

still waters

home church studies

psalm 146

[Worship]

1 Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD, O my soul! 2 I will praise the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God all my life long. 3 Do not put your trust in princes, in mortals, in whom there is no help. 4 When their breath departs, they return to the earth; on that very day their plans perish. 5 Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD their God, 6 who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them; who keeps faith forever; 7 who executes justice for the oppressed; who gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets the prisoners free; 8 the LORD opens the eyes of the blind. The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous. 9 The LORD watches over the strangers; he upholds the orphan and the widow, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin. 10 The LORD will reign forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the LORD!

[Think & Pray...]

Consider:

Often, we believe that God is bound in duty to perform for us. We silently think that when all goes wrong in our lives, that he is less than God if his deliverance is not here when we order it-like at the drive-thru window.

Our Lectionary readings for this week focus on widows, worship and the change of heart that moves us from being religiously right, to religiously sacrificial for others. The readings from St. Paul's story is that of his change of heart when God changes his perspective. Prior to this "revealing," he was comfortable in his piety, and in his striving within religious circles—excelling and having it all, working hard and enjoying the lavishness of his rewards. I imagine he felt justified and sinless to a degree because of his ability to strive and attain a particular religious stature.

Serious consideration and walking with Jesus will change that...

In our Lectionary story of Paul, we can view his words to mean that his "conversion" came from God, and so he needn't submit to anyone else—he is independent in his "personal relationship with Christ." Truth be told, as we examine Paul's life, reconsider these words to be filled with exactly the opposite—a man not presuming to charge into the position of authority—a man who was learning slowly, to honor those around him, and above him—a man who was learning respect through an un-doing of his religiosity—a man finding humility, and a man finding himself in Christ.



Is today's Christianity a matter of good business, the latest Christian fads, like the latest books, self-help, methods, and movements; sophisticated Christian consumerism and entertainment; private groups, clicks, and affinity groups; filling our heads with information and theory? Is this where we find God? Is this where we walk with Jesus? Is this our prophetic voice?

luke 7.11-17

[The Scripture]

11 Soon afterwards he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went with him. 12 As he approached the gate of the town, a man who had died was being carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow; and with her was a large crowd from the town. 13 When the Lord saw her, he had compassion for her and said to her, "Do not weep." 14 Then he came forward and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to you, rise!" 15 The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. 16 Fear seized all of them; and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen among us!" and "God has looked favorably on his people!" 17 This word about him spread throughout Judea and all the surrounding country.