

THE RESULTS ARE IN! LOVE WINS

We have all heard of Jeremiah the prophet. He actually lived about 650 years before Christ. He spoke God's word to the people of Israel at a time when they were in between the Syrians and the Egyptians and the Babylonians. The King of Israel was trying to navigate which super power he should align with. Jeremiah came with God's word. The king heard but did not obey. The Israelites ended up being defeated, their country devastated and many of their countrymen deported as slaves. Jeremiah brought God's word. It was truth. It was God's word directing his own people. They did not listen. They ended up paying the steepest price.

Prophets speak the word we need to hear and the word God wants us to hear. But it is not often the word we want to hear. And so, many times we make our own decisions. When we do, it does not end well. A question: Does God still speak a prophetic word to us today or was that just something for twenty-five hundred years ago? God still speaks. Often God uses the same words spoken a long time ago to speak his word to the people of this age. What is God's prophetic word to us today? There are actually a couple of them from today's readings.

The first word that you and I need to hear is this: I formed you, long ago, in your mother's womb. I, the Lord Most High, formed you. I knew you then. I know you now. I dedicated you to my Father then. There is a purpose to your life, to my life, to every life. Do not be afraid. You cannot hide from me. I have loved you into life. You cannot even draw a breath or have one beat of your heart without my love. Believe this. Live accordingly, in my love, says the Lord.

Speaking of love, Saint Paul is poetic and almost mystical in the hymn to love he pens in the second reading today. What is God's prophetic word from Paul? Love. Is. A. Gift. Love is a gift. Much more than something that begins and ends in my heart or your heart. Love is a gift from God. But it is given to every person. It can be received. It needs to be received. It needs to be cooperated with for it to take hold in our lives. But the gift has already been bestowed. Believe this. Live accordingly, in my love, says the Lord.

Speaking of love, Jesus of Nazareth is God's Love in our human flesh. If you would discover what the love of God looks like or what the love of God does,

look to the person of Jesus, look to the ministry of Jesus, look to the words of Jesus, look to the deeds of Jesus. God is love. Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus is love incarnate. Jesus is patient and kind. Jesus is not jealous or pompous; Jesus is not self-important or rude; Jesus does not look to his own interests, is not quick tempered, does not brood over injuries, does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rather rejoices with the truth. Jesus bears all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Jesus never fails. Jesus wins. Love wins. Love conquers all. And if that is not your experience of life—then there are still places in need of your bringing the love of your heart and allowing God to work in that situation—in you and through you.

God's prophetic word. Are you listening? Do you really hear? Go to communion. Pray.