

WHAT MOVES US?

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UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST MEETING HOUSE
NOVEMBER 15, 2009

SO FAR THIS NOVEMBER, WE HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT UNITARIAN AND UNIVERSALIST PROPHETS AND MARTYRS. ON NOVEMBER 1, WHICH, APPROPRIATELY ENOUGH, IS ALL SAINT'S DAY IN THE CHRISTIAN CALENDAR, DR. ZIZI GELLÉRD TOLD US ABOUT TWO MARTYRS FROM TRANSYLVANIAN UNITARIAN HISTORY, FRANCIS DAVID AND HER FATHER, IMRE GELLÉRD. LAST WEEK, WE HAD A PULPIT DRAMA SHOWING THE UNIVERSALIST PROPHET JOHN MURRAY IN ACTION.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PROPHET AND MARTYR? THE WORD MARTYR COMES FROM THE GREEK WORD FOR WITNESS, AND THE ROLE OF THE MARTYR IS TO PROVIDE A WITNESS FOR HIS OR HER FAITH BY DYING, SO THAT HIS OR HER DEATH

WILL INSPIRE THE FAITH OF OTHERS.

THE WORD PROPHET IN OUR TIME IS OFTEN USED TO DESCRIBE SOMEONE WHO FORETELLS THE FUTURE, BUT IN THE HEBREW BIBLE, THE CENTRAL MEANING IS SOMEONE WHO IS CHOSEN BY GOD TO DELIVER A MESSAGE TO SOCIETY AND ITS LEADERS. THE PROPHET STANDS APART FROM SOCIETY AND CRITICIZES IT IN THE NAME OF GOD, USUALLY ON DIRECT ORDERS FROM GOD.

AS I MENTIONED LAST WEEK, UU THEOLOGIAN JAMES LUTHER ADAMS DESCRIBED OUR MOVEMENT AS "THE PROPHETHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS," MEANING THAT EACH OF US IS CALLED TO BE A PROPHET, TO STAND APART FROM THE WORLD AND TO HOLD IT UP TO CRITICISM IN THE NAME OF THE HOLY.

IN 1921, MINISTER L. B. FISHER SAID,
"UNIVERSALISTS ARE OFTEN ASKED WHERE THEY STAND. THE

ONLY TRUE ANSWER TO GIVE TO THIS QUESTION IS THAT WE DO NOT STAND AT ALL, WE MOVE."

WHAT REV. FISHER MEANT WAS THAT UNITARIANS AND UNIVERSALISTS MOVE IN THE WORLD AND TRY TO CHANGE IT FOR THE BETTER. FOR OVER THE YEARS UNITARIANS AND UNIVERSALISTS AND, SINCE THE 1961 MERGER, UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN MANY MOVEMENTS TO TRY TO MAKE THIS WORLD MORE JUST.

I WANT TO TURN THIS QUESTION AROUND THIS MORNING TO ASK, WHAT MOVES US?

WHAT MOVES US TO ACTION? IF WE ARE PROPHETS, WHAT ARE WE PROPHETS OF, IN WHOSE NAME DO WE SPEAK? WE HAVE A DIVERSITY OF BELIEFS ABOUT GOD. OVER MORE THAN TWO CENTURIES, UNITARIANS AND UNIVERSALISTS HAVE FOUGHT AGAINST SLAVERY, THE DEATH PENALTY, CENSORSHIP, THE

DISENFRANCHISEMENT OF WOMEN, WAR, POVERTY, DRUNKENNESS.
IN THE SHORT HISTORY OF THIS CHURCH WE HAVE OPPOSED THE
WAR IN IRAQ, WE HAVE STOOD FOR EQUAL MARRIAGE AND
PROUDLY FLOWN THE RAINBOW FLAG, WE HAVE ENGAGED IN A
THOUSAND OTHER CHANNELS, LARGE AND SMALL, TO MAKE THE
WORLD A BETTER PLACE. THIS CONGREGATION IS TYPICAL OF
MANY UU CHURCHES, IN THAT THE ACTIONS OF INDIVIDUALS,
OFTEN ACTING OUTSIDE THE CHURCH, TO MAKE THE WORLD A
BETTER PLACE, ARE LARGER THAN THE OFFICIAL SOCIAL
ACTION PROGRAM OF THE CHURCH.

