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Day 3

*“Crossing Over to the Promised Land”*

Inspirations of Brene Brown, thingsilearnt  
(wordpress.com), Dr. Mulkar  
Joshua 3:1 – 4:9  
November 1, 2020

**Theme:**

Within our shared worshipful times together at Tippe over many years, we have often spoken about the power of the stories we tell ourselves to be either life giving or life stopping. Tell the story (of your day, a part of your life) to yourself in a different way, with a different intent or focus, you change how it shapes the meanings you make. Different narrative, different meaning.

Our lives have many stories running through them concurrently: daily lives and long-term intentions, our projects and goals, relationships with different people.

And each story has a process or a storyline: a beginning, a middle, and an end. So, three acts: a Day One, Day Two, Day Three.

**Day 1** is the start...the “what?” and a deep realization, with deep emotions or lack of, a reckoning, of sorts, with the way things really are.

**Day 2** is the struggle...how to respond/move forward. It asks of us our vulnerability to honestly acknowledge what is happening, curious about new

questions and learnings. Wrestling with and ruminating on ideas and strategies, recognizing misunderstandings, faulty assumptions, projections...and owning them as a way of freeing yourself to new insights. We call this courage!

**Day 3** is the resolution...the new way, a new and maybe unexpected ending that makes much meaning...brings meaning to life. It creates a little revolution in your life...as you rally, recover, and reach out.

And, Day 2 is always the hardest. The “what to do now” is hard and often leaves you feeling exposed, perhaps overwhelmed...and often tired!

It’s also ‘the point of no return’ - a term borrowed from aviation. You’re too far to turn back, but not yet far enough...to see the light, a new ending to your story, and your struggle.

Day 2 is a scary place at times. You just don’t know what will come next but you do know...it is coming (you can’t turn back...the clock) and you have a say in what will come next. The way you tell yourself this story matters!  
Thing is: **You can’t skip day 2!**

Day 2 is the non-negotiable part of the process - when things are raw, and real, emotions are high. This is when the struggle seems too real and too large. Life is a rumble. Sound familiar? The gut-wrenching, never-ending feeling of everything going wrong is Day 2.

But the only way to Day 3 is through Day 2. Because...  
you cannot resolve the challenge till you  
deeply FEEL the need to resolve it –  
REALLY FEEL THE NEED for it to be different  
in your bones, unleashing your true potential.

It takes courage to stay in Day 2.  
Courage to be vulnerable in exploring the situation and options.  
You have to choose courage over comfort (which may be cozy at first but sits you on the  
couch as an on-looker in your own life story as if powerless)

And, no amount of awareness or experience  
can give you a free pass from the daunting level of doubt  
which is part of the process of Day 2.

But what awareness and experience **will** give you is:  
“A little grace. A grace that whispers:  
“This is part of the process. Stay the course. You’ve done this before. I am with you.  
Together, we’ve got this!”

It’s messy...and it’s normal. It’s okay. It’s where the magic happens. Mystery unfolds.  
Holiness thrives within. So: stay the course.

In this Covid/protest/politic season, most of us have been in Day 1 a while now...and  
are being pushed, no return now, into Day 2.

The way you navigate Day 2 will define the possible new outcome and peace of your  
story: Day 3.

The way you tell yourself your story, matters

To get to Day 3 we have (Day 1) reckoned and (Day 2) rumbled.

Day 3 is a Revolution. You rally (yourself and others). You recover (family  
and friends). You reach out (to each other in love and empath.

## Prompting:

They dipped their toes in the edge of the water.  
Those ordained to lead went first. These are our biggest risk takers...right? Are they? Ha!

The leaders were carrying the arc of the covenant...the place where the Israelites thought God resides.

Where would we say God resides in our midst?

Or might that be:

how does God reside in our midst?

God does!

And it wasn't just any river they were sticking their toes into, but the one God called them to cross over...it matters which rivers you cross in order to get to the Promise Land.

These leaders were to go out into the rushing waters and stand there holding this very heavy arc (to be faithful is no small thing!)

until all the people cross over to the other side...till  
all survive...not agree, survive.

Not just some, everyone!

And before these leaders were to also cross over,  
12 people, one from each tribe...like one from each opinion group/ministry team,  
were to be chosen *by the people*  
and go back into the river and pick up a stone  
near the feet of the priests,

a stone so heavy and big, it had to be carried  
on their shoulders

and they were to make a memorial where they newly camped...in the Promise Land.

*So that* the children, the next generations of followers,  
will see the stones and ask what they mean and hear the whole story...be connected to shared  
experience as a building block of their new experiences.

Are you sure you're crossing the right rivers?  
~Which river would your God have you cross  
to get to your Promise Land?

~What is the river, the force, the other, in your life you are to cross over...will you cross over to  
the Promised Life?

And...

~What are the stones, big stones, you now can set down...ones you've been carrying...that you  
are now released from carrying if you will

only cross over and put them down?

These stones represent how hard it has been and how far you have come.

These stones are associated with the very times (the Day 2's of life) when the Promise is close, but the river wide.

