

Sally: Let's Find True Peace

Next Steps

December 22, 2024

Luke 1:46-56

OPENING PRAYER:

O Holy God, Word made flesh, in the sacred hush of this time and place, help us like Mary to treasure your good news in our hearts. Give us a renewed awe and amazement as we ponder and study your goodness. Thank you for the gift of this time with Your Word. Amen.

BREAKING THE ICE:

- What makes you feel comfortable? Or, where are you most comfortable? Can you explain why ...

WRESTLING WITH THE WORD:¹

Sally places her trust and peace in money. Our Savior brings peace through the unexpected. This week we read Mary's song of where she finds peace. Read Luke 1:46-56

- What jumps out at you in this scripture?
- Of the attributes of God celebrated in Mary's song, which do you appreciate the most? Challenge you the most? Please explain ...
- How will Jesus fulfill the themes running through Mary's song? Which theme resonates with you and sparks your faith? Why?
- This can be seen as a crazy and chaotic season. What helps you find true peace?
- What issue/conflict/event are you struggling to find peace? What would help you listen to God in this moment?

DIGGING DEEPER:

All over this magnificent world, God calls us to extend his kingdom of shalom-peace and wholeness -- of justice, of goodness, of compassion, of caring, of sharing, of laughter, of joy, of reconciliation. God is transfiguring the world right this very moment through us because God believes in us and because God loves us. What can separate us from the love of God? Nothing. Absolutely nothing. And as we share God's love with our brothers and sisters, God's other children, there is no tyrant who can resist us, no opposition that cannot be ended, no hunger that cannot be fed, no wound that cannot be healed, no hatred that cannot be turned into love, no dream that cannot be fulfilled. (Desmond Tutu, *God Has a Dream: A Vision of Hope for Our Time*)

- What do you hear in this sermon passage?
- Where do you see God transfiguring the world?
- What does it mean for you that 'God believes in us'?
- Desmond Tutu speaks these words from a context of oppression and apartheid that we cannot even imagine. When you imagine his context, what new speaks to you in this passage? What can you learn from this?

NEXT STEPS:

- Christmas Eve is two days away. What can you implement in your life for these few days to draw you closer to God? Put this into practice ...
- Reflecting on each week, how will each week in Advent and then January change your life?

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:

We thank you, Lord, for Christmas --

Grant that we may be grateful enough to keep it not for a day, but for always.

In the name of Christ,

Whose coming is a mystery --

Whose life is a miracle --

Whose ministry in word and deed and death is salvation --

And whose presence is now our highest hope. Amen.

¹ *The Serendipity Bible*, 4th Edition

-- William W. Kenney