



SEEDS

May 2006

GOOD NEWS *Associates*

13730 15th Ave NE , A302, Seattle, WA 98125

www.goodnewsassoc.org

The Psalms: Everyday Honesty

By Nate Macy

I've been spending a lot of time with the Psalms lately. Teaching, singing, thinking about them. This ancient poetry has become a central theme in my life. What's so helpful about the Psalms is their deep, honest, even raw connection with life and God. There's no polite conversation, no sycophantic attempt to deceive or misdirect, no hidden agenda. The Psalms suggest that we're to be wholly honest with God and ourselves. We're to live our lives passionately in relationship with God. We expect God to show up in all circumstances, and in turn, we live our praise out in all the places that our lives take us, good and bad.



How refreshing! Our churches so often teach us that we can't be who we really are. Our "secular" lives that take place in the "world" aren't the places that God *really* shows up. We can't take our anger, sorrow, or mundane praise to God, because God is too holy for that. We might offend God's piety – be too vulgar, too coarse and too juvenile. We might prove untouchable. But the Psalms, and the rest of scripture for that matter, speak directly against this. Jesus frequently touches those who are pariahs, bringing God-light to the places that the religious authorities said were impossible to reach.

The Psalmists cry out "Where are you God?" or "Why haven't you fixed this like I wanted?" or "God, you are so utterly amazing in the way you show up in my life and redeem it!" Whether its praise, anger, joy, or confusion the Psalmist shares it all.

Vulnerability is a requirement for love; to know as we are known. When we hide ourselves from God, we cannot transform to God's likeness. Like Adam and Eve in the garden, God comes searching for us, wanting intimacy. But God respects our free will. Thus when we hide

the darkest parts of ourselves from God, they cannot be transformed. Likewise when our praise comes from ideological assent, rather than lived experience, it is powerless.

Paul says in Romans 12:1 “give your bodies as living sacrifices, for this is your spiritual act of worship.” The Psalms give us a template of how to do this, bringing all of our lives to God to share. My hope is that we begin to carry all of our lives, the holy and profane, the sacred and the secular, to Christ, that we might grow in intimacy and love.



Nate Macy, GOOD NEWS *Associate*, is a member of Newberg Friends Church. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Christian Ministry and a Master of Arts in Spiritual Formation, both from George Fox University. His heart is to empower folks in their faithfulness. His ministry includes composing, worship leadership, retreat leadership, spiritual direction and music production.. He has released two CD's, *Hope* and *Psalms Project*.

To hear samples of Nate's music or purchase a CD, visit
<http://natemacy.luggle.com/>

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Spirit work in me,
deep and gentle.

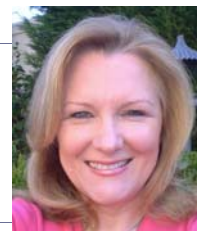
Sun rise with a day,
new and better.

God speak something fresh,
full and wholesome.

Christine Eleanor Merritt

Christine Merritt, an Affiliate of GOOD NEWS *Associates*, is the founder of Metamorphosis. She is a Certified Labyrinth Facilitator, Physical Therapist and a Poet. Visit her web page at:

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