

Smash Flood

'They will look on Me, the One that they have pierced...and grieve bitterly. On that day a fountain will open to cleanse them from sin and impurity' (Zech. 12:10; 13:1).

Jesus mirrored hard truth. Outraged man shattered the mirror. God retaliated by releasing a flood of divine mercy from His broken frame, the only source that restores us to the truth.

Barbara Taylor Brown says it best: 'I remember being at a retreat once where the leader asked us to think of someone who represented Christ in our lives. One woman stood up and said: "I kept thinking: who is it who told me the truth about myself so clearly that I wanted to kill him for it?" Jesus died because He told the truth to everyone He met. He was the truth, a perfect mirror in which people saw themselves in God's own light.'

The Desert Stream staff now habitually gathers to tell each other the truth about one another's strengths and weaknesses. As the sugary, soft fruit of the therapeutic age, we delight in blessing each other's good points but brace ourselves for the bad. We flinch to even use language like 'bad', preferring words like 'unchallenged strengths.'

What I recall from those meetings is the 'bad.' I couldn't recount the 'blessings' but have wrestled in the wee hours with the difference between how I see reality and how others see mine. I have not wanted to kill certain staff members but I've rehearsed 'setting them straight' monologues before sleep. How much bigger the gap between God's truth and ours? The difference: in exposing our self-deceptions, He submits to our smashing, and offers Himself as the antidote.

He gives all—His body pierced for our washing and broken for our bread, the meal that makes us whole. For us who are troubled and touchy and too readily defended—pour out Your 'vengeance' upon us this Good Friday, Good God.

Barbara Taylor Brown again: 'In the presence of His integrity, our pretense is exposed. In the presence of His constancy, our cowardice comes to light. In the presence of His fierce love for God and us, our hardness of heart is revealed. I am not worse than you nor you I, but leave Him in the room and there is no room to hide. He is the light of the world. In His presence, we either fall down to worship Him or do everything we can to extinguish His light.'

Today, while He dies, do not turn away. Make yourself look in the mirror. Today no-one gets away from being shamed by His beauty. Today no-one flees without being laid bare by His light.'