

BIBLE STUDY #4 – LIGHT OF SCRIPTURE

Land Acknowledgement/Acknowledgement of Indigenous Spirituality, Creativity & Wisdom - Richard Wagamese, *Embers*

Like most of us do, I spent a lot of time trying to compress things into a context I could accept. That was hard work, and it meant I was alone most of the time. Nowadays, I figure life is pretty simple: Creator is everywhere and divine light shines through everything and everyone all the time. My work is to look for that light. In those fleeting, glorious instances when I see it, I am made more, right then, right there.

Romans 8: 38-39 (New Revised Standard Version)

³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:38-39 (The Inclusive Bible)

³⁸For I am certain that neither death nor life, neither angels nor rulers, neither the present nor the future, ³⁹neither heights nor depths - nor anything else in all creation - will be able to separate us from the love of God that comes to us in Christ Jesus, our Saviour.

Covenant: How we want to be together

- Listen to one another without interrupting;
- Listen for the divine light in scripture and in one another;
- Feel free to pass; and
- Whether you pass or you share a response, please invite the next person to share until everyone has been invited.

Discussion Questions

- What word, phrase, or image stands out to you? Why?
- When have you felt separated from the love of God (or the love of the people of God)?
- Can you share a memory or an experience of when Paul's words rang true – that nothing can separate us from the love of God?
- "Actions speak louder than words." How have you shown God's unconditional love to someone else? How has your church shown God's unconditional love to others?
- How would keeping Romans 8:38-39 on our hearts impact our close relationships and daily lives?
- How would keeping Romans 8:38-39 on our hearts impact our congregations and ministries? What would change? What would *have* to change?

The Design of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) - Preamble

As members of the Christian Church, we confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and proclaim him Lord and Saviour of the world. In Christ's name and by his grace we accept our mission of witness and service to all people.

We rejoice in God, maker of heaven and earth, and in God's covenant of love which binds us to God and to one another. Through baptism into Christ we enter into newness of life and are made one with the whole people of God.

In the communion of the Holy Spirit we are joined together in discipleship and in obedience to Christ. At the Table of the Lord we celebrate with thanksgiving the saving acts and presence of Christ.

Within the universal church we receive the gift of ministry and the light of scripture. In the bonds of Christian faith we yield ourselves to God that we may serve the One whose kingdom has no end.

Blessing, glory, and honour be to God forever. Amen.

Discussion Questions

- What word, phrase, or image of covenant (love in community) stands out to you? Why?
- What are you willing to do differently in your local congregation, region, or denomination as a result of our listening and sharing together and in light of our covenant with one another?

Closing Prayer

God of Community and God in Community as Creator, Christ, and Spirit,
Thank you for this time of gathering and storytelling as we learn how to be the church in your beautiful and fragmented world. When life is good and especially when life is hard, remind us that there's nothing that can separate us or anyone else from your love. May we believe these words. May we live them out. May we try each and every day to be in community and be in covenant with all people, this land, and these waters. This we pray in the name of Jesus, who taught us how to live with and love one another. Amen.