

Lessons from Bethlehem part 4

“Peace in an Age of Noise”

Bethlehem, It is a story of hope, love, joy and peace that is rooted in the everyday world we live in.

Hope

God has entered the world in the form of a man, Jesus, born in Bethlehem, to rescue the world. Why would God do something like this? *Because no one cares how much you know, or who you are, until they know how much you care.*

Hope is the anticipation of good.” Dallas Willard

Love

Our heart and treatment of immigrants and refugees must be rooted in and reflective of God’s heart for the vulnerable.

The NT reiterates this, first in how Jesus reveals the heart of the Father in his love for the vulnerable, and second, in commanding hospitality to sojourners. We reflect to others the grace, hospitality, and kindness we’ve received from God. We have empathy for physical sojourners as those who understand we are sojourners in this world. --Tim Keller

Joy

“We can be unhappy about many things, but joy can still be there... It is important to become aware that every moment of our life we have an opportunity to choose joy...It is in the choice that our true freedom lies, and that freedom is, in the final analysis, the freedom to love.” Henri Nouwen

Peace

Isaiah 9:6

“Prince of Peace”

2 Thessalonians 3:16

Colossians 3:15

John 14:27

John 16:33

Philippians 4:6-7

Romans 5:1

Luke 5:12-16

The Wilderness

“Tais eremois”

Literally means “lonely places.”

Desert Father: Arsenius the Great

Noise is the great threat to the spiritual life in the modern world.

James 1:19-20

John 14:27

“Tais eremois” the place that our soul can be laid bare for who and what it actually is, but in the presence of the lovely gaze of God.

This has come to be called silence and solitude in our modern day in the Contemplative Christian tradition.

1. Look for a quiet place and time

Scripture and prayers, less is more...

2. Let go

“God, I give everyone and everything to you”

It is the release of your ego

“surrender”

“Not my will but yours”—Jesus

3. Listen

“The primary posture of a follower of Jesus is sitting at his feet.”

4. Love

The primary goal of the spiritual life is love

“You become like that which you contemplate.”

“Our greatest need is to be silent before this great God, for the language he hears is the silent language of love.” --John of the Cross

The spiritual journey is about moving from fear to love

Let God love you in the quiet...

Follow Jesus to the quiet this Christmas. Give yourself the gift, that Jesus longs to give to you this Christmas-- His peace.

Story of Silent night

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light. Radiant beams from thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace. Jesus Lord at thy birth, Jesus Lord at thy birth.