25th January 2023

Still

"Let all that I am wait quietly before God."
Bible, *Psalm 62:5*

My reflection on "empty" yesterday caused me to ponder other important aspects from my counselling years ago. And one of these was theology.

I'd been brought up in a Christian household, and everything was informed by Scripture. We learned great chunks of the Bible in school. "Memory verses" were integral to my Sunday School years. And, as a teenager, when I became familiar with "giving my personal testimony", I knew I had to reference the Bible, key verses that informed my Christian life. This was all good stuff, and I don't decry it in any way. But the trouble was, I had learned to work with a "canon within a Cannon" in Scripture. The sections of the Bible I'd been encouraged to rely on and which had become imbedded in my psyche were additional "drivers" to how I envisaged and acted out my Christian service.

Jesus said: "No one who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the Kingdom of Heaven." I was informed by that, every waking moment. It wasn't for me to question, or express doubts, or complain. It was for me, a Kingdom servant, to get on with the demands of the work.

Jesus said: "Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head." You shouldn't look for rest like the foxes and birds. It's about doing, and moving, and making a difference. It's not about safety and home, it's about mission and service.

Christ's call *is* about commitment. But what I was missing was the balance to that, the self-care as well as the self-sacrifice, the stillness as well as the service. I needed to hear God's guidance to the Psalmist: "Be still and know that I am God"; to heed Zechariah's call to me to "be still before the Lord"; to listen to Peter's advice to "cast all your anxiety on Him"; to understand Samuel's advice: "Now then, stand still and see the great things the Lord is about to do before your eyes."

I don't always get the balance right in my Christian life. But I know now what I didn't know then – that Scripture gives me the balance I need, if only I would see the whole of it, and not just the "drivers" that I, and others, feel I should be responsive to.

A prayer for today

Lord, help me to see that when I am still in your presence, I am still about your business. Amen

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