



Vision and Viewpoint

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Where is God now?

God is in the newness of life. Newness is where God waits for us to teach us new things. It is, however, the old, the familiar, the routine, the commonplace that we prefer. So we cling. We like to get things “right.” We like to be in control of our lives. We like surety and stability and predictability. We don’t want change.

We want to master the moment and capture it in chains. But the ground under is one great mass of movement. Where is God in flux?

The children come and interrupt our antiseptic schedules. Then, years later, the children go and leave us strangers to one another and even to ourselves. Where is God for us when we are nowhere at all that we recognize?

We get money in the bank. Security seems assured and, out of the blue, the company closes. We find ourselves in midlife, adrift and unsure. Where is the God who said, “I will be with you”?

We work hard to beat a path through the woods of life and find that the path we wanted so badly leads nowhere for us at all. Where is God in failure?

Answer: God is right where we do not want God to be. God is in the newness of our lives. The God of the past is past now. There is only one way out and that is forward. Then, it is to the God of Newness that we must go if we are really to be spiritual people.

To be invited to begin again, to be ready to start over in life, is what the practice of Lent is all about. Then we are free to rethink everything we’ve done in life and everything we want in life and everything we’ve demanded from life and get down to basics: the presence of God and trust in the God of surprises.

If Lent is to be real at all, we must recognize that we are on a journey that twists and turns between what we were before and what we are beginning now. There is no settling down. There is only the call of the New Beginning where God dwells in the heart and takes all our fear, all our loneliness away.