

Let Love Win

Remarks delivered by Pastor Robert at the Love and Tolerance memorial for victims of the Orlando tragedy.

Voices!

Since I heard the news, I have struggled for words. What can be said that hasn't or isn't been said?

What words are sufficient at a time like this.

Yet, it seems for so many there are an abundance of words and the voices around us seem to be multiplying.

They've always been there but in the days since Sunday, they've grown louder and longer and multiplied in number.

Tragedy of this magnitude and this nature stirs up the voices above everything else.

My exposure to media, news, even Facebook posts is at an all-time low these days; largely because of all of the different voices. Yet, even I have not been able to avoid them this week.

Emotions are stretched thin and breaking.

I hear voices of hate, like so many others.

Voices of anger.

Voices of self-righteousness.

Voices of condemnation.

Even within ourselves the voices battle for attention.

Voices of confusion.

Voices of pain, of grief, of sadness.

Some crying out through tears for explanation for answers.

Some trembling in fear for what could be, what was and what is.

At times, it seems like the hate, anger, fear and pain will win out on all sides.

And I strain to hear a voice that will silence them all.

I long to hear a voice that will overpower the hate

A voice that will silence the angry slurs

A voice that will exile the fear

A voice that will sooth the pain.

After a while, I begin to hear echoes of that voice and the words come to me from an Apostle of old, bearing a message to a persecuted, beaten down people as he writes to them to encourage them in the face of many dangers: 'Above all, keep fervent' stay strong in your love' (1 Peter 4:8, NASB). Another man paraphrased his words this way, 'Love each other as if your life depended on it. Love makes up for practically anything.' (1 Peter 4:8, The Message)

And the voice of love begins to break through above all other voices, more powerful than hate, more consuming than anger and more compelling than fear.

I want to leave you with the words to a song we've been singing at church this year which sums up my thoughts this evening with words better than those that I could pen

'We believe Your love is the strongest way

You're tearing down walls and You break our chains

Even in this darkness hope will rise again

When we lay down our weapons we will let love win

Lord we lay down our weapons and we let love win.'

('Let Love Win' by Carrollton)