



Monday Musing: Sept 9th, 2024 Marking Time...

Recently, my car needed some repairs. It was the differential in the back end. In particular, it was the spider gear and the clutch plates inside that had been worn and scorched over 11 years. But as I waited for my car to be ready, and it took a couple of weeks, it got me thinking about forests, life, and time.

First, to understand the differential: the 'diff' is a gearbox placed between the drive wheels that transmits power from the engine to the axle to move the wheels and, more importantly, to move them at different speeds from each other. This is what you need when you are going around corners and curves.

It is like soldiers marking time in one spot, while the rest of the soldiers in their line march forward around a corner or a curve. The soldiers marking time, for me, seem to work like the differential as it slows one wheel while the other keeps going.

Last Friday in the forest, I was telling Karen about my 'diff' repair and found myself thinking about how when I'm in the trees, I'm immersed in a different experience of life and yet beyond the forest, life keeps going on. It is like the forest gives me a place to mark time, or maybe it just becomes like another dimension, while the wheel of life beyond the forest keeps turning.

Over the last few weeks, there's been another perspective for me on time that I have experienced many, many times in ministry, over the last 25 years, and personally too. And that is time spent in the hospital with someone who is sick or dying. Standing in the hospital room has been like marking time or being in another dimension. Looking out the hospital room windows the world keeps going oblivious to what is happening inside the room. Looking down from the windows I know that no one below has a clue what is happening to those I am with. Life below, and around keeps going, even while we're immersed in the situation, the dimension inside, like marking time, waiting, waiting, for the turn to be made.

I have found the same feeling while looking out the windows from funeral homes too. Outside, the busyness of the downtown continues with people on the streets talking, shopping, eating, with cars lined up trying to get where they're going. Inside, we're mourning the loss of someone dear. Marking time, marking the moment. Waiting for the turn to be made, the turn in our lives from what was to what will be.

I think when we read the bible, we need to realize that the stories of people's lives and experiences with God are from their point of view, in their time, like marking their time, while the rest of their world, the whole world known and unknown to them, kept going on.

One thing I do know for me, and I hope for you, is that when I am in the forest, or find myself in those places marking time, I know I'm not alone. I feel God's presence. And no matter what is happening, no matter what turn it is going to be, I trust there we are immersed in the stuff real life is made of - we're immersed, embraced, and held in love.

We also need to remember when we're out in the streets, shopping, eating, driving along, there are others somewhere, marking time.

Thanks to Cody and the other mechanics who repaired my 'diff' that I might continue to make turns moving forward and around while marking time just as we all do in life, from time to time.

Peace always everyone,
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Prayer

Holy God, it is in those places of marking time
That we need you, hear you, feel your presence.
It is in those times, we wait for the turn to come.
Transitions, births, deaths, endings, beginnings,
We wait, in the sacredness of the turning, we wait.
Amen.

Scripture from the Lectionary This Week

Proverbs 1:20-33	Wisdom cries in the streets.
Psalms 19	The heavens declare the glory of God.
James 3:1-12	Not many of you should be teachers of God's word.
Mark 8:27-38	Who do people say that I am?

TR Question (theological reflection)

What have been your times of 'marking time'? How did you feel God's presence there?