

Of all of the fine books available written by Brennan Manning. and there are many, this book of daily devotions from his writings has been the most helpful to me. In the selection for March 23rd entitled "His Presence Found", an apparently previously unpublished piece Manning writes this:

"At this moment, many ordinary men and women just like you and me are being invited to enter into the rhythm of loss and gain. In each of our lives, there no doubt have been periods of fervor when we could almost touch the goodness of God. We have enjoyed various religious exercises, precious securities for many of us, in which it was a joy to be in his presence. Perhaps all this has changed now: like Catherine of Siena we seem to have lost Christ, and we fear he might never return.

But the gsin is never far away, God's love and mercy are too great and too lasting to depend on the rise and fall of his frail creatures. Clouds may shroud our soul in darkness but above them the sun shines brightly; God's mercy never fails. Those who grasp the real meaning of this truth find Christ in a new way. This experience marks the beginning of a richer life in which joy and peace flourish even in the darkness, because they are rooted not in superficial human feelings, but deep down in the dark certainty of faith that Jesus is always the same.

Happiness and sadness may play havoc with our emotions, but once we learn that God dwells in darkness beneath the shifting surfaces of our souls, we know that is where we must do to find him. There we will pray in peace and silence, attentive to the God who never changes."

"Wether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you saying, 'this is the way; walk in it.' Isaiah 30:21.'

Brennan Manning, Reflections for Ragamuffins Daily devotions from the writings of Brennan Manning, edited by Ann McMath, Harper San Francisco, 1997, page 83

This quote has been very helpful to me this past week as Renie and I have struggled with the ups and downs of our weariness in the ongoing battle with cancer and the side effects of the chemo treatments. I have truly found Christ to be present when I have taken the time to seek him in the depths of my heart in silence. and in the pages of God's Word Christ, the Word become flesh has offered reassurance of God's love and

mercy that do not change, no matter what the surface chaos suggests to the contrary. I am truly grateful for a lifetime of being taught to take scripture study and prayer seriously and for the ongoing opportunities to enjoy these practices both corporately and privately.

May you enjoy the depths of God's mercy and peace as you seek Him in the quiet depths of your hearts.

Under God's Mercy,

Howie