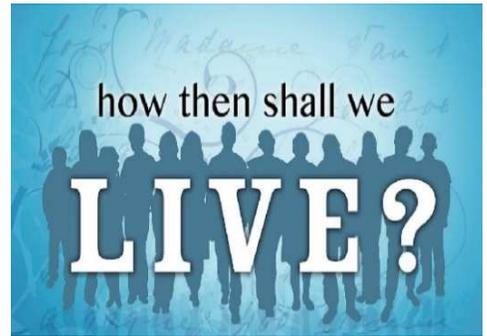


Grace!

That special “someone” came up and embraced you. They gave you a kiss on the cheek unexpectedly. You remember how exceptional the feeling was.

You asked them why. And they simply replied..., “*Because I love you...*”



We can dress it up with theological terms, clothe it with religious dogma, explain it in foreign Greek words such as “*agape*” for love, and “*charis*” for grace, or romantic Latin phrases such as, “*Amor in perpetuum vivit dei gratia*” meaning, “[Love lives forever by the grace of God...](#)” (I know that last one had to impress you!)

But when all is said and done, it all boils down to, “*Because I love you...*” That’s *GRACE... pure and simple.*

And I am feeling these days that in our pursuit of deeper revelations, more meaningful experiences with God, deeper relationship connection with the divine persona above us and the human community around us , we might most fundamentally be best served by returning to step one – *GRACE!*

And we ask “*Why?*”... “*Because, I love you!*” God responds.

That is what God said to humanity when he entered our flesh though an infant presence in Bethlehem’s manger and exited through the agony of Calvary’s cruel cross. The divinity so majestically restrained in the physical body of Jesus was ravishly released in the resurrection and then poured out from heaven upon all flesh at Pentecost to splash upon the human timeline this era we call grace!

And how will respond today – in such a time as this? Perhaps resonating with the words penned by songwriter Gloria Gaither:

*I then shall live as one who's been forgiven. I'll walk with joy to know my debts are paid.
I know my name is clear before my Father; I am His child and I am not afraid.
So, greatly pardoned, I'll forgive my brother; The law of love I gladly will obey.*

I then shall live as one who's learned compassion.

I've been so loved, that I'll risk loving too.

I know how fear builds walls instead of bridges; I'll dare to see another's point of view.

And when relationships demand commitment,

Then I'll be there to care and follow through!