A time when the unexpected can happen if you'll rumble with possibility. Unexpected like the water separating if you'll just step in.

These stones are constant reminders to you:

**God is with you and knows your rivers, stones...**

**God see your life's hard rocks.....**

**and longs for you to put them down on your Promised Land!**

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*Meanwhile, back in the story, remember...the Israelites had been enslaved in Egypt. Their way out was to follow the faith of Moses and *cross the Red Sea*.*

The way out was not an easy way, but God was with them.

And they traveled in the desert 40 years...long enough to perhaps begin to detach from the past and so, be open to the future...

let go of a way of thinking about the past which makes it better than it really was and keeps you from the promise.

Self-talk!

If it weren't for such a passage of time...if they had wandered, say 40 days...they may have been tempted to go back or settled for way too little!

Stay the course. Give it some time.

Sometimes it takes some time.

*And as they followed Moses, their confidence... and their leadership team grew. Grumbling and all!*

Even though tribes, they were of one spirit, not one mind. There will always be grumbling, right?

And as they reach the Promise Land, the leadership changes and they face another river.

**BUT, this time, it is the leadership team,  
not one leader, who parts the waters  
and willingly stands in it till all have passed.**

And they remember all that has happened, how far they've come, and look toward a new future...not an easy future, but a new one.

Their experience reforms how they think about themselves, their leaders, their God...what the promise really is!

Remember...all that has happened...to them...to you...

how far you've come...

the right rivers you have crossed over...

...and remember the ones you crossed that didn't go anywhere or bring you fuller life.

**The story of the Israelites is a wondrous metaphor for the journey each of us makes...is called to make:**

~leading, following, enabling others to lead, respecting all

~willing to cross over many a river...together

God chose rivers you would never have chosen to cross in your right mind

~couldn't have if God wasn't leading you to do so

~cause you'd never been this way before...

**Come on**...what leader in their right mind would ever suggest crossing rivers like...

\*doubling a mission budget,

\*coming up with a plan to revitalize future worship  
by changing the seating, days, times,

\*let VBS and Peace Camp turn to dust even while so successful.....so the next  
program...ASLC...can happen,

**\*let tension be in the air when there is disappointment or confusion or anger rather than  
quick fix it  
or explain it away.**

What leader would do such things?

**Are you nuts? Out of your mind?**

**Or, are you faithful?**

What parent in their right mind would...would set a new schedule for themselves, work less or different hours,  
to support their family's well-being?

What spouse, partner in their right mind in the middle of an argument, especially when provoked, would give up venting and blaming/shaming the other for the way it is...give this up and instead fight fair (there is a way to fight fair)

because one of you has to fight fair first  
in order for anything new to happen...and whichever one it is will have it harder rather than  
easier initially?

Are you nuts? Out of your mind?

What child in their right mind wouldn't run from a bully hurting a friend of theirs?

What teen in their right mind doesn't want to be seen as cool, in the powerful clique?

Who in their right mind would be an advocate and take a stand in public over the school  
budgets, gerrymandering, medical insurance and women's health issues, just wages, hungry  
people

.....especially in these times of ours where so many think resources are scarce when actually,  
even with the way things really are,

there have never been so many resources available?

You'd have to be out of your mind to stick out your neck like that! Cross those rivers!  
Pick up and put down those stones!

***But don't you see...that's just it...  
we are called to get out of our minds!  
Out of our minds. Our emotionality. Be Released!***

We stand before God with our mind in our heart for all time.

**It's not about right thinking.**

**It's about living with God right by your side...right through the river. Getting it right.**

God is not rational or reasonable.

But God isn't irrational or unreasonable either.

God lives in the non-rational...

**the mystery, the intersection of the way it is  
and the way it can be...**

God by your side, you can stand there...in that right river...

stay in the tension...trust that as we stay together the waters will part...

and you will cross over to the promise.

But you have to stand there in the right river

...not lay on the couch watching TV complaining,

...not popping off at your kids without impacting a change in anything other than the punishment routine,

...not looking down at your desk when “stuff” is going down at work,

...not talking about Tippe in the parking lot rather than in the ministry and session meetings,

...not blaming the have-nots for having not.

**...stand in the river, cross over,  
oh...if these stones could speak...they can!**

**You know which tough river God calls you to cross over.**

**Go on, stick your toes in gently,  
then stand there, until life crosses over.**

Pick up your stones and put them down.

Don't be afraid to get wet! Pick up your stones. Put them down. This is the promise, the Promised Land.

~What is the story you are right now telling yourself about your situation...emotions and all? Self-Talk counts!

~What in that story are you willing to own as your projections or judgements?

~Will you move your story from Day 1...reckoning with your feelings and engaging your curiosity about what can come?

~Will you move your story to Day 2. And stay there with courage and vulnerability to give peace and Day 3 a chance?

God knows how hard it is to be human being  
and invites us...**not to be right but to get it right!**

Are you willing to look at things differently?  
When you change the way you look at things,  
the things you look at...change!  
Just like that: 1, 2, 3.