**“What’s love got to do with it?”**

With the recent death of music legend Tina Turner, I’ve had the lyric “What’s love got to do with it?” ringing round my head. As someone who has been working on environmental field for some years, love does not come up much in eco conversations, in volunteer roles or job descriptions, but I think it should.

Tina’s song has made me reflect on the things I love. There is coffee and chocolate for starters. Swallows swooping and diving as they return in spring, the smell of honey suckle on a warm summers evening or the feeling of sand between my toes on the beach. Then there is my family and friends of course.

At times this can be a painful list to run through, as our changed climate is impacting on almost everything I love; declining coffee yields due to rising temperatures, disrupted seasons in the UK impacting birds and plants; beaches being lost to rising sea levels along our Yorkshire coastline; and what does a 2.7C warmer climate look like for my family’s future?

As a Christian, there is another kind of love to reflect on. My love for God and his love for me. Or should I be a bit less self-obsessed and widen that out to Christ’s love for the whole world? John’s gospel tells us “For God so loved the *world* that he gave his one and only Son”. God’s love is for the whole cosmos – everything.

My love leads me to grieve over the environmental destruction that I see all around me, but I know that Jesus also weeps for the loss of the very created order that he has made to worship and glorify him. From bird song to beaches, all creation points to our awesome God and brings him joy. Every lost species, whether it is an unsightly insect or a wildlife poster pin up, says something about how humanity relates to God and what we think about his love.

In Jesus’ time the close intertwined love between people, nature and God would have been obvious. He lived in an indigenous people culture, not a post-industrial western culture like our own, where we have become divorced from our natural suroundings.

“Things look so bad everywhere, In this whole world, what is fair?” Now I have the lyrics of Steve Windwood’s song *Higher Love* reverberating in my head,“Bring me a higher love”. We can find that higher love in Jesus’ death and resurrection for the redemption of all things. His sacrificial love for the whole of his creation. Can we think big enough to grasp a gospel that includes the renewal of the whole of creation? What does that mean for all the things I love?

The song continues “Think about it, there must be higher love, Down in the heart or hidden in the stars above, Without it, life is wasted time, Look inside your heart, I'll look inside mine.”

Is it time to look inside our hearts and be inspired by Jesus’ higher love?

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