

The 1st Place of Encounter:

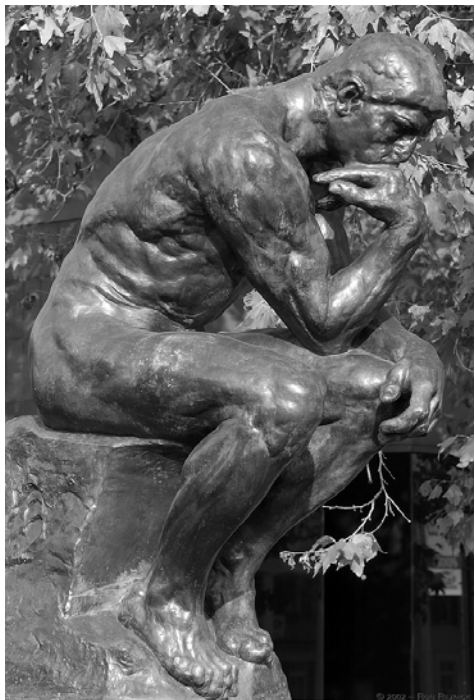
Consider the Great Love of the Lord!

Location: Narthex

Consider:

"Whoever is wise, let him heed these things
and **consider** the great love of the LORD."

Psalms 107:43



"When I **consider** your heavens,
the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars
which you have set in place,
what is man that
you are mindful of him,
the son of man
that you care for him?
You made him a little lower
than the heavenly beings
and crowned him
with glory and honor."

Psalms 8:3-5

"**Consider** the ravens: They do not sow or reap,
they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them.
And how much more valuable you are than birds!"

Luke 12:24

"**Consider** how the lilies grow.
They do not labor or spin.
Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor
was dressed like one of these."

Luke 12:27

"I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the **breadth** and **length** and **height** and **depth**, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."

Ephesians 3:18-19 NRSV

Reflections:

As you reflect on the marvelous intricacies of God's creation, remember that of all creation, God has chosen mankind alone to participate in His Divine nature (*cf. 2 Peter 1:4*). His plan of salvation is reserved only for us. These are matters that even the angels long to understand (*cf. 1 Peter 1:12*).

In love, He fashioned us, the pinnacle of all creation. And if that were not enough, when we were bent upon pursuing our own way and refused to acknowledge Him, He offered the ultimate sacrifice of His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ. We are twice His by right of creation and by right of redemption!

Proclamation:

What Wondrous Love Is This, O, My Soul!

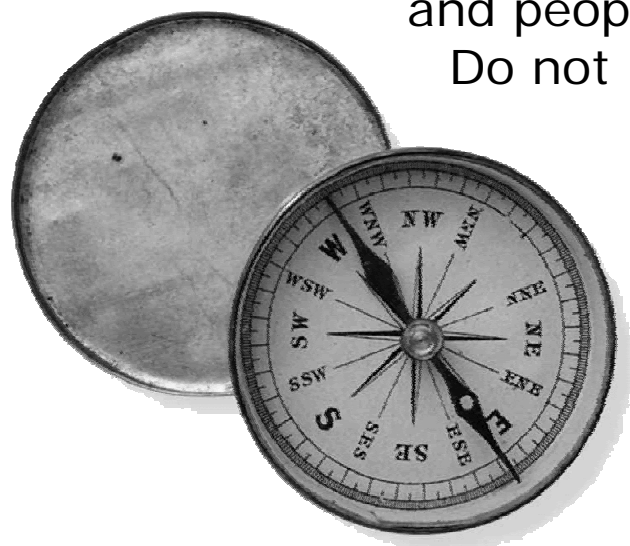
The 2nd Place of Encounter:

Reach out and Experience Its Breadth!

Location: Library

Consider:

"Since you are precious and honored in my sight,
and because I love you,
I will give men in exchange for you,
and people in exchange for your life.
Do not be afraid, for I am with you;



I will bring your children
from the **east**
and gather you
from the **west**.
I will say to the **north**,
'Give them up!'
and to the **south**,
'Do not hold them back.'

"Bring my sons **from afar**
and my daughters **from the ends of the earth** —
everyone who is called by my name,
whom I created for my glory,
whom I formed and made."

Isaiah 43:4-7

"O you who hear prayer, to you **all** men will come.

