



*Living in Relational Wholeness*

## **Coalesce Podcast**

### **Episode 010 – Experiencing God’s Love**

#### **Note, terms, scripture, practice**



[Exodus 34:6](#) (merciful, gracious, faithful, forgiving, and forever steadfast in love)

*anawim* - the humble and poor ones

[Proverbs 9:4](#)

[Mark 10:14](#)

[Matthew 9:13](#)

[Luke 18:16](#)

[Luke 18:17](#)

[Luke 66:12-13](#)

[Matthew 3:16-17](#)

*Midrash* is a way of interpreting Scripture that fills in the gaps, questioning and imagining a multitude of interpretations possible. *Midrash* allows the text and the Spirit of God to open up the reader, instead of closing down the possibility of being changed by latching onto one final, closed, and forever certain interpretation.

[Luke 16:19](#)

[John 10:34](#)

[Psalms 82:6](#)

[Matthew 5:8](#)

[Matthew 5:17](#)

[John 17:21](#)

*Most religion drew a circle that shut me out  
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.  
But love Jesus and I had the wit to win:  
we drew a circle that took him in!*

—“Outwitted” by Edwin Markham

[Leviticus 15:19-30](#)

[Luke 9:49-56](#)

[Matthew 15:1-14](#)

[Mark 2:27](#)

[John 8:7](#)

[Matthew 13:14-15](#)

[Ephesians 5:14](#)

[Matthew 7:4-5](#)

### **Practice: Midrash**

Try to approach Scripture with patience, humility, respect, and the Jewish practice of *midrash*. *Midrash* is a way of interpreting scripture that asks questions more than seeks always certain and unchanging answers. It allows many possibilities, many levels of faith-filled meaning—meaning that is relevant and applicable to you, the reader, and puts you in the subject’s shoes to build empathy and understanding. Let the passage first challenge *you* before it challenges anyone else. To use the text in a spiritual way is to allow it to convert you, to change you, to grow you up. What does this ask of me? How might this apply to my life, to my marriage, to my church, to my neighborhood, to my country?

The German poet, Rainer Maria Rilke, seemed to grasp the value of this practice applied not only to a sacred text, but to life. He wrote in *Letters to a Young Poet*: “Have patience with everything that remains unsolved in your heart. Try to love the questions themselves, like locked rooms and like books written in a foreign language. Do not now look for the answers. They cannot now be given to you because you could not live them. It is a question of experiencing everything. At present you need to live the question. Perhaps you will gradually, without even noticing it, find yourself experiencing the answer, some distant day.”

As Jesus modeled so masterfully in his teaching, welcome uncertainty and paradox. Respond to questions with yet more questions, like Jesus did with the lawyer who asked how he might inherit eternal life, but really only to “justify himself” ([Luke 10:25-37](#)). Let the wisdom written on your own heart lead you, through experiencing God’s love, toward mercy and justice.