
PODCAST START:

[intro music]

Fr. Shay: Welcome to the Reading Queerly Queer Theology Podcast, where each week, your hosts Brian Murphy and Shay Kearns will offer a reflection on the week's lectionary readings.

Brian: This week, Shay and I are looking at the lectionary readings for Sunday, July 14th. Today we're going to talk about Deuteronomy 30:9-14.

[not read aloud]

...and the Lord your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all your undertakings, in the fruit of your body, in the fruit of your livestock, and in the fruit of your soil. For the Lord will again take delight in prospering you, just as he delighted in prospering your ancestors, when you obey the Lord your God by observing his commandments and decrees that are written in this book of the law, because you turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

Surely, this commandment that I am commanding you today is not too hard for you, nor is it too far away. It is not in heaven, that you should say, "Who will go up to heaven for us, and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it?" Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, "Who will cross to the other side of the sea for us, and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it?" No, the word is very near to you; it is in your mouth and in your heart for you to observe.

[NRSV]

So, Shay, as you look at this passage, what are some things that you might want to preach on?

FS: I really love the second half of this passage, this idea that the commandment that we're being given is not too difficult, and that it's not something that we have to search for, but that it's in our mouth and in our heart waiting for us to do it. That really speaks to me. I think, often, especially as queer people, we internalize

a lot of things that we should or shouldn't do – ways that we have to be in the world, whether it be to fit in or to be the right kind of Christian or to be the right kind of queer person. This text, to me, is really saying: listen, if you're in tune with the spirit, if you're really going deep in your relationship with God, then you're going to know what it is that you need to do. You don't have to stress out about it or to be searching for or to even look to someone else's instructions – it's in your heart and it's in your mouth. You just need to speak and to be.

B: It also reminds me – as I was preparing to do this cross-country activism trip, sort of confronting anti-LGBT religious institutions, that as we were preparing we were scared about, like, what do we say? Will we say the right thing? These people are Biblical scholars, we don't have all the answers... One of my friends said, "If we believe that we have truth and justice on our side, then all we have to do is bring ourselves, and show up and speak our truth. And that is enough." And as I meet people in my life who find out that I do activism, I often get, oh, I could never do that, or I don't know enough, or that's too scary. And yeah, it might be scary, and we talk about that. But more importantly, I think, we *all* can do it. We can talk to our pastors. We can talk to our senators. We can talk to our school board members. We can talk to our parents. We don't have to have the right answers or have read the right books or believe in the right creed, but if we show up and we bring ourselves and we speak our truth, that what is important is there. As this passage says, it's in your mouth and it's in your heart. And we can know it and we can share it with other people.

FS: I love this idea of being able to trust ourselves, to trust our experiences, and to trust that there's power in those experiences, and that that will speak to other people.

B: I think that's important for me to hear that. If I was going to be listening to a sermon on this, I think what would be really important and healing and inspirational for me to hear was that I need to relearn to trust myself. Especially as an LGBTQ person, but I think as all sorts of people, as women, as people who are congregants instead of pastors – we've been sort of taught to give up our own agency and our own knowledge and our own skills. I think it's important for pastors to emphasize that the Word of God is near you, it's within you. You should cultivate a practice of listening to that and following it.

FS: Yeah, absolutely.

[outro music]

B: I'm Brian.

FS: And I'm Shay. You can find out more at QueerTheology.com.

B: If you'd like to connect with us, send us an email to connect@queertheology.com.

FS: Thanks for listening.

PODCAST END

Transcript by Taylor Walker