BUT WHAT MOTIVATES US, AND SPECIFICALLY, WHAT
RELIGIOUS LEVERS ARE THERE FOR THESE ACTIONS? YOU IN
THE PEWS MAY NOT FEEL THAT YOU HAVE A RELIGIOUS
MOTIVATION. YOU MAY THINK THAT YOU JUST HAPPEN TO GO
TO A UU CHURCH AND THAT YOU ENGAGE IN SOCIAL ACTION,

BUT YOU DON'T REALLY CONNECT THE TWO.

WHAT I WANT TO DO ARGUE HERE IS THAT SOCIAL ACTION HAS ALWAYS BEEN WOVEN INTO THE WARP AND WEFT OF OUR RELIGION. WE ARE A MOVEMENT CHURCH, BUT WE ARE A MOVEMENT CHURCH IN A DIFFERENT WAY THAN A ROMAN CATHOLIC OR METHODIST CHURCH MAY BE DEVOTED TO SOCIAL ACTION. WHAT I WANT TO DO IS TEASE OUT OF OUR HISTORY A FEW OF THE LIBERAL THEOLOGICAL ROOTS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE. BECAUSE WE ARE A CHURCH WITHOUT A CREED, I CAN'T DRAW A DIRECT LINE FROM ANY SPECIFIC DOCTRINE TO SOCIAL JUSTICE; NOR WOULD I DARE PRESUME TO TELL YOU WHAT THEOLOGICAL IDEAS DO OR SHOULD MOTIVATE YOU IN YOUR JUSTICE-MAKING. RATHER IT IS MY HOPE THAT I MAY BE ABLE TO GIVE YOU HERE A LITTLE GLIMPSE OF SOME THOUGHTS OTHERS HAVE HAD BY WHICH YOU CAN REFLECT ON

WHY YOU DO THE THINGS YOU MIGHT DO.

THERE IS NO WAY TO BE COMPREHENSIVE IN THE SPACE OF ONE SERMON, SO OUT OF THE MANY STRANDS OF LIBERAL THOUGHT I WANT TO TALK HERE ABOUT FOUR IDEAS WHICH MAY MOVE US TO DO SOCIAL JUSTICE WORK: NATURAL THEOLOGY, SALVATION BY CHARACTER, THE PARENTHOOD OF GOD AND THE BELOVED COMMUNITY.

NATURAL THEOLOGY WAS AN IDEA IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY WHICH BASICALLY SAID WE CAN KNOW GOD THROUGH COMMON SENSE, THE USE OF OUR FIVE SENSES, AND REASON, WITHOUT RESORTING TO SPECIAL REVELATION AS CONTAINED IN THE BIBLE OR CHURCH DOCTRINE. IT WAS THE BRAINCHILD OF PHILOSOPHER JOHN LOCKE, BUT ONE OF THE MOST PROMINENT PLACES NATURAL THEOLOGY POPS UP IN IS OUR NATIONAL FOUNDING DOCUMENT, THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

THE COLONISTS, CASTING ABOUT FOR SOME JUSTIFICATION FOR SEPARATING THEMSELVES FROM ENGLAND, HIT UPON THE IDEA THAT THEY WERE ENTITLED TO BE SEPARATE BY NATURAL LAW: THE SEPARATE AND EQUAL STATION TO WHICH THE LAWS OF NATURE AND NATURE'S GOD ENTITLE THEM.

