



June 10, 2020

## ***GIFTS IN THE DARKNESS***

The language of Christian faith sometimes uses the metaphor of light and darkness as moral opposites, encouraging us to walk in the light and to love the light, instead of loving darkness. But that's not the whole story!

In the scriptures, it was dark when Jacob wrestled with the angel during the night, and emerged with a blessing and a new name, Israel. Moses entered the darkness of the clouds that covered the peak of Mt. Sinai to talk with God. And it was in the darkness of the tomb that Jesus was raised from the dead.

I recently caught up with a fabulous book that people in my life (especially my spouse!) kept recommending. In *Learning to Walk in the Dark*, Barbara Brown Taylor writes that our society has lost crucial gifts of darkness. Instead of thinking about darkness as dangerous, scary, or inferior, Taylor describes darkness as good, revelatory, and necessary.

Just as our bodies and our spirits are blessed by lights of the night sky, which we seldom see anymore, with our lives so artificially illuminated, there are also gifts to be found in the spiritual experiences of uncertainty, unknowing, and loss. Like Jacob, we could be blessed by some time to wrestle in the dark.

Taylor reminds us that having certainty about our lives, or about our faith, is overrated, and it is an illusion anyway. It is in the darkness that God gives us new life. It is in the darkness that God gives us the strength that we need to meet love when life is hard, and to be full of grace under pressure.

May God bless both the light and the dark hours of our lives. May we receive the gifts of the darkness.

Peace,

Rev. Dr. Matthew Wooster  
Senior Minister