

BELOVED COMMUNITY - 9/20/20

I love the invitation of this song - to “fix our eyes” on Jesus’ love...

Sometimes I find it easiest to be very intune with the way the world seems out of joint - it’s what rings loudest in my ears... the way things are misaligned. The way things are going wrong **TO** us and **around** us - we have a lot of material for that..... Another hard conversation, another sickness you’ve heard of, another injustice you’ve witnessed ... another day with real life - front and center.

These painful and trying ways of being in the world - **seem only to multiply**. Compounding one upon the other - in such a way that our view of the world, of school, of work - of hope, of joy, our view of ourselves, of God, and one another is cast in a hazy filter.

It is a human response when we encounter this “disjointed-ness” in life - to be irritated with it, to be wearied by it, and to feel it deeply. And it’s not only because we want things to “go our way” - but because we have within us the goodness of God, the image of God that is scrambling to make itself known **too**, to come into view through the haze!.... It’s GOD IN US - pressing us forward, helping us to make the goodness of God known in the world around us. Helping us to see that the Spirit of God inhabits our way of being in the world **too** - that this SPIRIT is actively at work **too**, IN AND THROUGH US.

So if you need - like I do - a moment to familiarize yourself with the goodness of God - that’s active right now IN YOU - and working through you - here’s a spiritual practice for you....

Spiritual Practice

3 quick components - all with the same question.

The components are God, US, and others....and we’ll form a prayer as we make our way through this practice.

1. **GOD:** What quality of God - that you have experienced - not just “know” - but have experienced would you want multiplied in the world? Think of it this way - if streets could be named after these qualities - what would you want the street you pass to say, what signpost would it be for others? “Grace avenue” - or “Judgement -free street”, What would you want our streets - our neighborhoods our cities, to be lined with?

What quality of God that you’ve experienced do you want to see multiplied in the world?

2. **US:** What quality can you identify in yourself that you would like multiplied in the world? This may be a little uncomfortable for you - but “we are in many ways the ones we’ve been waiting for” to be agents of change and good in this world. God has empowered us and called us to be this.....
SO trust that there is something in you - that if MULTIPLIED would be hugely impactful.

What quality in yourself - do you want to see multiplied in the world?

3. **ANOTHER:** What quality do you admire in someone you know... that you would love to see multiplied in the world? Maybe it's not even someone you fully like yet - but this quality about them - you totally admire. Here's where we acknowledge the disjointedness around us - and also believe that God is not finished with the human story - which is every unfolding.. .and an on-going evolving project.

What quality in another - do you want to see multiplied in the world?

***Pray for them right now - by name! "God thank you for Eve, for her zest to interrupt and call out both big and small**

*Put a note in your calendar to send them a text, or an email today. A tiny action - that God can multiply... Let them know, that you admire this quality of them - and you hope for more of it in the world.... empower.

As a way to pray today - why don't you type one, or two or three of those qualities that you came around to (Whether your own quality or God's or anothers) and **put it in the chat**. (I won't read your name- but I'll read the qualities you wrote)...

Let's see what values underpin the world - the beloved community that we want to co-create with God and each other.

(you can join me if you wish on taking on the posture and spirit of this prayer):

I believe for the shaping - and re-shaping of this world with you, God.

Through..... X, y, z.....(fervent action, clarity and peace)

I believe for the sacred work that it is to clothe one another and ourselves - our minds, and our souls - with....

X, y, z (humbleness, grace and wisdom)

I believe for your kin-dom come here on earth - this beloved community to be formed where we can each develop and realize our placement in this life - *for* this time - *in* this day - with these people we've named... and how crucial for all of us it is to be aligned with your heart and your relentless Spirit.

Peter says, "Grace and peace be multiplied to you through Jesus" -

And I too, say 1000's of years later - to all of you - "May grace and peace be multiplied to you through Jesus."

Amen.