

Bible Study
Advent 1, Year C
November 29, 2015

(RCL) Jeremiah 33:14-16; Psalm 25:1-9; 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13; Luke 21:25-36

Jeremiah 33:14-16

“The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah.”

Two things strike me about this sentence. I am assured that God is good, and will fulfill the promises made. Simultaneously, I am struck by the frustration of the Israelites, and indeed of us today, with having to wait upon the Lord.

- What are the promises God has made to you?
- For what are you waiting for God to fulfill?
- How can we rest in the assurance that God will fulfill and bring to fruition the promises God has made?

Let us rest in the faith and reassurance of those promises.

Psalm 25:1-9

In the first lines of this psalm, we get a great prayer of trust – “To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul; my God, I put my trust in you.” What a great way to begin a prayer! The psalmist also shows their own humanity and doubt in the very next line, “let me not be humiliated, nor let my enemies triumph over me.” The story of our walk with God in faith is often one of trusting even in the face of doubt.

- When we come to the end of our day, can we too say, “In you have I trusted all the day long”?
- How would it feel to continually put our trust in God?
- What would this challenge in us?
- How might our lives be transformed?

Perhaps we would find that “all the paths of the Lord are love and faithfulness” – what a gift that could be.

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

This letter is written by Paul to one of the early church communities. I wonder, in our position as members of the Anglican Communion, how often we think this way of our fellow churches. I suspect the practice of writing encouragement to one another has ceased, partly because we are in a world where written letters are not the fastest forms of communication – and partly because we simply forget to encourage and thank God for one another. Following God’s call is difficult. We need to lift one another up, to encourage one another in our callings, even when we don’t immediately see eye to eye.

- How might we lift up one another?
- In what ways can we encourage one another in our callings and ministry?

May we abound in love for one another and have our hearts strengthened in holiness.

Luke 21:25-36

It is hard for me to read this gospel lesson of the signs of the coming of man and not connect it to some of the doom and gloom teachers and preachers who love to talk about the end of time and draw lines in the sand over who will be saved. After reading it through a few times, though, I find this passage not to be about living in fear but rather about standing in our truth as Christians. Jesus' instructions are not to spend time worrying and preparing for this coming, but rather to "stand up and raise your heads" when these things come to pass.

- Are we ready to stand strong in our faith? Why or why not?
- "Heaven and Earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away." How can we hold more firmly to the everlasting words of Jesus and let go of the things that will pass away?

Written by Jazzy Bostock

Jazzy is a sun-loving, big-dreaming, laugh-adoring, God-praising Native Hawaiian woman, in her first year at seminary. She believes deeply in the power of kindness, compassion, gentleness, and most of all love. She is grateful for the opportunity God has given her and for all that God is. Mahalo piha.

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