

Easter IV

¹⁶We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. ¹⁷How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? ¹⁸Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. ¹⁹And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him

²⁰whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. ²¹Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; ²²and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him.

²³And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. ²⁴All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

In the name...

I've mentioned this before, perhaps—I don't recall. But there was a moment in time some twelve years ago in which I needed to finally defend my master's thesis in Charlotte, North Carolina at the very moment that my wife was to deliver a baby that we knew would likely need surgery. I had been sick for a hot minute with a parasite that I had yet to confess to my bride. I remember having to pause in the airport to regain my strength as I made my way to the rental car, but I wanted to get this thesis presentation done. Meanwhile, she was preparing the party of a lifetime to celebrate the 6 years it had taken me to finish the thesis while launching a school wracked with problems.

And then....a new problem erupted: a teacher scandal that required immediate dismissal, which meant that I was teaching all of sixth grade until further notice.

When I crawled into that dismissal of the teacher, something happened that I did not expect. I had beat myself up over all of the issues: if only I had gotten ahead of this issue, if only I had more experience, if only I wasn't sick and dumb, if only I wasn't distracted by a delayed Master's defense. If only, if only, if only. My heart was in total condemnation. But then something happened that I didn't expect. As I walked into our board room with that teacher, the Chairman of my Board was already sitting there. I sat down with my notes, ready to read the verdict, and instead, my board chair, knowing the

At this altar, you feast upon the sacred, bleeding, life-giving heart of Jesus. It's bigger than your heart. His heartbeat is the pulsating rhythm of everything from Jupiter's orbit to your rhythms of parenting an indifferent child. And the way to tune our hearts to his is to feast upon it. In the name...