

LENT DEVOTIONAL

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LENT DEVOTIONAL MARCH 13, 2025

SCRIPTURE

JOHN 3:16-21

16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

17 "Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. 18 Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. 19 And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. 20 For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. 21 But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God."

DEVOTION

Have you ever attended a candlelight service? The warmth and coziness of the darkened space illuminated by the soft, flickering glow of the candles, seeing the candlelight reflected on the faces of the folks holding the candles—everywhere one looks, one can see the LIGHT has come into the world!

But once the candles are extinguished, and we leave the coziness, the softness of that surrounding light, and enter the darkness of the real world . . . it's us against them, me verses you—divisiveness abounds everywhere in this darkness. Families divided over election results, those attempting to cross borders because the horrors they leave behind are worse than the dangers that lie ahead, those being persecuted because of who they love. With such pervasive darkness, it is sometimes difficult to believe in a God who so loves the world.

And yet there are glimmers of light . . . a diverse group of volunteers working together to eradicate world hunger, a smattering of pastors officiating weddings for couples others have turned away, an employer who gives those impacted by incarceration a second chance. You see, Beloved, God is not where people often say God is—God doesn't thrive on human darkness and dread. God is found in the light and love we share in the midst of the darkness in the world God so loves.

Thankfully, we are reminded that God's love for the world is not dependent on the world's response. Even from a cross. Especially from a cross.

PRAYER

God of wondrous presence, how grateful we are that your love is not dependent on the world's response. Continue to shower your light and love on us, so that when our capacity to love is spent, others may experience your love through us. Amen.

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