

## Where Is God in That?

Here are two definitions to consider. Once you review them, take a couple of minutes to answer the questions that follow.

**Love:** 1) an intense feeling of deep affection; 2) a great interest and pleasure in something.

**Tolerate:** to allow the existence, occurrence, or practice of something (that one does not necessarily like or agree with) without interference.

What are foods that you love? Which do you tolerate?  
What are activities that you love? Which do you tolerate?  
What music do you love? Which kinds do you tolerate?  
What colors do you love? Which do you tolerate?  
Who do you love? Who do you tolerate?

We don't get the luxury to *tolerate* people; we are called to *love*. Tolerating someone is easy. Loving someone whom you can hardly tolerate is much harder. It takes faith, a deep belief that God is love and that by loving our sisters and brothers we honor the image of God in them. This is how we love God in return.

Every time we find differences within a person, we can also find things we have in common. No matter how hard it may be, the foundation is the same. God created that person in God's image. We may not love or even tolerate the life decisions or choices someone makes, but God asks us to love that person regardless.

If we came upon a stranger who had fallen, before we go to assist them to their feet, should we stop and ask them about their political affiliations? What their faith background is? Or what their beliefs are? No. We go, extend a hand, and help them up. No questions asked. Maybe even with a smiling face and a reassuring voice. We do this without knowledge of who they are.

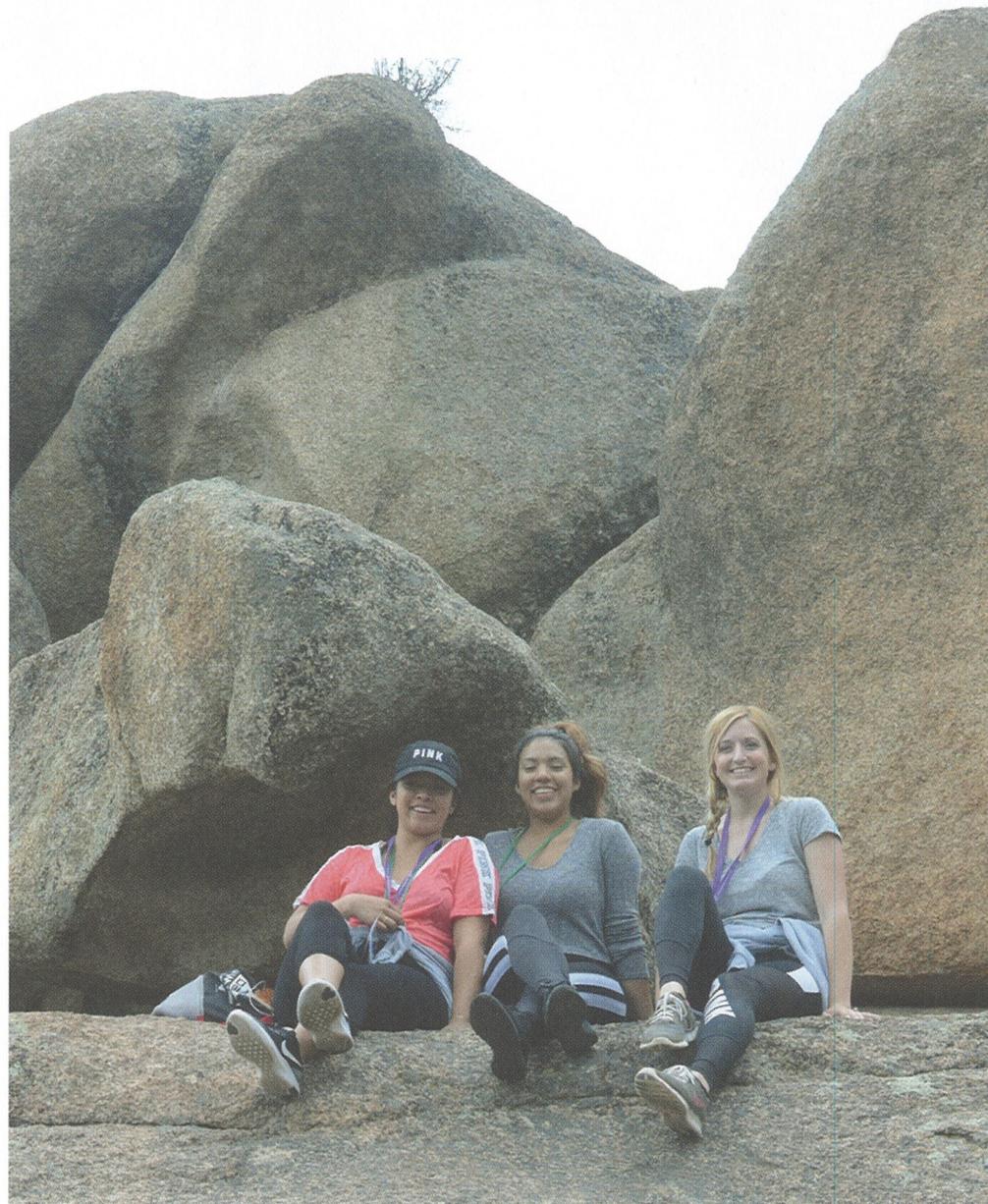
Then I ask you this: Why would our actions change if we knew the answers to those questions? Where is God in that?

