



KA PULE 'EKOLU O KA HIKINA THE THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT

“Ua Eo Na Waimaka I Ka 'Oli'oli – Joy Overcomes Tears”

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Heluhelu Baibala / Scripture Reading

Mateo 22:37-40

‘Ī akula ‘o Iesū iā ia, E aloha aku ‘oe iā Iēhova i kou Akua me kou na‘au a pau, a me kou ‘uhane a pau, a me kou mana‘o a pau. ‘O ka mua kēia a me ke kauoha nui. Ua like ho‘i ka lua me ia, E aloha aku ‘oe i kou hoalauna me ‘oe iā ‘oe iho. Ma luna o kēia mau kauoha ‘elua, ke kau nei ke kāmāwai a pau a me nā kāmā.

Matthew 22:37-40

Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

Mana‘o / Thoughts

“Ke Aloha Ana ‘Ole: Loved Beyond Measure”

I remember a time Jesus met me at Maunalua Bay. I had my head against His shoulder and He showed me a picture of myself. I was doing cartwheels and dancing on the shore, trying to get His attention. He looked me in the eyes and said, “There is nothing more or less you could do to win or lose my love.”

I broke down and cried. I couldn't stop crying. Jesus exposed a deep struggle within me. His words in Matthew 22:37 spoke to me as I realized my aloha for Ke Akua had been divided. E aloha aku 'oe iā lēhova i kou Akua me kou na'au a pau, a me kou 'uhane a pau, a me kou mana'o a pau. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Love Him with all your mind."

For most of my life, I had placed my worth in accomplishments and performance. I strived to be the best and sought the approval of others.

This led to an exhausting and endless battle of expectation, comparison, and competition. I thought I had to do "X, Y, and, Z" to be loved and accepted. I didn't feel I deserved love unless I earned it. I was blinded by this false belief and it left me tirelessly trying to do, do, do, to earn love and acceptance of others.

It was hard for me to fathom that the Lord just loved me simply because He created me; I was created to be loved. It's such a hard thing to grasp and yet, I don't think we're supposed to make sense of it. It's pretty simple; we're supposed to receive His love and live loved.

In this Christmas season, I am reminded that God didn't wait to send His Son into this world until we did something to deserve His love. The first Christmas reveals God's love through His action of sending His only Son to live in the midst of human sin, then to die on the cross in order to pay the cost for our sins.

I am humbled and brought to tears of gratitude and joy. Receiving and rejoicing in the Lord's love.

No more running from His love, but receiving it. Surrendering the pressures of performing, achieving, and pleasing others, has freed me. Jesus has freed me of fitting into what others might think I should be, to embracing who He has created me to be.

He has freed me of being a victim of struggle, to living as a victorious work-in-progress. He has freed me of negative talk about myself or others, to speaking His truths of being loved beyond measure – ke aloha ana ‘ole.

E aloha aku ‘oe i kou hoalauna me ‘oe iā ‘oe iho. Love your neighbor as you love yourself.
Matthew 22:39

I no longer am in competition with others, but an instrument of His love. Through the intentional relationships He has given, I have the opportunity to reveal His love through me. I need to be willing to take actions for the good of the other person, even when they have done nothing to deserve it. Like Iesū Kristo, for the sake of Ke Akua’s love to be known, my life is a living sacrifice.

Furthermore, we can draw mana and inspiration found in a classic and familiar hīmeni haipule (Hawaiian hymn) composed by Robert Nāwahine entitled “‘Ekolu Mea Nui.” Taken from 1 Corinthians 13:13, it gives us further instruction and inspiration for living life:

Ke mau nei kēia mau mea ‘ekolu, ‘o ka mana‘o‘i‘o, ‘o ka mana‘olana, a me ke aloha. ‘O ke aloha na‘e kai ‘oi o kēia mau mea.

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Questions to Ponder

- What are some of the barriers that may prevent you from loving others?
- How would your life change if you depended on Jesus to help you love others?
- Why is it important to be thankful on a daily basis even when enduring challenges?
- Who can you count on to always be your kāko‘o?

Pule / Prayer

E Ka Haku, Ka Makua Lani, thank You for loving me so unconditionally – me ke aloha ana ‘ole - and sending Iesū to live and die for my sins, even when I didn’t deserve it. May my life be an offering of gratitude and a reflection of Your aloha and sacrifice given to us through that very first Christmas. Ma ka inoa hemolele o Iesū, In Jesus’ most holy and precious name, ‘āmenē.

Keiki Activity

Put Love into Action - Read John 3:16-20

God loves us very much. We know that because He put His love into action when He gave His son Jesus to die for our sins. Christians show that God’s love is in them. How? By the things they do and say. Try this game with your family. Say “Love is...” and give each person a chance to finish the sentence.

Here are some ideas:

- “Love is helping with the dishes.”
- “Love is praying with me at night.”
- “Love is helping a sick neighbor.”

Each person gets 10 seconds to answer. Then it’s the next person’s turn. How many “Love is...” actions can you family make? Now see how many of them your family can put into practice.

Ka Wikīo Hīmeni / Video Hymn

“Ekolu Mea Nui” – These Three Things

‘Ekolu mea nui ma ka honua
‘O ka mana‘o‘i‘o, ka mana‘olana
A me ke aloha, ke aloha kai ‘oi a‘e
Pōmaika‘i nā mea a pau
Pōmaika‘i nā mea a pau.

E hele mai kākou a pau,
E ‘ike I ka Haku iā Iesū
Ka Ho‘ōla o kea o nei,
Nona nō nā mea a pau
Nona nō nā mea a pau.

There important things on earth,
Faith, hope and love (compassion),
And love, is the greatest,
All things are blessed,
All things are blessed.

Let us come together,
To see the Lord Jesus,
The salvation of the world,
Everything is possible through Him,
Everything is possible through Him.