

Risk

DREAM.



*“Don’t search for the answers...live the questions now.
Perhaps then, someday far in the future, you will
gradually, without even noticing it, live your way into the answer.”*

– Ranier Maria Rilke, *Letters to a Young Poet*

1st break:

If progressive Christians need to “get a message” and be intentional about sharing the faith that we have, what are some of the core points of that message?

According to Mel White, what do we need to “let go” of?

How does being centered in “Spirit and Wisdom” and “Compassion and Justice” correspond with any “deep yearnings” you might have?

2nd break:

What does Micah have to do with being a follower of Jesus?

Brueggemann says there are the three definitive marks of the church which have been kept “secret.” How do you see responding to these hungers as part of your spiritual journey? Your faith community’s future?

3rd break:

What is the “last blind spot on the body of Christ”?

How might seeing “through each other’s eyes” help us reach agreements that lead to wholeness for real people?

Why is “being in solidarity with the poor” often a characteristic of vital faith communities?

4th break:

What are some of the practical ways Christians can express a non-legalistic faith?

List the ways Townes suggests that we can “live our faith.” What would you add?

What are some of the ways progressive Christians can claim a distinctive voice today?

General Reflection:

What do you find most helpful or interesting from the material so far?

What are the implications for your personal spiritual journey? For Christianity as a whole?

Spirit Practice

Consider the following poem by Kahlil Gibran. For one week, read the poem each morning and let it sink in and resonate with your deepest self in preparation for your day. At the end of the week, consider how its imagery and intent either supports or challenges your spiritual journey. How will your answer affect your actions in the world?

*“Your thought is a tree rooted deep in the soil of tradition
and whose branches grow in the power of continuity.
My thought is a cloud moving in the space.
It turns into drops which, as they fall,
form a brook that sings its way into the sea.
Then it rises as vapor into the sky.*

*Your thought is a fortress that neither gale nor the lightning can shake.
My thought is a tender leaf that sways in every direction
and finds pleasure in its swaying.*

*Your thought is an ancient dogma that cannot change you
nor can you change it.
My thought is new, and it tests me and I test it morn and eve.
You have your thought and I have mine.”*

-- Kahlil Gibran

Words of Wisdom

Without justice, human beings cannot live together as God intended. Without kindness and mercy, life is unbearable. And unless one walks humbly in the presence of the mystery we call God, we are likely to be humbled in ways we least expect. Micah poses the question that stands at the heart of Jesus' ministry:

READ Micah 6.8

The Christian life is *not* about believing the right stuff or even about being "good." It's about a *relationship* with the Divine and with one another. It's a relationship that changes us – transforms us – into more and more compassionate beings; as Paul writes, into "the likeness of Christ."

READ 2 Corinthians 3.17-18

Try it

In your community (faith or otherwise)

Plant a Peace Pole. Over 200,000 poles proclaiming "May Peace Prevail on Earth" in multiple languages have been planted the world over.

Information on ordering a peace pole can be found at

<http://www.peacepoles.com/>. Ideas for locations and other elements of planting a peace pole can be found at

<http://www.worldpeace.org/peacepoles.html>.

Personally:

Socially responsible investments. Assuming that some participants of your group have personal investments, mutual funds, and pension plans administered by others, take time to review what your investments are supporting. There are a number of mutual funds and other services that put a priority on the environment, corporate ethics, and human rights while avoiding investments that support the military industrial complex and unsustainable energies.

Some websites to investigate are: <http://www.calvertgroup.com/>, <http://www.socialfunds.com/>, <http://www.portfolio21.com/>, and <http://www.acumenfund.org>.