—Logan JP Schrag  
McPherson, Kansas

**Text for today:** "Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we *love one another*, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us" (1 John 4:11-12, NRSV). **Bible readings for today:** Acts 8:26-40; Psalm 22:25-31; 1 John 4:7-21 (12); John 15:1-8.

Photo by Nevin Dulabaum; © 2021 Church of the Brethren  
05-02-21, National Youth Sunday. Printed in the USA  
Worship resource © 2021 Brethren Press

LOVE  
ONE ANOTHER



May 2, 2021

Older Adult Sunday

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE "The Mighty Hand of God" (Koury)

\*CALL TO WORSHIP Sandy Clipp, Worship Leader

One: Christ says: I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. What do you say?

All: **Christ is the vine, we are the branches. Shelter us!**

One: Christ says: You have been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you.

All: **Christ is the vine, we are the branches. Prune us!**

One: Christ says: Abide in me as I abide in you.

All: **Christ is the vine, we are the branches. Sustain us!**

One: Christ says: Apart from me you can do nothing.

All: **Christ is the vine, we are the branches. Save us!**

One: Christ says: Ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

All: **Christ is the vine, we are the branches. Alleluia! Amen.**

\*OPENING PRAYER

God of love, plant us in the soil of your grace. Nurture us with the strength of Christ, the vine of everlasting life. Enlighten us with the wisdom of your Spirit, which flows through us today and all days. Abide in us, that we may abide in you and live in your love. In your holy name, we pray. Amen.

\*HYMN #29 "Like the murmur of the dove's song"

[Verse 1]

*Like the murmur of the dove's song, like the challenge of her flight,  
like the vigor of the wind's rush, like the new flame's eager might: come,  
Holy Spirit, come.*

[Verse 2]

*To the members of Christ's body, to the branches of the Vine, to the church in faith assembled, to her midst as gift and sign: come, Holy Spirit, come.*

[Verse 3]

*With the healing of division, with the ceaseless voice of prayer, with the pow'r to love and witness, with the peace beyond compare: come, Holy Spirit, come.*

## A MOMENT TO BECOME LIKE CHILDREN

### SERVICE OF GIVING

#### Call to Giving

To love God is to love people. No exceptions. No one who ignores the needs of the poor knows God. No one who hates another abides in God's love. Let us show our love for God as we offer our gifts, not only to Christ and Christ's church, but to the least and the last.

Joyfully...as the living body of Christ...we participate in this significant act of worship for the building of God's kingdom.

You may place your offering in the plate at the front of the church during the offertory, if you have not done so yet. Or if you are watching the service online, we virtually pass the offering plate to you and you can prepare your offering to be mailed to or dropped off at the church this week; or you can use Paypal on the Hagerstowncob webpage.

Offertory "God's Care" (Logan)

\*Doxology #119 "Praise God from whom"

#### \*Prayer of Thanksgiving

Let us pray. Bountiful God, you promise that the poor shall eat and be satisfied. May your promise be fulfilled through the gifts we bring to you this day. Sanctify our offering, that it may be for the world a sign of your boundless love and your overflowing abundance. Amen.

## SHARING OUR JOYS, CONCERNS, AND HOPES

*Please remember our worship is also on Facebook Live and our website. Please do not share any personal information you do not want to be made public.*

*An usher will hold the microphone for you while you share.*

*(continued)*

**POEMS HONORING OLDER ADULTS**

*"The Beauty of Elderly Hands"*

By Kelly Roper

Although the hands of the elderly may not be

Smooth, supple, and unblemished,

They have a beauty all their own.

Each line, each spot, each scar

Has its own tale to tell.

Some are tales of tragedy, others are tales of triumph,

But they all combine to tell the unique story

Of that treasured person's life.

So the next time you're with an elder,

Gently take that person's hands within your own,

And look with wonder at a life truly lived.

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

**SPECIAL MUSIC**

*"More of You - Medley"* (Arr. Leatherman)

Elaine Smith, Soloist

**SCRIPTURE READING: John 15:1-8**

I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

**MESSAGE**

*"Managing the Vine"*

Pastor Twyla Rowe

**\*HYMN #373**

*"Thou true Vine, that heals"*

[Verse 1]

*Thou true Vine, that heals the nations, Tree of life, thy branches we.*

*They who leave thee fade and wither, none bear fruit except in thee.*

*Cleanse us, make us sane and simple, till we merge our lives in thine,  
gain ourselves in thee, the Vintage, give ourselves through thee, the Vine.*

[Verse 2]

*Nothing can we do without thee; on thy life depends each one.*

*If we keep thy words and love thee, all we ask for shall be done.*

*May we, loving one another, radiant in thy light abide; so through us,  
made fruitful by thee, shall our God be glorified.*

**\*BENEDICTION**

*After the Benediction, you may be seated.*

*Please continue in a spirit of worship as we listen  
to the Postlude music.*

**POSTLUDE**

*"In Heavenly Love Abiding"*

(Hagarty)

~~~~~

\*Please rise — in body or spirit — as an act of worship.

Thank you for joining us in worship today.

~~~~~

*(continued)*