

You all remember the rules...

Do no harm.
Do all the good you can.
Stay in love with God.

My experience has been that the hardest of these three to live into in the incredibly busy and demanding role of church leadership....and the one that is actually the foundation for the other two...is the call to stay in love with God. Now I know that's not exactly how Wesley phrased it, but the spirit of the rule is to attend to your life with God in such a way that we are each day made more perfect in love. This is how we avoid our leadership being superficial...having a life *with* God that can sustain what we *do* for God. (Scazzero)

More than anything, the people we serve and the world for which Christ died need us to stay in love with God. I recall Mother Teresa saying, the world doesn't need more clever people or more powerful people. The world desperately needs deep people. I think that means the world needs people who have the love of God shed abroad in their hearts and minds, who see the world through the lens of God's vast, amazing, extravagant, sacrificial, cruciform love, and who lead and live from within and out of that love – who lead and live not from their own cleverness, or intellect, or position, or power, or personality, but who lead and live from the deep well of God's love.

And so, as we enter a very busy Fall season, my prayer for each of us is that we'll fall more deeply in love with God. That we'll pause long enough to hear God say, "I love you and I want you to love others". That is the beginning and end of our vocation as pastors, church leaders, and of course disciples of Jesus who is Love in the flesh. So, hear this word from a favorite Jesuit writer, Pedro Arrupe, and may it be our prayer...

*Nothing is more practical than
finding God, than
falling in Love
in a quite absolute, final way.
What you are in love with,
what seizes your imagination, will affect everything.
It will decide
what will get you out of bed in the morning,
what you do with your evenings,
how you spend your weekends,
what you read, whom you know,
what breaks your heart,
and what amazes you with joy and gratitude.
Fall in Love, stay in love,
and it will decide everything.*

Peace be with you,

David