

Reflection and Prayertime: Still Rolls the Stone & Shaking the Graveclothes Off

April 5, 2021

I hope everyone had a wonderful weekend and if you celebrate Easter I hope you were able to walk through Holy Week from Maundy Thursday to Easter Sunday with reflection and intentionality. I hope you felt the uplift from the despair and darkness of Good Friday to the joy of Easter resurrection. If you are still making that transition, it's not too late! Resurrection is an ongoing process and can happen in our daily lives.

I believe that for as long as I live I'll remember the VOA Easter service of 2019 in which I shared the story of Rickey Green's resurrection from his path to death as a 115 pound addict selling every drug that exists to the healthy father, entrepreneur, rapper, photographer renaissance man we know him as today. I remember saying in the sermon that he ran with a rough crowd of cousins and friends in his middle and high school days in a trailer park in Bowling Green. And then at the conclusion of the service one of the men undergoing treatment at Shelby Street coming up to me asking if I'd said Rickey was from Bowling Green and when I said yes, he said, "I'm one of those cousins you talked about him running around with but I'm coming up out of the madness. I believe that every person here undergoing treatment is experiencing our own resurrection from death to life."

As we think about the song "Still Rolls the Stone" and "Graveclothes" I want to ask a couple questions. How is the stone still rolling away in your life? How are you shaking the graveclothes off? As we can be more hopeful in returning to some sense of normalcy, whatever future "normal" is going to look like, we can be assured that God remains interested in working on us and with us to help us continue our story of resurrection and fully embracing God's love.

I watched a wonderful movie this weekend called "One Night in Miami" and if you haven't seen it, I highly recommend it; it truly should be nominated for an Oscar in my opinion. The movie is a fictionalized version of an actual meeting of Cassius Clay (before he was Muhammad Ali), Jim Brown (NFL athlete), Sam Cooke (the "King of Soul") and Malcolm X. The whole movie is about their conversation when away from the cameras and how they interact with each other the world around them in which they find themselves. One part that really struck me in a very poignant and impactful way is a conversation between Malcolm X and Sam Cooke in which Malcolm calls Sam out of his comfort zone and to a fuller embrace of the potential to step up for justice, a call to change and grow. I wonder if on this day in the throes of Easter if we are being called to change and grow. And so back to the questions, how is the stone still rolling away in your life and how are you shaking your graveclothes off? What is it God is calling you to do between now and Easter 2022 to practice resurrection?