THE GOD WHO IS INVOKED IN THESE SENTENCES IS NOT JAHWEH OR ELOHIM OF THE HEBREW BIBLE, NOT THE THREE-IN-ONE GODHEAD OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY, NOT ALLAH OR SHIVA OR ANY OTHER DIVINITY REVEALED IN ANY OTHER SCRIPTURE. BY WHAT POWER ARE THE AMERICAN COLONISTS IN THE FIRST SENTENCE ENTITLED TO THEIR SEPARATE AND EQUAL STATION? BY THE LAWS OF NATURE AND NATURE'S GOD. LAWS WHICH ANY PERSON CAN FIND OUT FOR HERSELF, BY READING IN THE BOOK OF NATURE. A GOD APPROACHABLE BY ANYONE.

IT IS THIS GOD, NATURE'S GOD, WHO CREATED ALL MEN

EQUAL. THE RIGHTS WHICH ARE BESTOWED, AMONG THEM LIFE AND LIBERTY, ARE INALIENABLE. THEY ARE AS MUCH A PART OF THE NATURAL ORDER OF THINGS AS THE INVERSE SQUARE LAW, IN JEFFERSON'S VIEW. THE GOD WHO GAVE US LIFE GAVE US LIBERTY AT THE SAME TIME, JEFFERSON WROTE, THE HAND OF FORCE MAY DESTROY BUT CANNOT DISJOIN THEM.

THE GOD OF THE HEBREW AND CHRISTIAN BIBLE IS A PARTICULARIST: HE MAKES SPECIAL COVENANTS WITH NOAH, WITH ABRAHAM, JACOB AND MOSES. HE SHOWS SPECIAL FAVOR TO THE JEWISH PEOPLE. THIS SPECIAL DISPENSATION IS EXTENDED, IN ST. PAUL'S THEORY, TO ALL THOSE WHO ACCEPT THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST. "THERE IS NO LONGER JEW OR GREEK, THERE IS NO LONGER SLAVE OR FREE, THERE IS NO LONGER MALE OR FEMALE;" FOR GOOD REASON, THIS WAS ONE OF MARTIN LUTHER KING'S FAVORITE PASSAGES.

BUT THE NATURAL THEOLOGY OF JEFFERSON WAS BY ITS TERMS UNIVERSAL, EXTENDING A CERTAIN SET OF BASIC LEGAL RIGHTS TO ALL PEOPLE: EQUALITY, LIFE, LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS. BECAUSE THESE WORDS HAVE BECOME SO DEEPLY GRAVEN ON OUR HEARTS, IT IS HARD TO REALIZE HOW RADICAL THEY WERE AT THE TIME. TO SAY THAT ALL PEOPLE WERE CREATED EQUAL WAS TO BELIEVE THE ENTIRETY OF HUMAN HISTORY TO THAT POINT, WHICH ASSUMED THAT THE DIFFERENCES IN POWER AND WEALTH BETWEEN PEOPLE WERE AS DIVINELY ORDAINED AS THE DIVINE RIGHT OF KINGS TO RULE OVER NATIONS. AND WHAT WAS MORE AMAZING WAS TO DO IT WITHOUT REFERENCE TO ANY HIGHER AUTHORITY THAN NATURE AND A GOD WHO COULD BE FOUND THEREIN.

FROM OUR PRESENT VANTAGE POINT, WE CAN SEE A HOST OF PROBLEMS WITH THIS, OF WHICH I'LL MENTION TWO: (1)

THE INDIVIDUAL WHO PENNED THE IDEALS SO NOBLY SET FORTH
IN THE DECLARATION AND THE INDIVIDUALS WHO VOTED FOR
THEM WERE FAR FROM REALIZING THEM. JEFFERSON WAS A
SLAVEHOLDER TO THE END OF HIS LIFE. WE HAVE NEVER
FULLY REALIZED THE IDEAL OF EQUALITY.

