

The Light of Morning

November 25, 2018: Christ the King Sunday

2 Samuel 23:1-7; Revelation 1:4-8; John 18:33-37

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*You're awake when I'm asleep.
And you're asleep when I'm awake.*

*But there are always leaves here. On the ground.
Where a sock, and a scarf, and a school bag lay.*

*The trees pray. The brush stills.
Beyond the ridge, it will move.
The birds are silent. The trains stop.
The moon fades into blue.*

*Ah, there you are.
Your eyes meet mine.
That what was left now veers right.
Their covers though black conceal the sheets cleaned white.*

*My love, my love, get up
Wake up*

*Please, my love, please,
Just wake up.*

My friends, are you awake?

When was the last time that you woke up? No, like really woke up? When you had one of those profound moments of epiphany? Of revelation? When the light was too bright, too powerful, that you couldn't avoid it, even if you tried? When you, perhaps for the first time, saw the Truth clearly. And "What is truth," Pilate asks. Well, when was the last time you saw the truth of yourself, this life, and our God clearly? Or have you been asleep for too long that you simply can't remember? The sock, the scarf, the school bag that lay behind. Are you still sleeping now?

My friends, it's time to wake up.

When was the last time you saw the sunrise? No, like actually saw the sunrise? Not when you kind of noticed it was light out after stumbling through the motions getting ready for work or school. No, I'm talking like when did you set your alarm and intend to go out, into the dark, to sit in stillness, and wait for our beautiful sun to rise over an equally beautiful ridge? To wait and watch for its coming. To anticipate with hope and expectation a new day, when all the shadows around you would slowly but surely begin to illuminate?

My guess is that it's hard to remember that day, if that day even ever happened at all. Our modern world doesn't really advocate for such endeavors now, does it? I mean, who wants to wait for anything anymore? Let alone setting an alarm for anything. If we can, we'll sleep in. As long as the snooze allows. And then we'll rush through everything such that day and night, morning and evening are tethered together, with a lot of incoherent noise in between. And the only things that grab our attention are those loud things. You know, those things blaring in color and dress, voice and movement. After all, there seemingly needs to be thunder and lightning for us to stop and look, to peel us away from our screens and routines. The subtle, the quiet, the soft, the slow, the distant, the small, eh... meh... next... right? But, it is in those latter things that our King, our God, God's Son, our Light is said to be found.

*The spirit of the Lord speaks through me, his word is upon my tongue.
The God of Israel has spoken, the Rock of Israel has said to me:
One who rules over people justly,
is like the light of morning,
like the sun rising on a cloudless morning,
gleaming from the rain on the grassy land.*

2 Samuel 23:2-4

And my friends, he is still like the grace of early morning. Like the quiet rays rising on a cloudless day. He doesn't appear in a storm. Or in a loud sonic boom. The ground doesn't shake and the seas don't need to swell. Our Lord simply gleams off the dew of the grass at first light. At first light. And,

He is also there in your smile.

In your warm hands

And at an opened door.

He is there everywhere where love and peace are implored.

Well, you might not think it pretty, and that it's all too simple to believe,
but I promise he is there
in both the rain and the dew,
and even in the weeds.

Can you see it? Are you yet awake? Can you pull back the covers? And make the wrong right?

Can you reclaim what we've forgotten?

And what we've lost over night?

2 Samuel 6-7 says, *"But the goddess are all like thorns that are thrown away;
for they cannot be picked up with the hand; to touch them one uses an iron bar or the shaft of a spear.
And they are entirely consumed in fire on the spot."*

John 18:36 says, *"Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not from this world.
If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over.
But as it is, my kingdom is not from here.'*

Revelation 1:7 says, *"Look! He is coming with the clouds;
every eye will see him, even those who pierced him;
and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail. So it is to be."*

My friends, can you see it? The evolution? The Alpha and the Omega? Jesus is the bridge from the Old to the New.

What was once at judgement has been redeemed. Our sheets have been cleaned pearly white. God's rule no longer pits one vs. the other, the native vs. the foreigner, the righteous vs. the unrighteous. For God's rule now makes room for even those who pierced him. For you and for Judas, for me and the Centurion. God's Kingdom in Christ does not enlist foot-soldiers who pound fists into chests and raise their iron to fight, but it is blessed with peacemakers who beat their guns into rakes and their ammunition into seed.

But we have recently been led to believe that power is contained in only muscle and might. In warships and cannons. In volume and attacks. In mistrust and divisions. But we have been led astray. My friends, to the dark, we have been led far astray. For true power comes not in tweets or counter tweets of blather and bluster, but in a single quiet stare. In a soft confident voice. In a short subtle proverb. In humility uncalled to.

Power is made manifest in those things, and

When we come together.

When we live together.

When we dream together.

When we who were young and now who are old

Remember childish stories of that rainbow and gold

Of a world so large it was impossible to behold

And yet so small that all was foretold

Wake up.

My friends, please wake up.

The sun will rise and continue to rise

But we also must rise

If we're to see the Light that will rise.