

MORAVIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Devotional Paper – June 2019

Let it Shine!

Read: John 9:1-11 – Healing...

In John's account the man who had been born blind experienced a life changing transformation through his healing by Jesus. His blindness was not pay-back or retribution for any of his actions or the actions of his parents. Jesus saw his blindness and his subsequent healing as a means to show people the power that God could have in their lives and that he was the ultimate source of that power and light. Sometimes we see our own ill health as a punishment for something we have done or experienced, wondering what we did to deserve this misfortune. As hard as it is not to think these things surely that is not how our God works. Our God is not a God of testing or a God of punishment for those who love him. Our God is someone who has known suffering in life. When Jesus took human form and lived among us he too suffered, he experienced pain, discomfort, humiliation, wounding; he experienced the loss of a loved one and brought about healing, not in a selfish way but in a way that restored and enabled others to believe in his restorative qualities.

In this day and age, I wonder how we measure healing. Is it a return to perfect health in body, mind and soul? Is it an acceptance of a diminished form of health or wellbeing; just being grateful that we are alive? Modern day medicine has brought about so many miracles within our lives. Today there are cures and preventative medicines for so many diseases and afflictions and many people have a life expectancy far beyond that of our own earlier relatives. How then do we deal with the reality that not all illness and disease can be healed? We donate and generate enormous funds for the investigation of so many illnesses like cancer and heart disease and yet everyday people still lose their battle and families have to face the darkness of grief.

I write this paper from a position of loss. Earlier this year my life was turned upside down by a change in my personal circumstances. Whilst it was not ill health, it caused pain and it led to a form of grieving. Many of us experience such things in life; changes in our relationships and our family dynamics bring about extreme emotions and cause us to rethink our position. Many never recover from such experiences and that sense of loss can turn to bitterness and heartache. For me, I chose to define the positives in my situation. What were the benefits which this new status brought to me? How could I make the most of this situation which I did not ask for and personally felt I did not deserve? Many of us have opportunities to dedicate ourselves to the service of others, perhaps by volunteering within our communities or through our career opportunities. Some of us are called directly by God to lead others in their faith journey. This is my privileged position, to be able to lead people to God and to preach and teach about the love which Jesus showed to the whole of humankind by his teachings and actions whilst here on earth, not least in his actions of restoration and healing.

When we share in the liturgy of the Lord's Supper we hear these words; *"You were conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of Mary, made flesh to bring light into this dark world. We give you thanks that you emptied yourself of all but love, shared our human nature, went about among us, and in your life reflected the glory of God. We thank you that you came to be our Saviour, delivering us from sin, redeeming us and making us new. You opened wide your arms on the cross, putting an end to death by dying for us."* Those words for me bring about healing. Not the kind of healing that stops bleeding or restores cells. Not the kind of healing that takes away physical pain or removes scars. I mean the kind of healing that brings peace to the heart and rest to the mind. The kind of healing that restores our faith in the love of human kind for each other. The kind of healing that brings hope to the hopeless and light which overcomes darkness. I pray that whatever your situation you may feel the love of Christ and be healed, not through the spit and the mud but by the light and love of Christ as it shines in your life.

Questions:

1. Have you experienced healing through any kind of loss?
2. What does healing mean in your life?

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