

Spiritual Practice || “Child of Light”

Phewf! We are at the end of a long week - in what has felt like an eternally long year. And I know that so many of us are seeking light - needing light - sunlight, the light of God in ways that feel necessary - if not pretty essential to our well being.

I wanted to invite Trecia to tell a story, that I heard her tell this week - that felt like light to me.

TRECIA STORY

The wonder of finding the light with her sister.

- *Your mom shutting the door, turning off the light. (the finality of that act - here's the darkness).*
- *Darkness.*
- *Child-like wonder.*
- *Making out shapes/stories/enacting imagination in the shadows.*

Trecia's childhood story stopped me in my tracks on Wednesday when I heard her tell this ... I was confronting my own disdain of waiting.. A growing sense of hopelessness and anger. I just was fed up with waiting to see when the goodness, justice and truth - the light that I wanted to see would rise up and overtake - all that felt dark.

The beauty of Trecia's story is that in darkness - Jesus invites us into the birth place from which all wonder, imagination and awe comes. And that these components are essential to how we make our way in days, seasons, years that feel dark.

Paul encourages us in Ephesians 5:8 to ***“live our life as children of light.” - Light produces fruit that consists of every sort of goodness, justice, and truth that we wish so badly to see in the world.***

****Give space to harken back to how people are doing this morning - from announcements Pervasiveness of darkness that still looms.***

And this is also true - that darkness will be present - it will encroach and pop-up unannounced And so we need a spiritual practice - that helps the **eyes of our heart** continue to adjust...to find the light - to find God - in our day-to-day existence, and in our nation.

Because our faith will get weary.....

\- we will try hard to make shapes of Jesus, out of shadows.

\- we will try to find hope in dusty cob-webbed-filled corners of our polity.

Pervasiveness of Jesus, even in darkness

But it's here - Barbara Holmes (this spiritual teacher, activist and author - who has written about contemplative practices of the Black Church) **says that we need to not forget the pervasiveness of Jesus too.** She seems to suggest that if we train our eyes to see Jesus only when

hope/peace/joy is luminously on display in front of us, ..and if we only take steps of action, risks, or make “informed decisions”, when we SEE JESUS in familiar ways - we will in fact miss **the Jesus we need in darkness.**

Our own spiritual lives - and the spirituality of our nation....demand an expansive means of locating Jesus even when everything around us suggests we give up and fail.

Holmes says, “**contemplative moments - where we try to connect with Jesus - that are accessed in safety are an expected luxury in our times. But so many of us don’t have this luxury, this safety... she says, “during slavey, crisis contemplation became a refuge - a wellspring of discernment in a suddenly disordered life space... this definition of contemplation/finding the light/ is dynamic and situational.**

(46), “Joy Unspeakable Contemplative Practices of the Black Church.”

Prayer actually begins at the edge of emptiness - where disorder, and upheaval do exist - where “our power ends” (Rabbi Heschel says) - and that’s something that many of us are still practicing... and need to continue.

Today, we stand on the grounds of new birth.

We harness our dreams and imagination - not just for a moment, but for a movement of greater change ... where we want to see goodness, justice and truth take seed....

And we need to birth in ourselves - this child-likeness, this wonder and awe - and **live our life as children of light.**

And it starts with sitting in the dark - not avoiding it.... [practicing ...as Trecia and her sister show us](#) - how to adjust the eyes of our heart.

THE PRACTICE

I’m going to invite you to close your eyes - sit in darkness and find Jesus with you.

(if at any point this is too frustrating - or scary - or triggering - just open your eyes... there’s lots of light around you).

[Ivy - shut off video.](#)

I’m going to invite you to:

Close your eyes.

Place your hands over your closed eyes.

[Sit in this darkness.](#)

With all the noise and movement around you - with racing thoughts ...

[Sit in this darkness.](#)

In this darkness, know that Jesus is with you. I’m not going to ask you to locate Jesus, or give feedback of where you think Jesus might be... I just want you to sit in this space, where you don’t have visual feedback of God - no sunshine, no beauty, no smiling person across from you.

Just sit here for a moment -

Get accustomed to what you are **feeling** in this place.
(peace, nervousness, fear, impatience)...

Notice what you are **thinking** about... maybe all that has been acutely familiar to you this week, the flashes of information and numbers and maps, and bright lights - the work ahead, tasks to do today.....let it all flow into your mind and out again.

Continue to sit here for a moment

This is the place of uncovering.

To sit in this darkness - is to be stripped down - **to just you, and just God.**

Why don't you just sit here for a moment.

And as much as you can - let the **darkness come into view, with God and you.**

Give yourself a second to get familiar with this....

You've been here before, (let yourself remember), **in the womb**, in fact.
Just you, darkness and God. Awaiting birth. Awaiting light.

Let yourself imagine that here is where God whispered to you in the womb, into your DNA:

"you are a child of light."

you are a child of light

you are a child of light

Check in with yourself - how does this truth resonate with you? That you are a child of light?
Let it call to life - parts of you that maybe have been dormant for a while.
Let it call out imagination, wonder and awe in you.

Now as best you can, as Trecia and her sister show us - allow your eyes to adjust, to locate Jesus with you.

How do you see Jesus here? What forms are coming into view? *Maybe it's a thought, a verse, a feeling, a memory, a song, a person, a deferred goal, your breath, your heartbeat ... what is it?*

If adjusting to the light of God, in us and with us - in times that are hard... allows us to give shape to more goodness, justice and truth in our lives and our world - what is it that you with fresh eyes - dream for? Imagine for?

Slowly open your eyes.... **TYPE IN CHAT**