BUT A MORE BASIC OBJECTION TO THIS NATURAL
THEOLOGY IS THAT IT IS MOST UNNATURAL. IF WE ARE USING
OUR POWERS OF OBSERVATION AND REASON, WE WILL SEE THAT
PEOPLE ARE NOT CREATED EQUAL, THEY ARE CREATED VERY
DIVERSE - VARYING COLORS, VARYING SHAPES, VARYING
SIZES, PROFOUNDLY UNEQUAL DISTRIBUTION OF MEASURABLE
QUANTITIES LIKE IQ, STRENGTH, ENDURANCE, AND OF COURSE
PROFOUNDLY UNEQUAL DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH, INNATE
ABILITIES AND CHARACTER. MOREOVER, THE MODERN VIEW OF
HUMAN NATURE GIVEN BY EVOLUTION SHOWS THAT THE

JEFFERSONIAN VIEW OF SOCIETY AS A VOLUNTARY COMPACT OF
INDIVIDUALS BEARS LITTLE RELATION TO WHAT WE FIND IN
HUMAN HISTORY. HUMANS ARE HARD-WIRED AS SOCIAL
CREATURES AND UP UNTIL OUR NEW ENGLAND ANCESTORS
DEVELOPED CONGREGATIONAL DEMOCRACY IN THE MAYFLOWER
COMPACT OF 1620 AND THE CAMBRIDGE COVENANT OF 1648, THE
WORLD HAD NEVER SEEN A SOCIETY FORMED BY THE VOLUNTARY
AGREEMENT OF ITS MEMBERS.

YET THE IDEALS HAVE A FORCE OF THEIR OWN: LINCOLN
USED THE IDEALS OF THE DECLARATION IN HIS GETTYSBURG
ADDRESS, INTERPRETING THE CIVIL WAR AS A TESTING GROUND
FOR WHETHER A NATION DEDICATED TO THE PROPOSITION THAT
ALL WERE CREATED EQUAL COULD LONG ENDURE. MARTIN
LUTHER KING, JR. USED THEM IN 1963.

SO WHEN WE THINK OF THE FENCES THAT DIVIDE US, OF

SEX AND RACE AND CLASS AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION, OUR THOUGHTS ARE GUIDED BY THE NATURAL THEOLOGY WHICH IS WOVEN INTO THE DECLARATION. THIS IS NOT SPECIFICALLY UNITARIAN - JEFFERSON LATER HAD SOME GOOD THINGS TO SAY ABOUT THE UNITARIANS, BUT HE NEVER JOINED A UNITARIAN CHURCH. BUT IT IS PART OF THE BACKGROUND OF ENLIGHTENMENT THINKING OUT OF WHICH UNITARIANISM WAS BORN.

A MORE SPECIFICALLY UNITARIAN IDEA IS THAT OF SALVATION BY CHARACTER. UNITARIANS REJECTED THE TRINITY, BUT THEY WANTED IN THE EARLY YEARS TO STAY CHRISTIAN. SO THEY DEVELOPED THE NOTION THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT THING ABOUT JESUS WAS HIS CHARACTER, AND THE DUTY OF HIS FOLLOWERS WAS TO IMITATE THAT CHARACTER. THUS, WHAT WAS IMPORTANT IN ACHIEVING SALVATION WAS NOT

HOW MANY TIMES YOU WENT TO MASS OR WHAT CREED YOU RECITED, BUT HOW YOU LIVED YOUR LIFE. THIS IS SHOWN BEST IN UNITARIAN LITERATURE OF THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY. A CHRISTMAS CAROL WAS WRITTEN BY DICKENS WHEN HE WAS IN HIS MOST UNITARIAN PHASE, AND THE IDEA THAT SCROOGE ACHIEVES SALVATION THROUGH RESOLVING TO CHANGE HIS WAYS AND BE MORE CHRIST-LIKE IS PURE SALVATION BY CHARACTER. A SIMILAR EXAMPLE IS HAWTHORNE'S THE SCARLET LETTER. HESTER PRYNNE, WHOSE CHARACTER WAS MODELED ON THE REAL LIFE TRANSCENDENTALIST FEMINIST INTELLECTUAL MARGARET FULLER, KEEPS THE PATERNITY OF HER CHILD SECRET THOUGH SHE IS SORELY TEMPTED TO NAME THE FATHER, SACRIFICING HER HAPPINESS FOR HIS, AND BY THE END OF THE BOOK THE SCARLET A WHICH SHE IS REQUIRED TO WEAR ON HER CHEST CEASES TO STAND FOR ADULTERESS AND

STANDS INSTEAD FOR ANGEL. SHE HAS ACHIEVED SALVATION THROUGH CHARACTER.

