



still waters

home church studies

Psalm 145.1-5, 17-21 [Worship]

1 | will extol you, my God and King, and bless your name forever and ever. 2 Every day I will bless you, and praise your name forever and ever. 3 Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; his greatness is unsearchable. 4 One generation shall laud your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts. 5 On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate.

17 The LORD is just in all his ways, and kind in all his doings. 18 The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. 19 He fulfills the desire of all who fear him; he also hears their cry, and saves them. 20 The LORD watches over all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy. 21 My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD, and all flesh will bless his holy name forever and ever.

Consider:

[Words]

These readings attest to the tenacity of God for us in the face of death. We live in a lethal culture in which our greed, anxiety, and violence turn our political-economic system into a killing field. These texts bring us the God of life who is our abiding, trustworthy advocate in the face of every death.

Haggai, addressing a tiny, bereft community of faith, says three times, "Take courage" (Haggai 1:4). The ground for courage is "I am with you" and "My spirit abides among you" (verse 5). Paul, in light of the same confidence, bids his readers to "stand firm and hold fast" (2 Thessalonians 2:15) and not to be misled into false faith.

Jesus' debate with the Sadducees in Luke is a life-or-death matter. They believe there is no resurrection and death will win. Jesus cuts through their subterfuge by attesting that God "is not God of the dead, but of the living" (Luke 20:38). The question they pose about life after death evaporates in his dictum, "In God all are alive" (verse 38).

Without God, death will win. We, however, are not without God, the God of life. On that basis we may act in daily life for what God wills in the world. God wills life!

– Walter Bruggemann

[Scripture]

Luke 20.27-38

27 Some Sadducees, those who say there is no resurrection, came to him 28 and asked him a question, "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies, leaving a wife but no children, the man shall marry the widow and raise up children for his brother. 29 Now there were seven brothers; the first married, and died childless; 30 then the second 31 and the third married her, and so in the same way all seven died childless. 32 Finally the woman also died. 33 In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had married her." 34 Jesus said to them, "Those who belong to this age marry and are given in marriage; 35 but those who are considered worthy of a place in that age and in the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. 36 Indeed they cannot die anymore, because they are like angels and are children of God, being children of the resurrection. 37 And the fact that the dead are raised Moses himself showed, in the story about the bush, where he speaks of the Lord as the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. 38 Now he is God not of the dead, but of the living; for to him all of them are alive."

Question: Where has our "fact-based" bible accuracy actually kept others (and probably ourselves) from life? Is there a way to remain faithful to Jesus' gospel of life, without killing someone?