

Looking for the Light

a devotional from
ST. CHARLES AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Monday, April 6, 2020

by Robert Edgecombe

Read:

1 Corinthians 13:12

For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known.

Reflect:

Yesterday marked the beginning of Holy Week. This solemn week includes some of the most sacred stories from our faith—Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, his "cleansing" of the temple, the Last Supper with his disciples, his trials and condemnation, and his crucifixion and resurrection. We mark many of these events with familiar names: Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Sunday.

One day that intrigues me, partly because it is given so little attention in the Gospels, is the Saturday of Holy Week—the day after Good Friday—which in some traditions is called Holy Saturday. It must have been a crushing day for those who knew and revered Jesus, a day when they realized they were in a new and unsettled spiritual wilderness. They could only see, as Paul writes, "in a mirror dimly"; they had no clear glimpse of the post-Easter life to come. They could only wait and wonder.

It strikes me that we are living in a very "Holy Saturday state of being" these days. We are doing our own share of waiting and wondering. We wait for updates on the well-being of friends and loved ones; we wait for clarity on when things will improve and how difficult they will become in the meantime; we wait because sometimes it feels like the only thing we're able to do. And we wonder about what things will be like on the other side of this crisis: When will things be more normal? What will never be normal again? And we have no certain answers. Like Jesus' friends and followers that Saturday, we too see only dimly.

But with faith and hope, our waiting can be purposeful and profound. N.T. Wright, preaching on Holy Saturday to a small mining town in northern England that was experiencing economic hardship and social unrest, offered this thought for hard times: "Yes, this is awful; it is beyond belief...but we will sit quietly and wait. All we can believe is that God is still the God of order and not of chaos, and that he will do what he will do." A rediscovery of God's goodness and sovereignty often involves waiting through the dimness, but it is always worth the wait.

We know the Easter story, of course. The dimness and despair of Holy Saturday does not last, and a new fullness is soon to come. The waiting pays off, and the waiting prepares us for all that is ahead, and for the joy of seeing face-to-face once again.

Pray:

I invite you to take a quiet moment to listen to this setting of one of Jesus' last words by Michael John Trotta. His [Seven Last Words](#), premiered at Carnegie Hall in 2017, was a project of the Presbyterian Association of Musicians, and was commissioned by four PCUSA congregations. Trotta also has a regional connection to us, having earned his Ph.D. at LSU. In this setting, he beautifully retranslates Luke 23:46 ("Father, into your hands I commend my spirit") as "Into your hands I surrender my whole soul." I hope this piece helps you find a moment of serenity today.

[Click here to listen.](#)

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If you would like to contribute to our daily devotionals, please email Pastor Sarah, sarah@scapc.org.

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