NOW HOW DOES THIS RELATE TO SOCIAL JUSTICE? WELL, IF WE ARE TRYING TO USE JESUS AS A MODEL, WE WILL IMITATE HIS RADICAL INCLUSIVITY. FOR A JEW IN THE FIRST CENTURY, THE RULES OF TABLE FELLOWSHIP WERE VERY STRICT: YOU ONLY DINED WITH PEOPLE WHO WERE RITUALLY PURE AND SOCIALLY ACCEPTABLE, WHICH IN PRACTICE MEANT OTHER JEWS. JESUS, HOWEVER, DINED WITH PROSTITUTES, SINNERS, TAX COLLECTORS, GENTILES. LIBERATION THEOLOGY, WHICH IS A KIND OF REINVENTION OF SALVATION BY CHARACTER IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, HOLDS THAT JESUS' WAY OF LIFE EXPRESSES A PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR. YOU GET A GLIMPSE OF THIS IN THE INSTRUCTIONS WHICH JESUS GAVE HIS FOLLOWERS IN THE

TENTH CHAPTER OF MATTHEW: HE DISPATCHED HIS DISCIPLES TO THE TOWNS AROUND THE SEA OF GALILEE WITHOUT SANDALS OR PURSE OR FOOD, MAKING THEM VULNERABLE AND DEPENDENT ON THE KINDNESS OF STRANGERS.

JUST AS NATURAL THEOLOGY HAS ITS DRAWBACKS, THERE ARE SOME PROBLEMS WITH SALVATION BY CHARACTER. TOO OFTEN IN BOSTON BRAHMIN CULTURE, SALVATION BY CHARACTER LED INTO NOBLESSE OBLIGE: WE THE RICH AND POWERFUL WILL HELP YOU, THE LESS FORTUNATE BECAUSE OF OUR GREAT LIBERALITY OF CHARACTER. WE ARE WHOLE AND WELL AND YOU ARE BROKEN AND SUFFERING AND AREN'T WE GREAT TO SHOWER ON YOU OUR LARGESSE WHEN WE DON'T HAVE TO? THIS IS THE KIND OF SOCIAL ACTION WHICH ERECTS AS MANY FENCES AS IT OVERCOMES.

A THIRD IDEA COMES FROM THE UNIVERSALIST SIDE OF

OUR HERITAGE: IT IS THE IDEA THAT GOD IS THE COMMON
SOURCE OF ALL THAT IS, AND THEREFORE WE ARE CONNECTED
TO EVERY OTHER PERSON AS CHILDREN OF GOD. THE REASON
WE CARE ABOUT THE OTHER IS THAT THE OTHER, LIKE US, IS
A CHILD OF GOD. THIS IS LITERALLY THE UNIVERSAL
BROTHERHOOD AND SISTERHOOD OF THE HUMAN RACE. IT IS
EXPRESSED IN THE EARLY UNITARIAN STATEMENTS OF BELIEF
AS THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN. THE REFRAIN FROM AN AFRICAN
AMERICAN CHRISTMAS CAROL GOES
IF ANYBODY ASKS YOU WHO I AM,
WHO I AM, WHO I AM,
IF ANYBODY ASKS YOU WHO I AM,
TELL THEM I'M A CHILD OF GOD.

