



Grain

“We’ve got to give ourselves to this struggle until the end. Nothing would be more tragic than to stop at this point in Memphis. We’ve got to see it through.” –The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (Delivered the night before he was killed to a group of striking sanitation workers, who suffered from low wages and exposure to toxins)

Field

¹The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork. ²Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge. ³There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard; ⁴yet their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun, ⁵which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy, and like a strong man runs its course with joy. ⁶Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them; and nothing is hid from its heat. ⁷The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the decrees of the LORD are sure, making wise the simple; ⁸the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is clear, enlightening the eyes; Psalm 19:1-8

Thoughts by William Mattson, Rhinelander

Why have we not emphasized and integrated all of cosmic creation, the foundational material and spiritual life force into the entire Christian story? We’re the poorer for it. If all of creation is sacred, why has the Church stood by quietly as it was being pillaged? The blue planet is enveloped in a crisis. How humans respond in the next ten years will set the planet on a path to either worsening destruction for tens of thousands of years or a slow repair for tens of decades. What shall it be?

As stewards of our common home, we must act. Author and activist, Reverend H. Paul Santmire, prefers that we call our relationship with creation, a partnership, not a stewardship. We must respect creation as our equals, he argues. So, what next? Because there are powerful forces that refuse to accept that we are in crisis, and they control much of business and government, nothing will change if we do not demand it.

Martin Luther taught that scripture calls us to be both personally responsible for our neighbor, and civically responsible for our communities by ensuring good civil governance that cares for the larger common good (such as clean air and water, safe public spaces, schools, judicial fairness, healthy landscapes). We must embrace a new consciousness, a modern cosmic theology of creation to right our course and to fortify our ecumenical resolve to demand governance that respects, protects and repairs all of creation. This means that we have to vote with prayerful discernment, and we may have to march with other faith communities to insist that government leaders craft the needed policies and then make them into laws. It’s about caring for creation at both a personal and a civic level. We cannot have one without the other.

To paraphrase Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., “An edifice that is creating harm must be changed.” God help us to help all of our earthly neighbor, seen and unseen, small and large. We see and hear their travails. Happy Monday!

References to "cosmic theology of creation" are from Rev. H. Paul Santmire and Rev. Dr. Joseph Sittler.

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Many Blessings upon you,

William Mattson