

Daily Meditation 05/20/2023

More Wisdom on Trust from Fred Shuttlesworth & Others

Good morning.

Today we can continue our meditations on holiness and on courage, which is part of holiness, and on Fred Shuttlesworth and his profound teachings about trust as being equivalent to courage.

And I want to point out in today's meditation, I quote von Rad, the great scholar of Wisdom literature, about how creation is worthy of trust. Remember that historical Jesus comes from that tradition, the wisdom tradition of Israel. And he was a peasant farmer. So he, too, was nurtured in the trust of nature that many peasants and people close to the Earth know about.

I'd like to expand a little more on Fred Shuttlesworth because he was such a great figure, and there are some wonderful YouTube videos that are offered in today's meditation, and yesterday's, about him. I really urge you to get to know him better. He's a very great figure and the more I've learned about him the more humbled I am and blessed I feel to have spent time with him and for him to have invited me to dialogue about ecology and racism. And how ahead of his time he was. And how aware he was about creation spirituality, about the importance of the sacredness of the earth for our health, as well for our spiritual health.

This passage is from a very fine book on Dr. King, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.* If you look in the index, there are numerous references to Fred Shuttlesworth.

One of the YouTube pieces, one today I think, had someone who knew King and Shuttlesworth well, and said Shuttlesworth was one of King's mentors, and that he really was as great in terms of the grassroots movement, the civil rights movement, as King was.

But here's a little more about Shuttlesworth; this on page 209:

King had followed events in Birmingham and had great admiration for Shuttlesworth, an absolutely fearless man who had made going to jail 'a badge of honor.'

Alabama born and bred, he was a spare man with close-cropped hair and pastor of Bethel Baptist Church. Since 1956, when he had led an attack against the city's Jim Crow buses, Shuttlesworth had suffered unbelievable violence and abuse. And Christmas night, 1956, his house was bombed and Shuttlesworth himself almost killed.

I now see that God had saved him and that 'I wasn't saved to run.' He conducted another demonstration against the buses, and whites retaliated by blowing up his church. When he and his wife tried to enroll their children in a white school, a mob beat him with chains and brass knuckles and stabbed his wife in the hip.

Because of his civil rights militancy he had gone to jail eight times, fought a \$3 million lawsuit brought against him by city officials, and seen his car and personal property sold off in public auction. Yet he went on challenging segregation because he knew it wasn't just going to die away.

So we're talking about courage. Of course, we're talking about Fred Shuttlesworth. We all should sit up and listen and learn.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.
Courage AND holiness.