

# July Epistle

2011

Jesus Loves me...

...and I love me too!!!

Love others, give, bless, pray for the hurting, the lost, stay humble, etc. So much of the Christian, so much of the humanitarian value system, is rooted in our treatment of our neighbors. The greatest commandment of the Bible is to love, to love everyone from your best friend to your worst enemy.

This past week I was gifted with the opportunity to be a part of two conferences for the Presbyterian Church, one in Baltimore and one in Indianapolis. Both conferences were made up primarily of pastors, both local and national; great pastors, giving pastors, beautiful role models of faith. I began to pick up on a common thread that ran throughout the diverse group of church leaders. There was a great call to give unconditionally of their time, energy, and love; however there was a great void in the avenue of self care and self love. I watched as Pastors showed up to the two events tired and weary; these pastors were giving every ounce of energy to their congregations. They were proudly answering God's call to love their neighbor and to "love the Lord with all [their] hearts." Many were so engulfed in the commandment though that they were neglecting



**Christianity on the Move™**

Little girl fourteen flipping through a magazine

Says she wants to look that way  
But her hair isn't straight body isn't fake  
And she's always felt overweight  
Well little girl fourteen I wish that you  
could see

That beauty is within your heart  
And you were made with such care your skin  
your body and your hair  
Are perfect just the way they are  
There could never be a more beautiful you  
Don't buy the lies disguises and hoops  
they make you jump through  
You were made to fill a purpose that only  
you could do

So there could never be a more beautiful  
you  
~Johnny Diaz "Beautiful You"

personal needs, personal health, self love. Diets get ignored and free time becomes obsolete. This is too often the life of a caregiver.

This passage in Matthew uses interesting wording: "Love your neighbor as yourself." That statement insinuates that we love ourselves, does it not? A negative reflection of one's self directly affects how we view others. We must remember that self love is not only different from, but contradictory to selfishness. Love God with all your heart; simple, but remember that through the blessing of the spirit, we are all blessed to have God within. To send prayers and love to a distant God while neglecting the God can be detrimental to our attitude, our health, and relationships. Instead love and care for the God within. Nourish your inner spirit as well as your body. Take time to enjoy being a divine creation, and take pride as well. How can we serve another to our full potential when we are weak, tired, overworked. How many of us mark off a time on our daily schedule for self love? How many schedule a day, a sabbath, of which they rest their minds and allow their bodies to play?

In eastern religions, not necessarily mutually exclusive of Christianity, there is an awareness of the oneness of creation. Jesus'

We are wont to condemn self-love; but what we really mean to condemn is contrary to self-love. It is that mixture of selfishness and self-hate that permanently pursues us, that prevents us from loving others, and that prohibits us from losing ourselves in the love with which we are loved eternally. He who is able to love himself is able to love others also; he who has learned to overcome self-contempt has overcome his contempt for others.

-Paul Tillich

## Upcoming Events:

- \*Friday Kickball playoffs @jcc
- \*July 10th Shawnee park worship @ 5pm
- \*July 13th workshop at Kindred
- \*July 19th Worship @ James Lees on Frankfort 7:30pm
- \*July 9th Cardinal Harbor tri
- \*July 24th Crescent Hill 11am

~More @ sweatysheep.com

call in the Gospel of Matthew is in strong accord with this notion of unity. Their is an equality and interconnectedness though-out creation, a deep relationship bringing ones neighbor, ones self, and God (the lifeblood of both) together. The greatest commandment is love... and there is a lot to love. Allow yourself to love all the beauty that is you. Spend a day with yourself, taking care of yourself, and intrinsically that love will carry to your neighbor and God who lovingly created you both.

Start today... make a list of how you have been neglecting your body and spirit. Eat fresh food, take a walk, smile often, sing, dance, and enjoy the your company. Learn how the fall in love with you! When you are ready, share that beautiful creation that is you with the world around. Give freely of your time, energy, and smiles... but remember to give to yourself in the same manner. Hug often, and don't be afraid to hug yourself. Have you ever been proud of, ever cherished a painting that you made, something that you built, a poem you wrote? These things represent you, they tell your story, they carry a piece of you in their own creation. God is proud of you, God's own creation, you are a priceless and unique piece of divine art.

**Matthew 22:34-38:** Now when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they assembled together. And one of them, an expert in religious law, asked him a question to test him; "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" Jesus said to him, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. The second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the law and the prophets depend on these two commandments."

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