

11/7: *"In a world so torn apart by rivalry, anger, and hatred, we have the privileged vocation to be living signs of a love that can bridge all divisions and heal all wounds."* -Henri J. M. Nouwen

Nothing quite highlights the world's rivalry, anger, and even hatred like an election season. We see it in the landscape of political signage, the mediascape of megafunded rhetoric algorithmically curated to portray the world in such a way as to evoke emotion from us, and even in our conversations with friends and loved ones. One might feel helpless to make a dent in the narrative of seemingly irreconcilable differences that we are awash in...and honestly, I understand and feel that way sometimes as well.

And yet, we have these inspirational quotes like this one from Henry Nouwen, and MLK's quote about Love being the most powerful, creative, and redemptive force in the universe, and others that remind us of what we ascribe to in our faith. On harder days, I hear quotes like these and think them to be naive. This story of our faith, however, has many chapters that have different contexts and situations but that generally instruct us that we are given the mantle of this unique divine love to carry into a world that is in one way or another deficient in it. There is so much light imagery in the Bible because darkness is prevalent. Hope is such a motif because there are so many things that can make us feel hopeless. Resurrection is so transformative to us because we all experience death.

So, yes, it is important for us to take what might feel like one small and (perhaps) naive step towards loving one another even as the world feels like it is being torn apart around us. Maybe we don't personally make it to the "promised land," but many generations have served as "living signs" of Love's redeeming and transformative power that have made the world a little brighter and more hopeful for others, and especially for those that come after them. That alone is a cause worth loving for.

We are not powerless, our words and our actions have real meaning and are formative and transformative in the lives of others. So let us take up this great privilege to be living embodiments of this unique love of God. To be harbingers of hope and reconciliation...because that is really what this faith in Jesus is all about.