

Share in Christ

Consider the people nearest to Jesus during His life on earth:

His mother,
His father,
His disciples.

Those closest to Him shared His sufferings.
In their own degree, they bore what Jesus bore.
Their relationship with that one man cost them everything.

For them, the mysteries of the transcendent God weren't abstract and far away.
They witnessed those mysteries close up.
They tasted them.
They journeyed through them.
They wrestled with them daily –
the light, the darkness,
the privilege, the pain,
the waiting, the questions, the wrenching self-sacrifice.

For each, it started with a personal call.
They sensed it was the call of the Living God,
and that decided their response,
though they couldn't see the end from the beginning.
Mary answered the angel,
"I am the Lord's servant... May your word to me be fulfilled" (Luke 1:38, NIV).
Joseph obeyed a dream and took a pregnant woman as his fiancé.
The disciples, average working men with deep local connections,
dropped everything familiar and
followed a homeless, itinerant teacher.

The price was real,
but the result was life rich beyond imagination,
permeated with truth and peace,
love and fruitfulness,
eternal meaning and undying glory.
That is still the price and the reward for all who share in Christ.

*An unwanted decree from
an unfriendly government,
a long, difficult journey with
a shameful pregnancy,
lousy accommodations,
a painful labor in tough circumstances, and
only a feeding trough for a cradle –
yet through all these God was
blessing the entire world.*

What unpleasant circumstances is He using in your life?

Hymn: Partners in the Mystery

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