



PEACE IN THE VALLEY: The Valley of Questions

Luke 22:39-46

March 9 - 15, 2008

What if we are not called to find the answers but to live the questions? Of course, answers do give us a sense of control. But life is often 'out of our control'. In fact, life is 'beyond' us. The only real decision we can make is to choose life in Christ. When has this choice been difficult? How have you been strengthened through prayer? Where have you been courageous?

Sunday, March 9: Maybe our faith does not give us answers, but empowers us to live the questions of why, why me, how come, when, and so on. If we don't know all the answers or can't know them, on what do we base hope, confidence and the desire to go on? Hebrews 11:1 begins a series of 'by faith' examples of people following the will of God beyond the questions they may have had. "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. For this the ancients were commended." Read Hebrews 1. Find one character with which to spend some time. What was this character asked to do by faith? What 'answers' are you being asked to take on faith today?

Monday, March 10: Living life's questions means a willingness to live with mystery and ambiguity. "Taking on the mystery is yielding to grace, letting go of all explanations, analyses, ideologies, self-images, images of God, agendas, expectations. [A Time to Live: Robert Raines]. Where do you need to 'let go and let God'?"

Tuesday, March 11: 'Taking on the mystery' captures the essence of what it means to be human, to embrace beyond all that we can comprehend the abiding mystery at the heart of the universe. To take on the mystery of things is to wear it like a shawl or cloak, to put on a cloud of unknowing, to live into luminous darkness. [A Time to Live: Robert Raines] If you were to wrap yourself in a shawl or cloak, what color and fabric might you use? What might luminous darkness be?

Wednesday, March 12: We may experience mystery as random or contingent, implacable, as silent as stone in the face of human sorrow. We may question our way into a whirlwind of no answers, like Job or feel forsaken, like Jesus, but there may also come moments when the veil is thin and we know we are known. [A Time to Live: Robert Raines] When during a time of questioning have you known God's presence and comfort?

Thursday, March 13: Consider I Corinthians 13:12-13. 'Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror, but then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.'

Friday, March 14: Pray Hymn: 368

My hope is built on nothing less
than Jesus' blood and righteousness.
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
but wholly lean on Jesus' name.

When darkness veils his lovely face,
I rest on his unchanging grace.
In every high and stormy gale,
my anchor holds within the veil.

His oath, his covenant, his blood
support me in the whelming flood.
When all around my soul gives way,
he then is all my hope and stay.

When he shall come with trumpet sound,
O may I then in him be found!
Dressed in his righteousness alone,
faultless to stand before the throne!
On Christ the solid rock I stand,
all other ground is sinking sand;
all other ground is sinking sand.