"You answer us with awesome deeds of righteousness,
O God our Savior,
the hope of **all the ends of the earth**
and of **the farthest seas!**"

Psalms 65:2, 5

"The LORD is compassionate and gracious,
slow to anger, abounding in love.
He will not always accuse,
nor will he harbor his anger forever;
he does not treat us as our sins deserve
or repay us according to our iniquities.
For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his love for those who fear him;
as far as the east is from the west,
so far has he removed our transgressions from us."

Psalm 103:8-12

"The LORD is faithful to ***all*** his promises
and loving toward ***all*** he has made.
The LORD upholds ***all*** those who fall
and lifts up ***all*** who are bowed down.

"The eyes of ***all***
look to you,
and you give them
their food
at the proper time.
You open your hand
and satisfy the desires
of ***every*** living thing.



"The LORD is righteous in ***all*** his ways
and loving toward ***all*** he has made.

Psalm 145:13-17

Reflections:

Allow the Lord to fill you with appreciation and understanding of the incredible scope and extent of His love. The arms of the Savior stretch wide to gather to Himself all He has made, from the north to the south, from the east to the west, even from the uttermost parts of the earth. The breadth of His love is incalculable. It cannot be fully observed, mapped, charted or navigated. There is no place in all the earth where you can escape His loving care.

Proclamation:



The 3rd Place of Encounter:

Test Its Length Through Time & Eternity!

Location: Hallway through to the Parlor

Consider:

At first glance this dimension of length may appear no different from the dimension of breadth. However, when you think of it terms of longevity, then you are dealing with the fourth dimension, **time**.

"But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath he swore to your forefathers that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, ***keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations*** of those who love him and keep his commands."

Deuteronomy 7:8-9

"But ***from everlasting to everlasting*** the LORD's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children."

Psalms 103:17

"Within your temple, O God,
we meditate on ***your unfailing love***."

Psalms 48:9

"Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good.
His love endures forever."

Psalms 136:1

Reflections:

The love of the Lord is not limited to time alone. It endures forever! As you meditate on His unfailing love throughout the ages, let Him expand your understanding so that you might catch a glimpse of His *eternal* love.

Proclamation:



The 4th Place of Encounter:

Rise to Its Heights!

Location: Entryway

Consider:

This can refer to the physical dimension of height as well as the spiritual dimension of loftiness, nobleness.

"For great is your love, ***reaching to the heavens***;
your faithfulness reaches to the skies."

Psalms 57:10

"O LORD, you have searched me and you know me.
You know when I sit and when I rise;
you perceive my thoughts from afar.
You discern my going out and my lying down;
you are familiar with all my ways.
Before a word is on my tongue
you know it completely, O LORD.
You hem me in — behind and before;
you have laid your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
too lofty for me to attain."

Psalms 139:1-6

"For this is what the ***high and lofty*** One says —
he who lives forever, whose name is holy:
'I live in a high and holy place,
but also with him who is ***contrite and lowly in spirit***,
to revive the spirit of the lowly
and to revive the heart of the contrite.'"

Isaiah 57:15

"Your attitude should be the same
as that of Christ Jesus:

Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God
something to be grasped,
but made himself nothing,
taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.

"And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself and became obedient to death-
even death on a cross!

"Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father."

Philippians 2:5-11

Reflections:

Let the loftiness of God's love lift you above the limited love that this world offers. Renounce your paltry passions for the vain things of this life which charm and seduce you and receive in exchange the exalted expression of His love for you in Christ. As Christ is lifted up, He will draw you up to Himself.

Proclamation:

Your Love Lifts Me Up to the Heavens!



The 5th Place of Encounter:

Plumb Its Depths!

Location: *Fellowship Hall*

Consider:

The Greek word for depth is *bathos*. God's love is so deep that you can immerse yourself in it. It is not shallow.

O the deep, deep love of Jesus,
Vast, unmeasured, boundless, free!
Rolling as a mighty ocean in its fullness over me!
Underneath me, all around me,
Is the current of Thy love
Leading onward, leading homeward
To Thy glorious rest above!

Samuel Francis, 1875

"If I make my bed in the depths, you are there!"

Psalms 139:8

Shallow love is demonstrated by mere words.

"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this:
While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Romans 5:8

When we were overwhelmed by sins,
you forgave our transgressions."

Psalms 65:3

Shallow love gives little thought to the beloved. God's profound love compels Him to think about us all the time.

