

Can I understand these things, Lord?
If I cannot understand
can I treasure them?
Can I believe they have some meaning
for me
while I live
when I die?

What is it like, Lord, to
present life to others
give life for others
fulfil life among others
sacrifice life on behalf of others
only to have your spent body
assume residence in a grave
for a time?

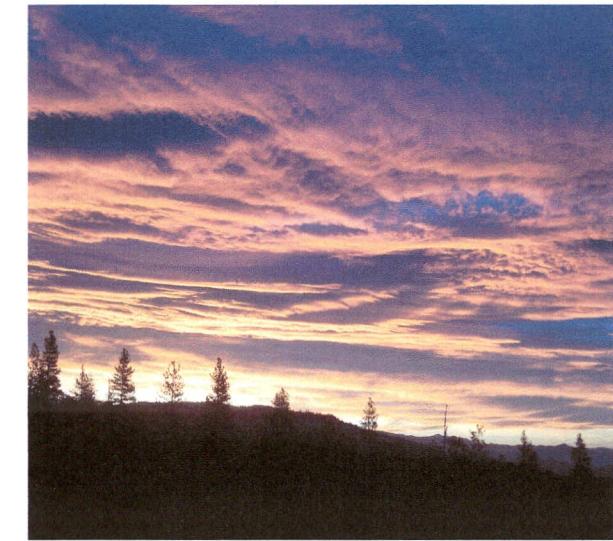
I will be there
sometime.
Will you be with me?
Please.

What is it like, Lord, to
see a sepulchre open
from the inside
watch death retreat
in the face of new life
greet tearful women and fearful men
with words of peace and hope
call off the funeral
invite folks to a fish fry
proclaim resurrection
not as a theory
but with your presence
and your promise
"Because I live
you shall live also"?

Can Lent melt into Easter
with such certainty?

LORD, I want to live!
JESUS, I want to celebrate life!
CHRIST, I claim your gift of life!
I'll see you tomorrow.

Questions for Christ on a Holy Saturday



A meditation for the day between Good Friday and the Festival of Our Lord's Resurrection

By Arnold G. Steinbeck

What is it like, Lord,
to hear your own first cries of life
nearly drowned out by
cattle lowing
sheep bleating
donkeys braying and
chickens clucking consternation
about mid-night arrivals
and transients not of their kind?

Can a twenty-first century person like me
product of a rich nation's
pampered people
identify with you, and
with your countless
sisters and brothers in the world
who are still
born
live and
die
in poverty?

What is it like, Lord,
to celebrate a Passover
in Jerusalem
with family;
experience joy at
becoming *bar mitzvah*
in the temple
with rabbis
immersed so completely
in your Father's business
that you lose track of time
and miss the last departure
of the caravan for Nazareth?

You must be very aware of
anxious parents,
concerned but not always
understanding,
maturing children scolded
though not really rejected,
and the love affirmed between them
through quiet dialogue
and renewed relationship.

Can you help me experience
such holy humanness?

What is it like, Lord, to
preach good news to the poor
proclaim release to the captives
restore sight to the blind
free those who are oppressed
announce a year of the Lord's favor ...
then find that such actions are
opposed by the establishment
scorned by the secure and
branded as dangerously radical?

A traitorous tax collector and
a few fishermen
some simple country folk and
an occasional intellectual
a little boy with a lunch bag
of bread and fish
a prostitute with another bag
of tricks and memories
the sick and the shamed and the sorrowful
somehow seemed
to understand you, Lord.
They dared to believe and follow you.

Is it possible yet to follow you today?
Do I want to?
Will you help me?

What is it like, Lord, to see life
rushing toward death
at the early age of thirty-three
watch opposition mount into fury
breaking the quietness of a garden
scattering trusted friends
adulterating justice in courts
both religious and secular?

Is there any hope
for justice in our day, Lord?
How can I help?
Will you help me
want to help?

What is it like, Lord, to
find yourself the object of
scorn
ridicule
mockery
brutality
pain
punishment
undeserved?

Can those who know similar suffering today
see your face
in the face
of their victims?
Where do I fit in?

What is it like, Lord, to
climb the highest mountain
only to find it
an ugly hill
armed with crosses
near the city rubbish dump
surrounded by stench
stained with death.

Can I bear that sight, Lord?
How could you?

What is it like, Lord, to
substitute love for hate
even among enemies
"Father, forgive them,
for they know not what they do"
speak hope to the hopeless
"Truly, I say to you, today
you shall be with me in Paradise"
utter the most fearsome of all words
"My God, My God,
why have you forsaken me?" then
declare victory in the face of defeat
"It is finished" and
relax and release your self
to the realm of the unknown
"Father, into thy hands
I commit my spirit"?