

Faith Statement: Rodger Y. Nishioka

In the journey of trusting in Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, four particular scripture passages are shaping my faith in these days.

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind so you may prove what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:1-2

I believe faith is fully embodied meaning that while faithing includes our mind, it is more than an intellectual activity. I am called to offer my whole self as a sacrifice to God in confessional humility. As a follower of Jesus Christ, I am called to be different from the world through renewing one's mind -- "faith seeking understanding" as St. Anselm of Canterbury wrote. So while faith is to be fully embodied, there is a particular role for the mind in faith formation as our minds give witness to what God intends for all of humankind and all of God's creation.

For the Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he awakens – awakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. Isaiah 50:4

Teaching continues to shape my life. Faithful teachers have helped form my faith as a child of the church, a young person, a young adult, and an adult. And I have discovered a love of teaching recognizing this as a gift of the Holy Spirit. The prophet reminds me that when I use this gift for God's glory, the weary are uplifted. At the same time, God is so faithful that each day, the Spirit awakens my soul so that I may, by God's grace, continue to learn and grow.

For I am convinced that neither death nor life nor angels nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:38-39

Boldly and unapologetically, the apostle makes the claim that nothing can separate us from God's love. The list is illustrative rather than exhaustive, and it is a foundational belief as well as a source of hope for me every day that in Jesus Christ, we know the love of God and cannot be separated from that love. This is not our doing. This is the grace of God!

Now to God who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than we can ask or imagine, to God be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. Ephesians 3:20-21.

I freely confess that while I can ask for and imagine much, even so, through God's power at work in us, God can do more. I believe the first and last action of all of creation is to glorify God through the church and for all ages and all time! Praise be to God!