

Steek gerus 'n kers aan terwyl jy lees en aanbid.

Skriflesing : Johannes 7: 37-44

Tema : Strome van lewende water. Is Jesus nog vars nuus? Watter energie straal ons uit?

BROODJIES VIR DIE PAD

“Man's maker was made man that He, Ruler of the stars, might nurse at His mother's breast; that the Bread might hunger, the Fountain thirst, the Light sleep, the Way be tired on its journey; that Truth might be accused of false witnesses, the Teacher be beaten with whips, the Foundation be suspended on wood; that Strength might grow weak; that the Healer might be wounded; that Life might die.”

— Saint Augustine of Hippo

“Christians don't simply learn or study or use Scripture; we assimilate it, take it into our lives in such a way that it gets metabolized into acts of love, cups of cold water, missions into all the world, healing and evangelism and justice in Jesus' name, hands raised in adoration of the Father, feet washed in company with the Son.”

— Eugene H. Peterson, *Eat This Book: A Conversation in the Art of Spiritual Reading*

“But the ultimate reason for our hope is not to be found at all in what we want, wish for and wait for; the ultimate reason is that we are wanted and wished for and waited for. What is it that awaits us? Does anything await us at all, or are we alone? Whenever we base our hope on trust in the divine mystery, we feel deep down in our hearts: there is someone who is waiting for you, who is hoping for you, who believes in you. We are waited for as the prodigal son in the parable is waited for by his father. We are accepted and received, as a mother takes her children into her arms and comforts them. God is our last hope because we are God's first love.”

— Jürgen Moltmann, *The Source of Life: The Holy Spirit and the Theology of Life*

“To ignore, repress, or dismiss our feelings is to fail to listen to the stirrings of the Spirit within our emotional life. Jesus listened. In John's Gospel we are told that Jesus was moved with the deepest emotions (11:33)...

The gospel portrait of the beloved Child of Abba is that of a man exquisitely attuned to His emotions and uninhibited in expressing them. The Son of Man did not scorn of reject feelings as fickle and unreliable. They were sensitive antennae to which He listened carefully and through which He perceived the will of His Father for congruent speech and action.”

— Brennan Manning, *Abba's Child: The Cry of the Heart for Intimate Belonging*

*“There's something I have learned from what I've lived:
If you're to live something, live it to its fullest
Your beloved should fall exhausted from your kisses
You should fall exhausted from smelling a flower*

*One can watch the sky for hours
Can for hours watch the sea, a bird, a child
To live on earth is to mingle with it
Growing roots that cannot be eradicated*

*When you hug a friend you should hug him vigorously
You should fight with all your muscles, body, passion
And once you stretch out on the hot sand
You should rest like a grain of sand, a leaf, a stone*

*One should listen to all the beautiful music on earth
So as to fill all his being with sounds and songs
One should dive into life as if
Diving from a rock into an emerald sea*

*Distant lands should lure you, people you do not know
You should burn with desire to read all the books, to
know all the lives
You should not exchange for anything the pleasure of
drinking a glass of water
All the joys should fill you with the yearning to live*

*And you should live grief also, with honor, with all your
being
For grief also, like joy, matures a person
Your blood should mingle with the great circulation of
life
In your veins must circulate the eternal fresh blood of
life*

*There is something I have learned from what I've lived:
If you're to live, live big, as if you are mingling with the
rivers, the sky, the whole universe
For what we call a life span is a gift to life
And life is a gift to mankind”*

— Ataol Behramoğlu

Threadbare Language

"I SHALL GO TO my grave," a friend of mine once wrote me, "feeling that Christian thought is a dead language—one that feeds many living ones to be sure, one that still sets these vibrating with echoes and undertones, but which I would no more use overtly than I would speak Latin." I suppose he is right, more right than wrong anyway. If the language that clothes Christianity is not dead, it is at least, for many, dying; and what is really surprising, I suppose, is that it has lasted as long as it has.

