



Insane for the Light, A Spirituality for Our Wisdom Years, by Ronald Rolheiser

Week 4- Chapter 3: The Challenge in Aging

Check in Question: If 'thank you' is one of the last honest phrases in our vocabulary, as Ronald Rolheiser says, when was the last time you used it with intention?

Opening Prayer

*Lord,
Lead me gently along this path of transformation.
Where there is resentment in me, plant gratitude.
Where bitterness has taken root, grow forgiveness.
Lift me from mere imagination into living faith,
and from wishful thinking into a hope that endures.
Strip away my need to appear sophisticated,
and give me instead the heart of a child—
trusting, open, and free.
Loosen my grip on control,
and teach me the peace of surrender into Your hands.
Turn my striving for achievement
into a life that bears quiet, lasting fruit for You.
I place all that I am before You, Lord—
transform me, renew me, and lead me home.
Amen.*

Reflection questions:

As you read through the following questions, select one or two that speak to you and be ready to share your reflection.

Chapter 4

1. If gratitude shapes the authenticity of our love, where do you see a need to grow in giving thanks?
2. Who have you recently forgiven? Is there someone you are still struggling to forgive?
3. How do you feel about the idea of forgiving yourself? What makes that difficult?
4. What images of God have been most meaningful to you in your life? As those images change or fade, how do you experience or understand God now?

5. How does hope show up in your life right now? Where do you experience it most concretely?
6. Many say hope is sustained in community. Where do you find hope in others? Who helps you hold onto it?
7. Ronald Rolheiser suggests that much of our woundedness comes from losing our innocence. Do you agree? Why or why not? What has shaped your own experience of this?
8. Do you tend to see yourself as self-sufficient? Where do you rely on others—or on God? What does true dependence look like to you?
9. What is something that might seem “childlike” but actually contains deep wisdom? Have you experienced this in your own life?
10. Is sophistication a necessary step on the path to wisdom? Where have your life experiences refined or deepened your understanding?
11. What is the difference between resignation and surrender? How can you tell which one you are living?
12. What is the difference between achievement and fruitfulness? Which one tends to drive your life more?
13. When have you experienced jealousy—either in yourself or from others? What did it reveal to you?
14. In what ways is God inviting you to become more fruitful in this season of your life?
15. When you make decisions, are you acting from your higher, more noble self—or from a place of woundedness? How can you tell?

Closing Prayer

For whom and what shall we pray...

I desired often to know what was our Lord’s meaning. And fifteen years after and more, I was answered in spiritual understanding, saying thus:

“What! Wouldst thou learn thy Lord’s meaning in this thing? Learn it well: Love was His meaning. Who showed it thee? Love. What showed He thee? Love. Wherefore showed it He? For love.

Hold thee therein and thou shalt learn and know more in the same. But thou shalt never know nor learn other thing without end.”

In this I saw that He showed me a little thing, the quantity of a hazelnut, lying in the palm of my hand, as it seemed. And it was as round as a ball. I looked upon it with the eye of my understanding and thought, “What may this be?” And it was answered generally thus: “It is all that is made.”

I marveled how it might last, for I thought it might suddenly have fallen to nothing for littleness. And I was answered in my understanding: **“It lasts, and ever shall, because God loves it.”** And so all things have their being by the love of God.

In this little thing I saw three properties: the first is that God made it; the second is that God loves it; the third is that God keeps it.

But what is to me truly the Maker, the Keeper, and the Lover, I cannot tell—for until I am substantially united to Him, I may never have full rest nor true bliss.

And thus I learned that love is our Lord's meaning.

Yet in all this I had a wondering: how all shall be well, for I saw truly that sin is the cause of all this pain.

And to this our Lord answered:

“Sin is behovely, but all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well.”

Amen.

(Julian of Norwich in *Revelations of Divine Love*, Chapter 27)

Overview of our meetings

Week 5- Chapter 4: Passivity as Generativity and Leaving Behind a Nurturing Spirit

Week 6- Chapter 5: The Modality and Darkness of Faith and Its Deeper Stages of Maturing

Week 7- Chapter 6: Forest Dwelling and Preparing to Find Our Beggars Hut

Week 8- Chapter 7: Finding Beggar's Hut and Giving our Deaths Away

Week 9- Chapter 8: Thoughts on the Afterlife

Week 10- Chapter 9: A Paradigm from a Christian Mystic