"How precious to (*concerning*) me
are your thoughts, O God!
How vast is the sum of them!
Were I to count them,
they would outnumber the grains of sand."

Psalms 139:17-18

Shallow love is self-centered. God's profound love is self-sacrificial.

"This is how we know what love is:
Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.
And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers."

1 John 3:16

"Greater love has no one than this,
that he lay down his life for his friends."

John 15:13

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord."

John 10:11, 18

This sea of God's love is fed directly from a river which flows from His Holy Presence, giving new life to all who dip their hearts in this living stream.

"I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east... [It became] a river that I could not cross, because the water had risen and was deep enough to swim in.

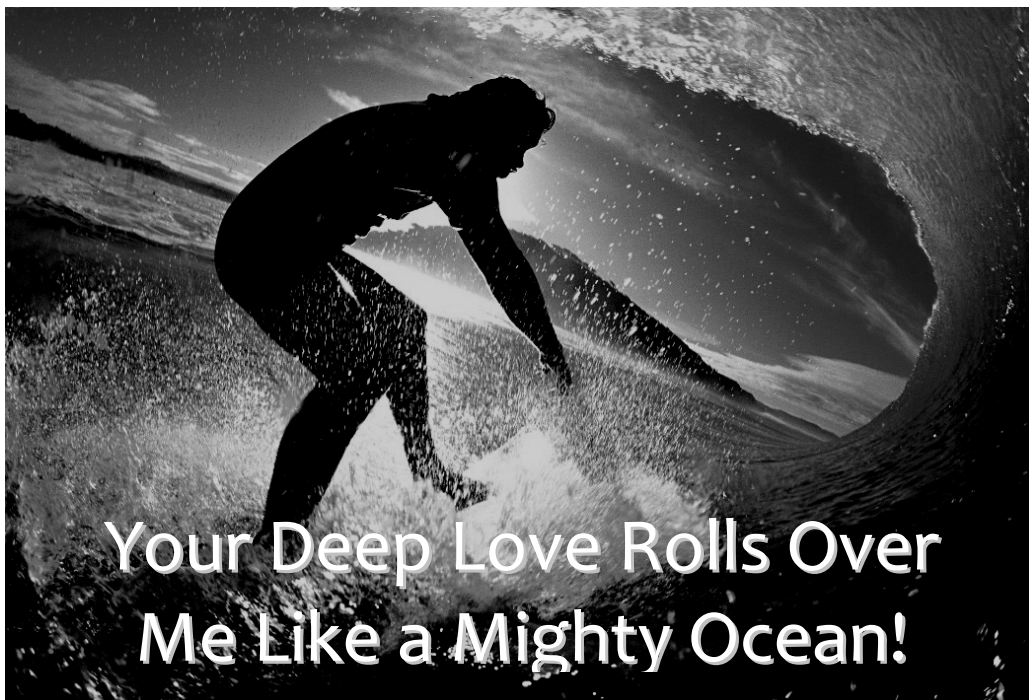
"When it empties into the Sea, the water there becomes fresh... There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live."

Ezekiel 47:1, 5, 8, 9

Reflections:

Immerse yourself in the sea of God's love. Cast your iniquities and your cares in its depths. Let your pain and your sorrow be washed away in the waves of His mercy. Let His billows and breakers sweep you over you and carry you away to His side.

Proclamation:



The 6th Place of Encounter:

Contemplate Its Extravagant Dimensions!

Location: Sanctuary

Consider:

The book of Revelation gives us a description of the New Jerusalem and details its dimensions.

