

Lent, Day 35  
Monday, April 15, 2019

Revelation 19:5–10

God chooses to work through means and, because of that, humans are ever falling into idolatry. Creation reveals the glory of God so creation becomes a focus of our worship. One area of sin we struggle with is spirituality. We can worship the religious. I've just watched another television show today depicting this very thing. A girl's confirmation is used as backdrop, showing the quaintness of the candles, the dress, the priest, the confession, and even the vows. But, we love it. It stirs something religious in us. We can divinize the dressing.

John struggles with this very thing in this section. The great consummation has come. This is where the whole creation to re-creation narrative has been going. The great marriage between heaven and earth; God and humanity. The whore—the parody—has been put away and as a result the bride is finally ready for her bridegroom. And, as the angel is revealing this to John, John falls in worship at his feet. Wright suggests this is to encourage the church to resist idolatry itself; even the great elder John at this climactic moment struggles to resist, too.

What an important warning. I have been pastoring full-time for the past five years. Perhaps that's long enough to say I've seen a pattern. People—church people—like Easter. There is enjoyment on Palm Sunday and excitement on Easter Sunday. However, the middle of the week is less loved. I've heard people say they don't like Good Friday. Of course, Good Friday isn't really there for us to like. More appropriately we force ourselves to look at something horrific and in awe and wonder thank God for his overwhelming unmerited grace.

The cross is important, particularly at Easter, not just to deal with our sin, but to keep the Easter season from becoming religious. We can run the risk of treating Easter as an idol; trying to capture the joyous happy feelings of the resurrection without the painful reality of the cross. When we are so close to this final picture we cannot run the risk of being scandalized by the cross. Lent can't be about doing religious activities that titillate us, it must be about bringing us back to the cross and resurrection.

Prayer

Lord, help us to worship the creator and not the creation. Keep the cross in the centre of our sight so we will not disdain it. Amen.