

July 20, 2020 -- Thirteenth Day

**"The Way of Jesus is the Way of Life and the Way of Life can change the world." Bishop Curry**

*For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to throw away; a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace. Ecclesiastes 3:1-8*

Pete Seeger composed *Turn, Turn, Turn* in 1959 based upon Ecclesiastes 3:1-8. The lyrics are almost verbatim from the Bible. Seeger added the “turn, turn, turn” for the chorus and tacked on his own hopeful concluding line for cold war audiences: “A time of peace; I swear it’s not too late.”

I’m not sure the song would have been as impactful without the chorus. The spiritual need to turn is one of the basic understandings of a meaningful Christian life. A lot of times we resist change and we don’t want to turn but it is in turning that we see God more clearly. We live many different seasons in our own lives and if we choose to stay put in one of the seasons that we perceive as “better” than the anticipated/dreaded new season, we will miss many life-giving moments with God and each other.

Bishop Curry’s podcast on *Turn* provides us with many insights on what it means to turn -- when we turn, how we turn, why we turn, what we are turning from, or what we turning towards.

For us to embrace the idea of turning, we must trust. Trust God and trust the community around us. In our scripture today, John describes this as having the faith to “abide in Christ”. The Rev. Becca Stevens described this process as living in "a circle of love". It is in a circle of love that we find Christ and abide in Christ. God is in this circle and it is here that you abide in God’s love with other Christians. In the Becca Stevens video (referenced below) prepared in conjunction with Bishop Curry’s podcast, the interviewer describes his feelings before attending services at Becca’s church on the Vanderbilt University campus in Nashville. He prepared himself for a “lukewarm but reliable sermon, a few students sitting five rows behind the stalwarts, and being unchanged after 57 minutes in Church.” He wasn’t prepared for the way that service would turn his life around. When we allow ourselves to step into a circle of love, we find a safe place to risk turning. When we turn, we understand what it means to abide in Christ. This safe place surrounds us with the life-changing love of family, trusted-friends, spiritual communities, and God.

Turn, Turn, Turn

I am attaching two additional resources:

1. [Turn, Turn, Turn](#) sung by Fran McKendree at the Kanuga Retreat and Conference Center in the Diocese of North Carolina
2. [The Rev. Becca Stevens speaking about "Turning."](#) One of the things that she talks about is how we can orient ourselves to God sometimes in ways as simple as beginning our day with a cup of coffee, lighting a candle, and taking a deep breath.