Take any English word, even the most commonplace, and try repeating it twenty times in a row—umbrella, let us say, umbrella, umbrella, umbrella—and by the time we have finished, umbrella will not be a word any more. It will be a noise only, an absurdity, stripped of all meaning. And when we take even the greatest and most meaningful words that the Christian faith has and repeat them over and over again for some two thousand years, much the same thing happens. There was a time when such words as faith, sin, redemption, and atonement had great depth of meaning, great reality; but through centuries of handling and mishandling they have tended to become such empty banalities that just the mention of them is apt to turn people's minds off like a switch, and wise and good men like this friend of mine whom I have quoted wonder seriously why anyone at all in tune with his times should continue using them. And sometimes I wonder myself.

But I keep on using them. I keep plugging away at the same old words. I keep on speaking the language of the Christian faith because, although the words themselves may well be mostly dead, the longer I use them, the more convinced I become that the realities that the words point to are very real and un-dead, and because I do not happen to know any other language that for me points to these realities so well. Certain branches of psychology point to them, certain kinds of poetry and music, some of the scriptures of Buddhism and other religions. But for me, threadbare and exhausted as the Christian language often is, it remains the richest one even so. And when I ask myself, as I often do, what it is that I really hope to accomplish as a teacher of "religion," I sometimes think that I would gladly settle for just the very limited business of clarifying to some slight degree the meaning of four or five of these great, worn-out Christian words, trying to suggest something of the nature of the experiences that I believe they are describing.

-Frederick Buechner-

BROOD VIR DIE PAD

Geestelike Waardes: Ons het nie méér helde nodig nie, net meer moed

Een van die temas wat die Duitse teoloog Dietrich Bonhoeffer in sy geskrif "Ná tien jaar" aan die orde stel is die saak van burgerlike moed (Zivilcourage). Hy skryf hierdie besondere teks – wat 'n paar jaar gelede in Engels onder die titel "After Ten Years": Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Our Times heruitgegee is – as 'n Kersgeskenk in Desember 1942 vir van sy medesamesweerders teen Hitler en die Nazi-bewind, en deel daarin perspektiewe uit sy konkrete ervaring van hul stryd tydens die voorafgaande dekade.

Bonhoeffer is goed bewus van die moed en opofferinge van baie Duitsers gedurende die oorlog. Tog meen hy dat burgerlike moed eintlik baie skaars was. Die probleem is nie soseer dat mense op 'n persoonlike vlak lafhartig was nie, maar dat moed gereduseer is tot gehoorsaamheid aan opdragte wat van bo gekom het, ook as deel van die eise van jou beroep. In die proses is daar egter nie deeglik genoeg rekening gehou met die boosheid van mense en stelsels nie. Daarom die gebrek aan verantwoordelike optrede wat moontlik 'n keuse teen bevel of beroepsukses geverg het. In dié klimaat het mense eerder hul gewete onderdruk. Of hulle is deur hul gewetenswroeging verlam.

"Maar burgerlike moed," skryf Bonhoeffer, "kan alleenlik gedy uit die vrye verantwoordelikheid van die vrye mens." En vir hom is hierdie vrye verantwoordelikheid, teologies beskou, begrond in die God wat ons roep tot verantwoordelike handeling en wat vergifnis en troos belowe aan diegene wat weens sodanige optrede skuld op hulself neem.

Bonhoeffer – wat in April 1945 tereggestel is – word dikwels beskou as iemand wat burgerlike moed beliggaam het. In ons dag en konteks sou ons eweneens kon dink aan merkwaardige figure wat nie stilbly as die waarheid verloën word nie, wat nie wegstroom daarvan om in moeilike omstandighede moedig op te kom vir dit wat reg en goed is nie. Vir seker het ons meer sulke uitsonderlike morele voorbeelde van burgerlike moed nodig.

Tog sou ons tereg kon byvoeg dat ons nie ons verantwoordelikheid volledig moet verplaas na enkele morele helde nie. Ons moet verder ook nie die invloed onderskat nie van hulle wat in hul familie-lewe, werkkring en openbare optrede vanuit 'n innerlike vryheid met klein dade van durf poog om die samelewing beter en meer menslik te maak.

Die dikwels aangehaalde woorde van die Italiaanse skrywer en joernalis Franca Magnani (1925-1996) bevat daarom steeds 'n groot stuk wysheid: "Hoe meer burgers met burgerlike moed 'n land het, hoe minder helde het hulle nodig." – RRV

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