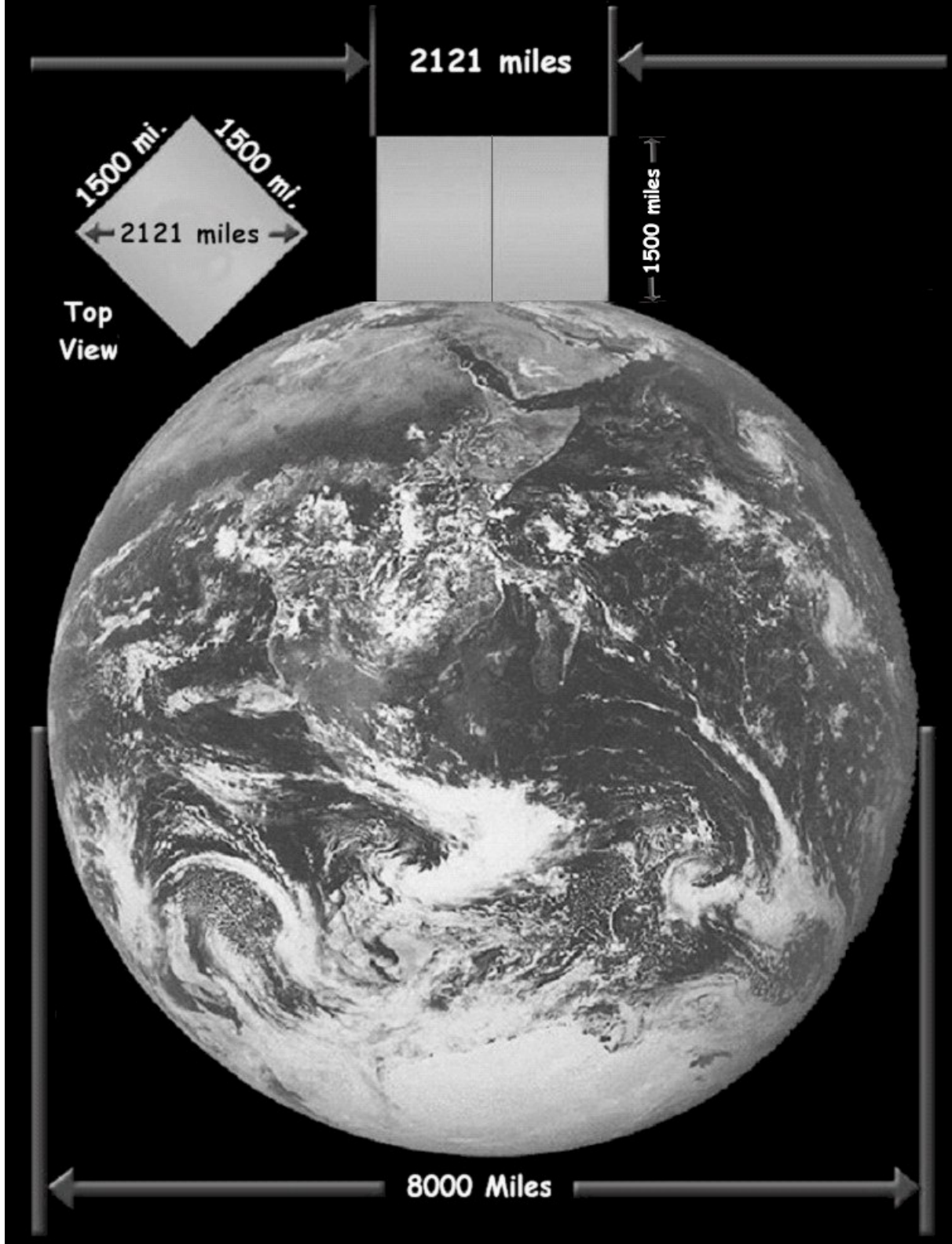
"Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.' And in the spirit he carried me away to a great, high mountain and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God. It has the glory of God and a radiance like a very rare jewel, like jasper, clear as crystal.

"The angel who talked to me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls. The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its width; and he measured the city with his rod, **fifteen hundred miles**; its **length** and **width** and **height** are equal."

Revelation 21:9-11, 15-17 NRSV

These dimensions are so great that they would cover an area of the United States stretching from Texas to Florida to the south and a northern border that extends from Wyoming to New York. And since it is also 1,500 miles high, it would rise up beyond our atmosphere into outer space. It would be large enough that the outline of its shadow might be seen against the moon during a lunar eclipse.

The Dimensions of the New Jerusalem



Reflections:

As immense as the New Jerusalem is, its vastness is a but a drop in the ocean when compared with the extravagant dimensions of God's love.

So high I can't get over it,
So low I can't get under it,
So wide I can't around it!

19th Century Negro Spiritual

Contemplate the immeasurable magnitude of His love and remember that as great as His love is, it is also personal and intimate. He delights to pour out this extravagance upon His children. Do not resist this love because you feel unworthy. Receive it with joy!

Proclamation:

**Father,
I Surrender to
Your Love!**



Personal Thoughts & Prayers:

Personal Thoughts & Prayers:

Personal Thoughts & Prayers:

Personal Thoughts & Prayers: