

Heartbroken for our Baltimore

Ask me why I love Baltimore.

It's not a flashy city.

We have a few jewels, and we are so very, very proud to show them off to visitors.



We may not know all the details of our city's great history and the legends who grew up here—or lived here once for a few years—but we are more than happy to tell you what we can remember.

Of course, we have fantastic food and we love our Old Bay—on everything, really.

And then we have our challenges. What city doesn't? We also have people who care deeply about our city and believe passionately in strengthening it for the future.



It's those people, those people who are investing in the city by living there, working there, playing there, who make it such an amazing place.

Last night we watched as a family as the news of unrest unfolded on TV.

Maybe we should shield our children from the images, I thought at first. Maybe we shouldn't try to explain what is happening in a way they will understand. I even turned the TV off for a while. And it was so painful for me to watch myself. But I turned it back on.

After all, this is real, and it's happening in our city—in our children's city.

They weren't born in Baltimore, but their Baltimore accents shine through. Their love for their city is solid. They beg to picnic at Fort McHenry. They root for the Orioles and the Ravens. They assume everyone puts Old Bay on scrambled eggs.



And we had already talked about what was happening—and some of why.

So we watched together, and we discussed what we were seeing and hearing.

“Mama,” our older son said at one point. “That man is talking about Martin Luther King!”

So we stopped to talk about Dr. King. We grasped for the light in the darkness and held onto it.

As we watched the clergy marching, I realized what I had been looking for.

Hope.

Strength.

Belief that tomorrow can be better.

All of that—and more—came through as we watched that group walking together along a Baltimore street. It was so moving.

This is not Charm City’s finest hour. We can’t flip a switch and bring peace and justice to Baltimore. But we can each do our part to bring light to the darkness, to work toward peace, and to believe that we can have a role in building a better tomorrow for this city we love—for the world beyond this city.

The beauty is that we can start right now, in this very moment, with prayer. Please join me in praying for Baltimore, for all those who live there, and especially for those who are offering hope for the future.

We love you, Baltimore.

Joining Theology Is a Verb and Reconciled to You for Worth Revisiting Wednesday on April 20, 2016.