

The Adopted Life

Fifth Sunday of Easter ~ 05.22.2011

The Stumbling Block

Our human nature stumbles over Jesus. We like to be able to neatly categorize the stuff of this world. We like the gods to be god and humans to be human, but Jesus is both - and not half and half, either, like Hercules, but fully both at the same time. What?! We like heaven to be up there somewhere and earth be down here, but, as John points out in his article this week, Jesus has joined the two together. What?! We like good people to be rewarded and bad people to be punished, but, as Tim points out this week, suffering is a part of what it means to be human - regardless of how good we think we are. What?!

So, Peter tells us that Jesus is a stumbling block (1 Peter 2:8.) He messes with our neat categories and challenges our carefully thought out systems of philosophy, religion, and science. And at first that seems like bad news. To some people, who love their thought-systems, it is such bad news that they run away from Jesus. Then the Holy Spirit starts to work on us and we slowly begin to realize that it's not Jesus that's the problem, it's our systems of thought. We have misunderstood everything that is going on around us. Like the ancients staring up at the sky and thinking the sun orbits the earth, we have gotten it all backwards. Our categories, our ways of thinking, and our world views are warped and skewed.

That's when Jesus becomes so precious to us (1 Peter 2:7.) When we realize he is the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6) and we can only understand ourselves and the universe when we see it all in the light of who he is: the Son of the Father, holding all things together.

~ Jonathan Stepp