



## **“Reckless In Your Love”**

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### **Scripture (MSG):**

#### **John 13:20-26**

<sup>20-21</sup> There were some Greeks in town who had come up to worship at the Passover Feast. They approached Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee: “Sir, we want to see Jesus. Can you help us?”

<sup>22-23</sup> Philip went and told Andrew. Andrew and Philip together told Jesus. Jesus answered, “Time’s up. The time has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

<sup>24-25</sup> “Listen carefully: Unless a grain of wheat is buried in the ground, dead to the world, it is never any more than a grain of wheat. But if it is buried, it sprouts and reproduces itself many times over. In the same way, anyone who holds on to life just as it is destroys that life. But if you let it go, reckless in your love, you’ll have it forever, real and eternal.

<sup>26</sup> “If any of you wants to serve me, then follow me. Then you’ll be where I am, ready to serve at a moment’s notice. The Father will honor and reward anyone who serves me.

### **Sermon:**

There is a widespread understanding that capitalism is “just the way it is”. The same holds true for violence and for war, it is everywhere and that is “just the way it is”.

Jesus won’t agree to that.

He challenges us to imagine that life is more wildly full of possibilities, more capable of learning, changing, transforming itself, than we believe. Life is more than “just the way it is”.

We believe in the things that are around us, and live in them, mostly without critique. We hold on to a “life” that is not true life.

We may sigh, but still cave in to a world of violence; we accept a culture consumed with buying and having and keeping and hoarding stuff, and recklessly use up the resources of our precious planet.

We may not want to be labeled a racist but we don't want to do the work to understand our culturally embedded racism, or our insidious white privilege, here in America.

I believe that this is the unreal world that Jesus is urging us to let go of. Because we do know that this “life” of materialism, of violence, of cruelty and bigotry and misogyny, of homophobia, transphobia, and xenophobia, is deadly. It is idolatry. Worshipping a false god. It is no true life at all. And within it, there is deadliness;

Our hearts are turned to stone, instead of compassion.

People are killed.

Hope dies.

Community is crushed.

Courage withers.

Beauty is lost.

Faith is mocked and destroyed.

It is nothing like the “reckless love” that Jesus suggests is a sign of life that is real and eternal.

Real living must include a willingness to take risks, huge risks of loving and vulnerability.

And real vulnerability takes courage.

And real risk-taking requires humility and trust.

It can be costly, risky, scary.

We dare not forget that the shape of our faith is carved in the shape of the cross.

That trusting in God as Jesus trusted, is not the same as a life of safe consumption, or of oppressive power.

It is a life of possibility...a rich and rewarding life of challenges, of making choices, of beauty and love, if we choose to live for the building of the “kingdom of God”...where there is love enough for all, and a home for all, and grace and peace and justice and mercy for all.

But it may not happen without the pain of hard choices. It cannot happen without death.

Death, for both science and spirituality, is filled with power and with purpose.

In science, we know that death is the re-cycling, the re-newing, of all that is, and that nothing is wasted in the universe, as all things are made and remade, living and dying and renewed in countless glorious forms of matter and life and beauty.

With Jesus, we discover the cross, though filled with suffering in the moment, cannot be the last word of life.

That risk, and loss, and all the pain surrounding the story of Jesus’ last days on earth, are simply not the final verses in the song of his life.

Like a grain of wheat, death is a part of life, and life springs up, ever stronger, ever brighter, ever more abundantly.

It feels risky, and perhaps it is.

But it is generous, rather than stingy. And hopeful rather than despairing.

It is a life where Jesus is: loving wildly, loving recklessly, loving with abandon, loving without limits.

Friends, I hope you know that neither Jesus nor I are talking about sex and romance here, not an infatuation, but a deep and committed love.

That kind of love is risky, whether it is a risk we take on loving ourselves, or the risk we take in loving someone else.

There may well be hurt.

There may well be death, even.

But where love is, Jesus says, there God is.

And where God is, there is Life, true life, full life. Reckless loving of life.

Everywhere we look that reckless, generous love is spinning galaxies across space. Causing binary stars to dance with one another.

Filling every inch of earth on our planet with teeming life at the smallest level, teeming in hugeness through the life in the seas, the air, the rocks, the trees, in us.

Can you love that much?

Only your heart can tell you.

Go ahead and Love, fearless of death, because in death there is more life.

The grain of wheat that is buried, lives even more, transformed.

Jesus is flinging a dare out at you and me; he is daring us to try to love so wildly and so generously!

Let us try! O let us try, and see how life is transformed!!