

Worship Sharing 2/1/22

Balance

“Some among us have a clear sense of what is right and wrong – for themselves personally if not for everyone else. They have a reassuring certitude and steadiness which can serve as a reference point by which others may navigate. There are others who live in a state of uncertainty, constantly re-thinking their responses to changing circumstances, trying to hold onto what seems fundamental but impelled to reinterpret, often even unsure where lies the boundary between the fundamental and the interpretation...

Please be patient, those of you who have found a rock to stand on, with those of us who haven't and with those of us who are not even looking for one. We live on the wave's edge, where sea, sand and sky are all mixed up together: we are tossed head over heels in the surf, catching only occasional glimpses of any fixed horizon. Some of us stay there from choice because it is exciting and it feels like the right place to be.”

Philip Rack, 1979

“Incomparably the most important thing is that each one of us should be sensitive to the call of God to ourselves and not spend time in passing judgment on the lives of others. To some the call will be to adopt the witness of great simplicity,.. To others the most important thing will be to maintain our ancient testimony against ‘fightings with outward weapons’... But perhaps most will be called to the humdrum tasks of serving an employer supremely well, or running a house, bringing up a family, keeping the peace with difficult neighbours, serving the community in little things – the tasks which, because they are simple, are in fact most difficult to do with dedication... **Our duty is to be sensitive to what God is asking us to do, and not to dissipate our energies trying to be absolutists in several directions at once.**”

Industry and the Social Order Conference, 1958

“The duty of the Society of Friends is to be the voice of the oppressed but [also] to be conscious that we ourselves are part of that oppression. Uncomfortably we stand with one foot in the kingdom of this world and with the other in the Eternal Kingdom. Seldom can we keep the inward and outward working of love in balance, let alone the consciousness of living both in time and in eternity, in timelessness. Let us not be beguiled into thinking that political action is all that is asked of us, nor that our personal relationship with God excuses us from actively confronting the evil in this world. The political and social struggles must be waged, but a person is more and needs more than politics, else we are in danger of gaining the whole world but losing our souls.”

Eva I Pinthus, 1987

Queries

Which of these quotes speak to your experience?

How do you remain sensitive to spiritual leadings in a world that calls from so many places?

What helps you seek balance between political action and spiritual deepening?

Do you have a “rock to stand on”?