 - b. And the love song we're going to sing today is call "The king of love my shepherd is."
- II. We're here today to remember, to delight in the source of all love –
 - a. And we're here to enter into our Lenten journey to salvation – a journey taken with love.
 - b. For salvation is one of the focuses for Lent – time to assess how we are doing on our life journey.
 - c. Is it time to tweak reconciliation, repentance, humility, deepening spirituality, are we in good and healthy places?
- III. So – our salvation. Being saved seems to be a big deal and a desire for many. It is spoken of four times in the Romans reading. It repeats telling us what might save us. But I don't really get the idea of salvation.
 - a. From the moment of baptism, from every time we say a confession are we saved forever?
 - b. Can we experience salvation while still living here on earth or does it only happen at the moment of our death?
 - c. Do we see heaven and say, great I made it!? Does salvation equal eternal life?
- IV. For me, I'm thinking the whole concept of salvation has been usurped by those church officials interested in control and power.
 - a. They teach us to live in fear and trembling – to continually assess our worthiness and if we're in doubt they can sell us some indulgences once we make promises of changed behavior or certain commitments to the church.
 - b. Where is the good news in that? We are gathered here because of love – the good news is about love.
- V. In my only semester of Greek there is one word I remember – Sozo. That's because it is a root word for salvation.
 - a. It translates and is used variously to mean – healed, safe, cured, cared for. It is such a present and positive understanding. Healing is for right now healing is for our health and wholeness.
 - b. Consider what you wish for your spouse – for your child. Don't you wish for their wholeness, for their health, for their healing, for their safety? Aren't all of those wishes/ hope coming from love?
 - c. Isn't the good news about love? That then is our salvation.
- VI. So our salvation journey this Lent is about love. It's about a love from God that turns us toward healing. A love that keeps us safe and cared for. It's a love that is ongoing every moment in our lives – for now and forever after.
- VII. And in the story of Jesus and the temptations – we get some idea of how we might respond to the ways that will lead to our healing.
 - a. We can say No – No to desiring only possessions. We must have our relationships and emotional side in our lives.

- b. We must say No to any love that draws us from God as our first love.
- c. And we must not ask God to prove his love for us. We must live with some trust and acceptance of that which can not be seen.

VIII. We follow the way of Jesus on our pathway to salvation.

IX. We are on our journey into health and healing.

X. We are on our journey to salvation – our pilgrimage of love.

XI. Thanks be to God.