

Living in the wisdom of accepted tenderness Mdwk Reflec # 60, Aug 19, 2009

This week I'd like to share with you a devotional I read on Monday in Brennan Manning's Reflections for Ragamuffins that has been very helpful to me in my current health situation. I trust it will be meaningful for you as well.

"THE HEALING PROCESS"

"To live in the wisdom of accepted tenderness is to let go of cares and concerns, to stop organizing means to ends and simply be in each moment of awareness as an end in itself. It is to hear with the heart the word of Paul to Titus: 'The tenderness and love of God our Savior has dawned in our lives: he saved us not because of any righteous deeds we had done but because of his mercy' (3:4-5 JB). We can embrace our whole life story in the knowledge that we have been graced and made beautiful by the providence of our past history. All the wrong turns in the past, the detours, mistakes, moral lapses, everything that is irrevocably ugly or painful, melts and dissolves in the warm glow of accepted tenderness. As theologian Kevin O'Shea writes, 'One rejoices in being unfrightened to be open to the healing presence, no matter what one might be or what one might have done.'

'When I am most afraid.

I put my trust in you;

in God whose word I praise,

in God I put my trust, fearing nothing.'

Psalm 56:3-4 JB

Brennan Manning, Reflections for Ragamuffins, Harper San Francisco, 1997, page 230,

August 17 meditation

As you might imagine, Fear and anxiety are part of the territory when one lives with cancer. Brennan's words and the Psalm verses he attaches to them have been used by God's Spirit this week to refocus my imagination on God's great mercy and love. I am eager to find out more about what Manning calls accepted tenderness. I have ordered his book by that title "The Wisdom of Accepted Tenderness" from Amazon and will share more once I have read it. In the meantime I am learning to let go of my anxious thoughts by listening to the heartbeat of God in quiet prayer and reciting Paul's words to Titus.

God's mercy continues to be real in the midst of this struggle. Praise God for His goodness and His Real Presence through the Risen Christ and the Holy Spirit's indwelling!

Under The Mercy,

Howie