

The name Jurgen Moltmann is not a household name. However, he is responsible for key elements of theological expression in many churches, whether people know it or not. Indeed, I recently had lunch with a colleague who noted that he is a Christian because of Jurgen Moltmann. Such a statement may seem a bit esoteric to those who know nothing of this man from Hamburg, Germany, but because of Moltmann's work--especially his seminal piece, *The Crucified God*--millions of people are impacted and may be none the wiser. *The Crucified God* is an exploration of the God who would meet humanity in the cry of dereliction of Jesus from the cross, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" For Jesus, the human, to articulate this is no surprise. We have all expressed this in some form or another. The halls of history echo its plea with no noticeable or efficacious response. For Jesus, the God-Man, this is the stumbling block that Paul spoke of. Rather than God as omniscient, omnipotent, and beyond the suasion of this mortal coil, using humanity as a playing, the *Crucified God* embodies the Holy's intimate engagement with our vulnerability and mortality, our loss and our loneliness, our deepest despair and our utmost desire.

Moltmann died this past week at the age of 98.

As I was thinking of the impact of Moltmann, I was moving with Marnie through the activities of the end of year events at King: Graduation, Retirement Recognitions, and Faculty Appreciation Events. In the latter two gatherings, a good deal of time is spent recognizing, honoring, and thanking those transitioning to another phase in life. What is most moving in such moments are the very real and very heartfelt reflections people express for their colleagues. Here are the individuals with whom I not only taught or coached or managed the grounds, but I shared my deeper concerns for life or my difficulties in life or my joys of life. The everyday rhythms that ultimately bind us together in ways that we can't always recognize or appreciate when we are in the midst of them. Often, it is when a transition occurs that we are forced to acknowledge the impact that a relationship had on our life.

Why do we wait to acknowledge the grace or the gravity with others before we are forced to?

Thus, this is the season of paying attention to the mundane and everyday as it expresses to us the presence of the Holy in the very real and fleshly reality of the other.

Like many, I watched portions of the 80th anniversary of D-Day ceremonies with rapt attention, feelings of patriotism, and the pang of the sacrifice that so many made. It is profound that those remaining who stormed the beaches at Normandy are 100 years or older. They were 19 or 20 or 21 at the time. It is hard to fathom their sacrifice. Harder still to understand their constitution of will to move toward that which they surely understood would mean their demise, rather than cut and run. Ordinary individuals making the ultimate commitment that led to the liberty and freedoms that we continue to enjoy in our country. Lives changed, transformed, and, literally, created by the sacrifice of nameless individuals. I am speechless in the presence of such commitment and fidelity to a cause larger than any of our lives.

What I realize in the connection of Moltmann to the teachers and staff at King School to the soldiers who died to secure freedom and liberty at Normandy is not only the infinitely nameless and unknown who impact us, but the very God who meets us in those individuals. Indeed, the God who does not scoff at the actions of the common person, but enters fully into our reality and then gives, ultimately, of God's self to partner with us in the redemption of all things. The powerful and the prestigious have no time for such frivolity. Theirs is the realm of a world that denies ultimate reality. We all possess clay feet. The insight of Moltmann, King faculty and staff, and the heroes and heroines of Normandy is that the commonplace and everyday is imbued with the presence of the Holy. Our actions loom larger than ourselves when done in service to others and the world. As Moltmann would note, just like God does.