

WHAT IS MY FAITH IN THE FUTURE?

By the Rev. Glenn H. Turner

OPENING WORDS & CHALICE LIGHTING:

Nothing worth doing is completed in our lifetime,

Therefore, we are saved by hope.

Nothing true or beautiful or good makes complete sense in any immediate context of history;

Therefore, we are saved by faith.

Nothing we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone.

Therefore, we are saved by love.

No virtuous act is quite a virtuous from the standpoint of our friend or foe as from our own;

Therefore, we are saved by the final form of love which is forgiveness.

- Reinhold Neibuhr

CHECK IN: (40 - 50 minutes)

What you share may be about your physical or spiritual health, cares or concerns for loved ones, issues you are facing.

Each person in the group speaks uninterrupted, if time remaining, general response and conversation is welcome. Confidentiality.

FOCUS:

Where does the future come from? It often feels these days as if the future arrives from nowhere. Suddenly things feel unfamiliar, we're behaving differently, the world doesn't work the way it used to... The future doesn't take form irrationally. It materializes from the actions, values, and beliefs we're practicing now.... If we want a different future, we have to take responsibility for what we are doing in the present.

I believe...many of us have lost faith in the future. Whether we are economically poor, or leading lives of material advantage that seem meaningless, it is time for us to notice whether we feel hopeful about the future. There is much suffering in the world, and it is increasing...If we realize that suffering is common to the human condition, we could begin listening to each other for this shared experience. It would open our hearts to each other, and this would be a good start.

Sometimes we confront the pain of the present and counter it with blind faith. This is especially true in the United States, where it is common to hear statements like: "I have faith in human ingenuity." We aren't lacking solutions. What we lack is the will to implement them.

For example, there are sufficient food and resources to provide for everyone on the planet. What we lack is the political will to use resources equitably, and to distribute them fairly.

Our ingenuity has already provided solutions to critical problems. We already know how to create a healthy, life-affirming future for all peoples. We have a different problem - developing the will to act once we know what to do. The gap between knowing and doing is bridged by the human heart.

It is time for us to notice what is going on, to think about this together, and to make choices about how we will act. We can't keep rejecting solutions because they require us to change our behavior.

adapted from Margaret Wheatley

Discussion:

Are we able to live a life that has meaning for us?

And to help others live good lives?

How do our needs and behaviors affect others - those in our own families, and also in our global family?

LIKES AND WISHES

How did this session go for you? Is there anything you'd like to call particular attention to?

CLOSING WORDS:

“Faith is not just a leap in the dark. Faith is a leap made toward life, for the sake of living things, in the very shadow of the possibility of failure in any of our ventures.

For as long as we can believe and love, we can solve our problems - and do something that gives hope and courage as well.

from *The Joy of Being Human* - Eugene Kennedy