



Advent Reflection for Friday, December 10

Morgan McGuire

You can listen to the reading and reflection by clicking [here](#).

Ephesians 5:6-14

Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes on those who are disobedient. Therefore do not be associated with them. For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light— for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, “Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

I’ve been on an impressive doom loop lately. I mean we all have sort of been on a collective doom loop for the last twenty months. To be honest, I preferred life when I doom looped alone. Y’all don’t know how to do it and you’re wearing me out. I’m mostly kidding about that last part. But the beauty of “normal life” is that if I’m on the doom loop invariably someone else isn’t and they’re over there basking in some kind of joy, and I can look at that and somehow go... “oh yeah. See. It shifts. You’ll get off the doom loop eventually.” Except we’re all on some serious ones together now. Global Pandemic. Climate change. Racial based violence. Misogyny. Gun violence. It’s just a veritable basket of societal joy on the daily, huh? So, I get the doom loop and I am sort of happy to stay on it because well... things are doomy. But then I read the above. Well, Jesus, that’s unhelpful to my doom loop. So unhelpful.

“For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light— for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true.”

And there it is! Conviction about my doom loop. Now... My doom loop is not depression. If it was, we would be having a different discussion. I should make that clear. My doom loop is my pessimism, my propensity to settle into hopelessness that is rooted in fear and not love, my propensity to not believe Jesus is who Jesus says Jesus is. Jesus is good and right and true. And Jesus makes all things true. I had someone give me a word once. It was so good. It was something like... “People fall in love with the first Jesus they meet.” When I remember the first Jesus I met it was Jesus the redeemer, the one who makes all things new. And when I am doom looping I forget that Jesus is making all things new even when I can’t see it. The one who has brought me from darkness to light. The Jesus who has made me new. It’s

easy for me to doom loop instead of choosing to be made new. I'm good at that. I am well practiced at the old stuff.

Except, as this passage reminds me, there is this command "Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." What does it mean to arise from the dead in this present moment? For me it looks like jumping off the doom loop. Moving through the horrifying moments we are bombarded with in daily modern life to do something... or say something... or advocate... or be a person who stands in the gap.

There are many ways to turn away from the darkness, to turn away from the choice to settle into my hopelessness. Maybe it's about going on a walk to listen to a friend process the challenges of foster parenting. Maybe it's about going for a walk with another to hold space as they process the passing of someone dear. Maybe it's about sitting down to finish the outline or send pages to my mentor or ask for a meeting with my agent to discuss what projects I'm excited about in 2022 because I think they might bring some good into the world. Maybe it is none of these things or maybe it is all of them. Or maybe the light is found in my commitment to turning and maybe in that act I wake up. I don't know. But I do think Jesus is asking for more from me than the doom loop... Jesus is asking me to awake from the dead.

"Morgan, awake! Rise from the dead..."

Morgan lives in Park Slope. She is an actor and playwright. In her spare time she likes running and spending time with friends. She's currently trying to make more spare time. We'll see how that goes? ;)

