



Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Reflection October 4, 2020

Sunday Reflection Quote: “You cannot control what happens to you in life, but you can always control what you will feel and do about what happens to you.” (Victor Frankl)

How to react when we don't understand?

Viktor Frankl, the author of Man's Search for Meaning, was a renowned psychologist focused on suicide prevention. In 1942 he, along with his wife and parents, was deported to a Nazi ghetto and later to Auschwitz and Dachau, two of the deadliest Nazi concentration camps. Victor and his sister were the only members of his family to survive the war.

With his wife and parents dead at the hands of Nazi oppressors, we might expect Frankl to be bitter and defeated. Yet, that was not to come. He later proclaimed that the words above were his secret to surviving the Nazi oppression and camps when so many did not.

From the Old Testament we read: “For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth ... so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.” (Isaiah 55:10-11, NRSV)

I don't believe everything happens for a reason...a reason I can fathom anyway. I don't believe God dispenses suffering...suffering I can understand anyway. I don't believe everything will work out...work out the way I want it to anyway. I confess that when I've been told by my friends things like “Everything happens for a reason” or “God doesn't give us more than we can handle” or “When one door closes a window will open” I am not uplifted.

But here's what I do believe: I believe there are some things we can count on even if we don't understand them, like God's constant presence and God's love and goodness. I believe God's word is as sure as the most fundamental cycles of life. I believe God's word is truer than any story we can make up. That we can count on it. We can build our lives on it.

The question is not whether we like or even understand things happening around us. The question is, when they do happen, how will they find us? Hiding in a back room with the lights off? Or dressed and willing to face them believing God will “be with us always?”

Special prayers this week for President and Mrs. Trump and all those suffering from COVID-19. We pray for an ease in suffering and a speedy recovery. We pray for all first responders. We pray for all of our friends and families near and dear to us. And may the peace which passes all understanding be with us all this day and forever. Amen –
Vance