NOTICE HOW THE RELATION TO GOD IS SHIFTED HERE.
IN NATURAL THEOLOGY, HUMANS WERE THE CREATIONS OF GOD,

AS A CLAY BOWL IS THE CREATION OF THE POTTER. TO SAY WE ARE CHILDREN OF GOD IS TO MAKE GOD THE ANCESTOR, THE PARENT, NOT THE FABRICATOR. IT'S A MORE INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP. IT PUTS GOD IN THE FAMILY, WHICH IN EFFECT, EXPANDS THE REACH OF THE FAMILY TO EMBRACE THE WHOLE HUMAN SPECIES.

YOUR FAMILY CONNECTION TO EVERY OTHER HUMAN IMPLIES YOU HAVE A DUTY TO SEEK JUSTICE FOR THEM. WHO DO YOU CALL ON FOR HELP IF YOU GET ARRESTED, WHO WILL GO YOUR BAIL? YOU WOULD CALL ON YOUR SPOUSE OR YOUR MOTHER OR YOUR BROTHER. BUT IF WE ARE ALL BROTHERS AND SPOUSES, WE ALL HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO SEE THAT INJUSTICE IS ELIMINATED. AS DR. KING SAYS, INJUSTICE ANYWHERE IS A THREAT TO JUSTICE EVERYWHERE.

NOW MANY OF YOU ARE SAYING BY NOW, THIS IS ALL

WELL AND GOOD FOR PEOPLE WHO STILL BUY THE CONCEPT OF
GOD, BUT I DON'T AND SO THIS HAS NO RELATION TO
ANYTHING I WOULD DO. THERE ARE THOSE AMONG US WHO
DON'T RELATE TO THE GOD OF THE HEBREW BIBLE, AND THERE
ARE THOSE WHO DON'T RELATE TO GOD OF NATURE EITHER. WE
STILL USE THE RHETORIC THAT ALL PEOPLE ARE CREATED
EQUAL, BUT WE'RE NOT SURE OF THE IDENTITY OF THE
CREATOR. WE DON'T BELIEVE IN AN AFTERLIFE, SO THE
WHOLE SALVATION BY CHARACTER CONCEPT OF GETTING TO
HEAVEN BY IMITATING JESUS DOESN'T MEAN MUCH. AND THE
CONCEPT OF CHILDREN OF GOD DOESN'T MEAN MUCH IF YOU
CAN'T SAY THERE IS A GOD.

AND YET MANY AMONG US WHO DO NOT BELIEVE IN A GOD
WILL BELIEVE IN THE POWER OF LOVE. IT IS BEDROCK
UNIVERSALIST DOCTRINE THAT GOD IS LOVE. THE CHOIR

DIRECTOR IN WAKEFIELD, JEFF WORKMAN, IS A MILITANT HUMANIST, AND HE USED TO ALWAYS ASK ME, IF GOD IS LOVE, WHY DO WE HAVE TO TALK ABOUT GOD AT ALL, WHY DON'T WE JUST TALK ABOUT LOVE? I NEVER HAD A GOOD ANSWER TO THAT.

IN FACT, SINCE THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY, PEOPLE HAVE BEEN WORKING ON A NON-THEISTIC WAY TO EXPRESS SOME OF THE IDEAS THAT I HAVE BEEN SETTING OUT HERE. AS I MENTIONED A FEW WEEKS AGO, JOSIAH ROYCE, A PHILOSOPHER AT HARVARD, CAME UP WITH THE NOTION OF LOVE AS THE FOUNDATION OF THE SOCIAL ORDER TOWARDS WHICH WE SHOULD BE MOVING, AND HE CALLED THIS THE BELOVED COMMUNITY. THIS NOTION WAS PICKED UP BY GANDHI AND BY MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. IT IS A WAY TO UNDERSTAND THE KINGDOM OF GOD, A SECULAR SALVATION, A HEAVEN WE CAN CREATE IN

THE HERE AND NOW.

