

Where Are the Reservoirs of Hope?

T. Richard Snyder raises this question in a recent article entitled, “Disabilities and Disorientations.” The context in which this question is found is in the following quotation:

Today, however, the center is not holding. We are being forced to search for new resources for organizing our lives and for finding meaning. We are at a crisis point in the human project. And because it is a crisis rather than a catastrophe, we have the opportunity to discover new ways of thinking and being that offer us resources for a hopeful future. Where we turn for those resources, where we look for meaning and structure is the crucial issue. *Where are the reservoirs of hope?*¹

When I was young, I lived in a town that had a reservoir located high on a hill. A small stream ran out of the reservoir from which we would often drink after a long hike up the hill. It was probably the best water I ever tasted. One day we explored and found that an artisan well bubbled out of the ground above the reservoir which provided an endless supply of fresh water.

Thirty years later I visited the town and discovered that this sparkling reservoir had become a stagnant pool. It was a sad sight. I thought perhaps that the well had dried up and that there was no longer a supply of water. I hiked up the hill once again only to find that the well had been capped and the water diverted to a bottled water company. The supply had been cut off from the reservoir and it had literally died. The town had outgrown the reservoir and had sold the property to a private company.

How fragile are our reservoirs of hope? Can they be cut off by powers beyond our control, and what resources do we have as human beings to establish new ones?

¹ From *Revolution of Spirit: Ecumenical Theology in Global Context*, Nantawan Boonprasat Lewis, ed.