

Opening Prayer

Never-changing, ever-loving God.

In this ever-changing world we find we seek out Your consistency. We seek the rich and solid truth that who You are has always been and will be forever. You provide us with a place to go out from and a place to return to while never having to leave. Not only does Your consistency offer a strong foundation but it holds us steady to the truth of who You are. It holds us steady to the Nature of Love.

We fear, even as we search for words to describe such Love, that we will minimise it in some way. Such are our limitations in describing it. Your statements of love go way beyond anything we have ever known in that Your declaration is never followed by the word “because.” You do not love **because** something or someone is good, or beautiful, or loveable, or has done something to please You. Neither do You not love **because** someone is full of all manner of evil. You never explain or justify your Love. You Love...full-stop. You...just... Love. You cannot...not...Love.

And in contrast we realise how very conditional our loving is. Our statements of love or not loving are peppered with the word “because” in our search to give reason for loving someone or not. We love because someone gives us pleasure. We love because someone thinks like us. We love because someone or something is pleasing to us, revealing that in so many ways our loving is self-serving. It is about our own pleasure. It is about our loving being a reflection of us.

We find ourselves wondering what we would have to relinquish if we removed the “because” that follows our declarations of love. It seems we would have to let go all judgement where no one is more worthy of our loving than someone else. We would have to remove the blinkers that cause us to see some and not others. We would have to drop all justifications for choosing some over others. We would have to acknowledge that our loving is no reflection of You...or Your ways. We would have to start all over and be “born” again...

And so we come to sit at Your feet...asking You to help us to become believers...not so much to believe in the details we can rattle off in our creed – but to be believers in Love, in **Your** way of Love. To believe in it in the same way we believe in our need to breathe. To believe in it to the extent that the world around us begins to be transformed into the Kin-dom, Your Kin-dom of Love here on earth...where kindness and mercy, too, have no “because”...

Amen