

TEXT: John 17:20-26
THEME: We have been given glory
SUBJECT: Glory
TITLE: Mud Pies

Seventh Sunday of Easter
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Messiah Moravian
Jerry Harris

C. S. Lewis, author of *The Chronicles of Narnia* and J. R. R. Tolkien, author of *The Lord of the Rings*, co-founded a literary discussion group, “Inklings,” at the Oxford pub “The Eagle and the Child (founded in the 17th century).” Over a pint they would critique each other’s writing.

Lewis wrote, “We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, (we are) like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because we cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea (we would say a vacation at the beach). *We are far too easily pleased.*”

The Gospel of John agrees. Why do we settle for security, when we are created for love? Why do we settle for popularity when we are created for glory? Why do we settle for power when we are created for union with God?

A more faithful translation of Jesus’ prayer helps us understand what Lewis means by being too easily pleased. Jesus prays, “That *all* may be one, *just as* you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they too might be in us . . .”

Jesus prays for you to be one with God *just as* he is one with God. Jesus prays for you to be in God and for God to be in you, *just as* he is in God and God is in him. This prayer gives heart burn to the guardians of church dogma. Merton calls this the most tremendous and the central mystery of Christianity.

St Augustine believed our hearts were created for happiness, and that our happiness lies in union with God. Many pursuits promise happiness. I will be happy when . . . when I get my dream job . . . when I marry my soul mate . . . when I am financially secure . . . when my grandchildren are happy . . .

One of the great lies of our culture is that I must be secure to be happy. Every financial services company sells its products based on this lie. Truth is, what saves us does not protect us from anything, but it saves us.

We need a sense of security, but all the security in the world will never satisfy the heart’s longing to live fully and freely. Our hearts are created for a larger life than one confined within secure borders.

Unless we are willing to take some risks, to become vulnerable, we will never know love. Jesus prays for us to know that God loves us *just as* God loves Jesus. Your heart is created to beat to

the pulse of God's love. If you spend your whole life protecting your heart against everything that might break it, you will end life disappointed, despondent even.

Follow your heart's leading and do what you love. Only love has the power to fill you with joy. "We are all searching for just one thing in life:" writes Christian Bobin, "to find fulfillment, to receive a kiss of light on our gray hearts, to know the sweetness of love that will not fade."

Jesus says he gives us the same glory that God gave him. The glory of God is ours. The praise of friends, fame, the adoration of the whole world, having as many followers on Twitter as Katy Perry, will never satisfy a heart created for the glory of God. The temptation is to do what will gain us acceptance, to be liked by those important to us. Who doesn't want to belong, at least somewhere?

When the cost of belonging is the denial of our heart's longing or the transgression of the good, life shrinks, the soul shrivels, the heart attacks. It is quite possible to be liked by everybody, perhaps even to be loved by most folk, and to be miserable. If we spend our lives conforming to the expectations of those who control access to the whatever it is we think we need, we will settle for making mud pies.

We are created for something greater, the very glory of God. Over 1800 years ago a man named Irenaeus, a Bishop in the Greek church, wrote: "The glory of God is a man/woman fully alive, and a fully alive person is the vision of God."

To be fully alive is to honor the heart's longing for beauty. It takes time to appreciate the beauty of creation. When was the last time we sat in front of a tree, a flower, a landscape and gazed with the attention of an artist? When was the last time we observed the face of another until we saw Christ?

To be fully alive is to honor the heart's longing for truth. We are often tempted, like Pilate, to trade truth for power. We are tempted to believe the world doesn't care about the truth, that all that matters is to "spin" the story to make us look good and to make someone else look bad. To give up on the truth is to give up on God.

Simone Weil wrote, ". . .one can never wrestle enough with God if one does so out of pure regard for the truth. Christ likes us to prefer truth to him because, before being Christ, he is truth. If one turns aside from him to go toward the truth, one will not go far before falling into his arms."

Our hearts are so created that only union with God will satisfy us. As you learn to honor your heart's true desire, your mind's longing for the truth, your body's need for the good, your soul's thirst for the glory of God, you become a vision of God.