



Daily Reflections

March 11, 2018

Scripture

John 3: 14-21

Jesus said to Nicodemus:

“Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert,
so must the Son of Man be lifted up,
so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.”

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him might not perish
but might have eternal life.

For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world,
but that the world might be saved through him.

Whoever believes in him will not be condemned,
but whoever does not believe has already been condemned,
because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

And this is the verdict,
that the light came into the world,
but people preferred darkness to light,
because their works were evil.

For everyone who does wicked things hates the light
and does not come toward the light,
so that his works might not be exposed.

But whoever lives the truth comes to the light,
so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God.

Our Scripture Reflection

John wants us to know that the only direction to go when we are in trouble is up. When we look up at the Cross we stop looking at reflections of ourselves and seek the only One who can bring us forgiveness, healing and Peace. Jesus and only Jesus is Our Savior.

Food for your Journey

As a person who has a life-long terror of snakes, I respond to the sentence "In Numbers, some of the bitten people could have refused to look at the bronze serpent and died. It's hard to imagine why anyone would, but it was possible." From my own nightmares, I can easily imagine being a Hebrew woman surrounded by venomous snakes slithering in sand, crawling upon rocks, hanging from tent flaps and ties and hiding in pots and among tools. The snakes' hideous odor permeating the air — adding to my terror of their presence and murderous intent. I can see myself desperately swinging my head from side to side and whirling my skirts to dislodge any real or imaginary snakes that may be clinging to the clothes I'm wearing — vainly trying to look at all places at once to identify and avoid the danger all around me. I cannot imagine having the courage to lift my eyes from the snakes around me to raise my gaze to a bronze "serpent," even as people who love me scream that it is my only chance to live. Fear, overwhelming terror, would immobilize me from doing the only thing that could save me.

I suggest that many sin-bitten people do not look up and live because of fear, overwhelming terror, at the nightmarish situations in which they find themselves.

They do not look up and live because they have no practice trusting anything but their own abilities.

They do not look up and live because they have invested little time or effort in those who love them.

They do not look up and live because they have no long-term relationship with God that allows them to trust even when not to do so is death.

—Deborah J. Stowers, in e-mail correspondence about this text.

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, You gave Your very life for my salvation on the Cross. Help me, Lord, to wake up and realize that I can not save myself. I need You! May I look up to You this day and keep my eyes focused on You at all times. Amen