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Wandering Woodrings

EASTER ENIGMAS

Enigma is a fun word for mystery. When I think of a mystery, I (Jen) usually think of a detective who-dunnit story. But mystery has long been used to describe paradoxical articles of faith. God has revealed them but we cannot fully wrap our heads around them. For example, Jesus was fully human and fully God. Or, how can God be ONE, and also three? We work hard to understand enigmas as best we can, but they are best appreciated with a good dose of awe and wonder, with the recognition that they might just be bigger than we can fully grasp.

This Easter season I've been pondering what is sometimes called the Divine Exchange, what Jesus exchanged with us on the cross. It started one day when I was pondering my reluctance to come into God's presence to pray. Oh, I had allowed shame to sneak in. I was feeling unworthy, stained by sins of omission and commission in areas where I was trying hard to grow. In a flash, I was reminded that Jesus took all those on Himself at the cross and that is why I am always welcome to "come boldly to the throne of grace" (Hebrews 4:16, Hebrews 1-4). Relief came with the truth of this mystery of Jesus taking my rightful punishment so I could have his deserved good standing. I can logically grasp it but I cannot fully comprehend it, let alone the amazing love that chose to do so.

The cross is a place of divine exchange. I give Him my sin. Jesus gives me his right standing with God (2 Cor 5:21). As prophesied, He was pierced and crushed for our wrongdoings. His punishment brought peace to us (Is 53:5). We often focus on this exchange in the church world but it is not all that He did on the Cross. Here are some more.



**He took our pain and bore our suffering. By His wounds, we are healed from those as well. (Is 53:4-5) So, I bring him my mourning and He gives me comfort, along with the oil of joy. (Is 61:2-3)

**I bring him my grief and ashes and He crowns me with beauty. ((Is 61:3) I bring him my despair and he replaces it with a garment of praise. (Is 61:3)

**I bring him my broken heart and

wounded places. He binds them up and brings healing. (Is 61:1 and many psalms as well talk about God being close to and healing the brokenhearted.)

My list does go on but my space runs out!

I find the exchange when I bring Him my pain or despair is not always immediately complete. However, burdens do lift off my heart. I am strengthened to take my next step. I feel palpably better when I pour out my heart and renew my trust in Him as the one who promises to set All things right at the Proper time. I'm grateful for such a kind and compassionate God who wants to share all good things with us.

I've enjoyed pondering some Easter enigmas. I hope something in my reflection encourages you too.



OTHER NEWS FROM HEBRON OAKS

The big news is that we have cancelled the Kansas Family Debrief Retreat to just focus on the one in Chico. There were zero applicants two months ahead. We are learning that everyone who comes loves these retreats but that not enough families yet realize how much this might benefit them.

We have finished our coaching classes and are seeking to finish up the required coaching practicum hours. When our Davis church asked us to debrief their youth trip to Mexico I assumed it would be a a van-full of folks. It was 50 people from 2 churches! Praise God, it went well.

Next month is quieter and we hope to catch up on many tasks neglected in the last several busier months.

He is Risen!

Jen and Craig

Pictures: top: Our March View of wildflowers, oaks, and mountains. I pasted in a Cross. Left: Jen leading the Mexico debrief. Right: stained glass window at Easton Presbyterian church.

*But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins.
He was beaten so we could be whole.
He was whipped so we could be healed.*
Isaiah 53:5 NLT

Photo: Our cross on the hill—this one I did not paste in but it is not located where a panorama shot works well. Behind we have a nice bench for our visitors to use.



April Prayer n Praise: This is a lighter month, so I'll include prayer requests for 5 of the 7 kinds of rest for us. Thank you for praising and praying with us for:

- 15 - restorative times with friends now that our schedule has more room.
- 16 - Enough experienced debriefers for the Chico debrief—still only 3 are committed but at least 5 are considering helping out.
- 17— finding new people to coach so we can get our hours of practicum done and the 100 hours of coaching toward certification.
- 18 - Our coaching to be effective when we do meet with others.
- 19 - finding help with some cleaning for Jen's mom. Jen just can't keep up with it all.
- 20 - Happy Easter. Praising God for sending Jesus to deliver, save, redeem, heal, teach, and more.**
- 21 - Helpful discussion with debriefing book discussion group today. What a book this month! Fire Lilies by Rhiannon Lloyd. I highly recommend this book about God working reconciliation in Rwanda, Congo, Kenya, Ukraine.... (she also discusses many divine exchanges at the cross)
- 22 - restorative time with friends. One book calls that Social Rest.
- 23 - families for the Chico Family Debrief Retreat. Two families are in process and raising support to come be debriefed. Please pray that more see the opportunity and step out in faith to take it.
- 24 - insights into how to develop Hebron Oaks as a Member Care location.
- 25 - God to prepare all the people coming to the family debrief: hosts, volunteers, and debriefees.
- 26 - physical exercise AND Physical rest. .
- 27 - Thanking God for another year of taxes being done. Jen is also grateful that Craig does that!**
- 28 - Global MC Meetings online today and tomorrow (Jen is debating attending at...5 am?).
- 29 - Global workers to stay rooted in the True vine, and thus bear fruit that lasts.
- 30 - emotional rest.
- MAY 1 - beneficial first meeting of the debriefer's network today (& hallelujah, someone else is organizing).
- 2 - Our local YWAM base to grow & thrive despite challenges. It's been hard for many bases since Covid.
- 3 - "being," not just doing. It is so easy to just do and do and do.
- 4 - we are grateful that seeing friends in Davis was awesome and the debriefing went well.. We are also thankful to have so much peace about canceling the Family Debrief in Kansas.**
- 5 - mental rest.
- 6 - catching up on those little tasks...or at least corralling several. Is one ever truly 'caught up?.
- 7 - Western Region YWAM meetings at the end of the month to be helpful to all who attend (Craig).
- 8 - planning for the 2nd half of the year..
- 9 - great results on Jen's cardiology baseline. The first test is today.
- 10 - finding ways to exercise despite the heat (we expect a long hot summer this year).
- 11 - We thank God for a great retreat and a good end to the lectures of our life coaching course (more practical work to be done before the course is fully finished)..**
- 12 - creative rest.
- 13 - ministries who seek to help trafficked women (and men) to be an effective blessing.
- 14 - peace on earth (John 14:27 and 1 Tim 2:1-4 peace)
- 15 - spiritual rest.

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