WE ARE THE EMBODIMENT OF THIS LOVE. TRADITIONAL UNIVERSALISTS WOULD SAY WE ARE GOD'S BODY. WE ARE GOD'S HANDS. GOD ACTS THROUGH US. IN 1900, THE GREAT UNIVERSALIST PREACHER QUILLEN SHINN WROTE THESE WORDS WHICH SUM UP THIS IDEA:

GOD WORKS THROUGH INSTRUMENTALITIES. WE ARE ALL TO BE AGENTS. A UNIVERSALIST WHO IS IDLE, DOING NOTHING TO MAKE HIS DOCTRINE TRUE, IS A COUNTERFEIT.

IT IS IRONIC THAT ONE OF THE BEST CONTEMPORARY EXPRESSIONS OF THIS IDEA IS THE PRESENT CAMPAIGN AT THE UUA NATIONAL LEVEL CALLED "STANDING ON THE SIDE OF LOVE." THIS MOVEMENT, STARTED UNDER FORMER PRESIDENT BILL SINKFORD AND CONTINUED UNDER OUR CURRENT PRESIDENT PETER

MORALES, HAS WORKED FOR EQUAL MARRIAGE ACROSS THE COUNTRY, HAS OPPOSED RESTRICTIONS ON IMMIGRATION AND SCORED A NOTABLE VICTORY RECENTLY WHEN IT WAS ONE OF THE FORCES WHICH SUCCESSFULLY PRESSURED CNN AND ITS XENOPHOBIC NEWSMAN LOU DOBBS TO HAVE HIM TAKEN OFF THE AIR.

THE IRONY IS IN THE NAME, FOR THE FAMOUS ANSWER UP UNTIL RECENTLY TO THE QUESTION OF WHERE WE STAND IS THAT OF L.B. FISHER, WE DON'T STAND, WE MOVE. NOW WE HAVE A NEW ANSWER: WE STAND ON THE SIDE OF LOVE.

THIS CAMPAIGN IS A FINE ONE, AND HAS DONE SOME FINE THINGS, BUT I KIND OF LIKE THAT OLD ANSWER: WE DO NOT STAND, WE MOVE. WHAT IS IT THAT MOVES US? I HAVE GIVEN YOU FOUR ANSWERS HERE: THE IDEA FROM NATURAL THEOLOGY THAT ALL ARE CREATED EQUAL; THE IDEA OF SALVATION BY

CHARACTER; THE IDEA THAT WE ARE ALL CHILDREN OF GOD, AND THE IDEA THAT WE SHOULD WORK TOWARD THE BELOVED COMMUNITY, MAKING LOVE REAL IN THE WORLD. BUT IT IS NOT JUST THESE IDEAS. IT IS NOT JUST ONE BELIEF OR FOUR. IT IS THE SUM OF ALL OUR IDEAS AND BELIEFS THAT HAVE LED TO A PROUD HISTORY OF OPPOSING INJUSTICE, FROM THE 1790 UNIVERSALIST RESOLUTION AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY TO THE ANTI-SLAVERY AGITATION OF CHARLES FOLLEN IN THE 1820S TO THE CAMPAIGN FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE OF SUSAN B. ANTHONY TO THE FOUNDING OF THE NAACP AND THE ACLU BY JOHN HAYNES HOMES TO THE CIVIL RIGHTS MARTYRDOM OF JAMES REEB AND VIOLA LIUZZO AND ALL OUR WORK ON MARRIAGE EQUALITY OF THE PRESENT DAY. WE ARE A CHURCH OF DEEDS, NOT CREEDS. WHATEVER THE WORD YOU VALUE, BE YE DOERS OF THE WORD, AND NOT HEARERS ONLY. WE ARE ALL CALLED TO BE PROPHETS.

IT'S NOT JUST WHAT YOU'RE BORN WITH,
IT'S WHAT YOU CHOOSE TO BEAR
IT'S NOT HOW LARGE YOUR SHARE IS,
BUT HOW MUCH YOU CAN SHARE;
FOR IT'S NOT THE FIGHTS YOU DREAMED OF
BUT THOSE YOU REALLY FOUGHT,
ITS NOT JUST WHAT YOU'RE GIVEN,
BUT WHAT YOU DO WITH WHAT YOU'VE GOT.

AMEN.