

36 years ago M. Scott Peck wrote, what eventually became a very popular book, called “The Road Less Traveled”.

I remember reading it, but, I’ll be honest,

I don’t really remember much of what it said, except the opening line:

“LIFE IS HARD”

It seems to be an obvious fact,

but in truth it is a fact that most of us like to deny.

It’s a no brainer, for sure. Life IS hard...

we all get sick, we all die.

People disappoint us, we disappoint ourselves.

Not everyone is honest or considerate or kind.

millions of children go to bed hungry every night...

animals are mistreated,

rivers and streams are polluted and sucked bone dry...

ok... I could go on and on, but what’s the point?

What good would that do any of us?

Dewitt Jones has worked for 20+ years as a photographer for the National Geographic.

and he says that every time he was given an assignment by his boss...

he was told to find what was right in that situation...every time!

He says that doing that for 20 years he learned that by

Celebrating what’s right with the world,

we would have the energy to fix what’s wrong.

The difference between Peck and Jones, is huge!

They start from two different positions...

Peck starts with what is wrong... DeWitt starts with what is right...

Tonight...we are celebrating the birth of a tiny baby boy

born over 2,000 years ago...

This little one would eventually give up his life

because he believed in what was right with his God and

what was right with the world...

He knew that Reign of Heaven was here and now...

in the lives that we are living right now, on this good green Earth...

not in some distant future life in some far away place...

He knew that the Reign of Justice and peace...

which was the kingdom of his Abba God,

would not be held back,

could not be held back,

by any power, by any army,

by any authority be it political or religious...

He believed that the Presence of the Holy One of the entire Cosmos

was present in each and every person.

No matter what they had done, or did not do. period.

He believed that he was meant, that he was born,

to raise people up,

not to push them down...

Every time Jesus healed and fed people he gave them hope.

Every time he ate with sinners and dined with prostitutes he gave them self respect...

Every time he told people “Do not be afraid” he changed their perception of God and gave them deep peace...

Every time he crossed to the other side of the road he showed people for all time the unboundaried, unconditional love of God.

Jesus is not just an historical figure that we remember and tell stories about, but we believe, we are invited to believe, that he lives on today, in our lives as the Christ...

Jesus the Christ, the one whose birthday we celebrate tonight, invites us this night, to celebrate what was right with the world to see the beauty and the magnificence that has always been and is everywhere present!

Christ invites us now to see what is right with ourselves so that we will see the Presence of the Holy One as our True Self... He invites us to see the goodness and the beauty that we are born with and can-not lose, ever....

Christ invites us now to see what is right with our God, so that we live no longer in fear and scarcity, but that we move on into a life of Joy and Gratitude...

Christ invites us now to see the Kingdom of Heaven in our midst...

The questions is: are we willing to accept this invitation?

Are we willing to take *the time* to even be aware of the invitation?

**Are we willing to see what is right, right here, right now...
in this very situation...**

**So if you are willing, let's pause for a moment and look around...
Let go of any 'schtuff' that you might have brought with you tonight..
Look at the beauty of the candle light and this magnificent tree,
look at the gift of your family and neighbors,
the one you know and the ones you don't know sitting around you...
Allow yourself to feel the love that is here
open your heart to the amazing grace that we swim in...
open your ears and your eyes to perceive the magnificence of what is...
open your mind to reality of miracles ...
be willing to start, from this moment forward,
from a place of what is right...**

PAUSE....PAUSE.....PAUSE.....

**As you leave this service tonight, as you step out into the darkness,
and before you get into your car,
perhaps you can pause once again...even if it is raining....
even if it is ever so briefly,
and take a deep breath...
are you willing to accept the invitation to see the Reign of Heaven on Earth
right here, right now?**

**If you are willing to accept this invitation...
you will discover the miracle and meaning of Christmas...
and the only thing you will be able to say next is**

Thank you! Amen....