

MEDITATION 4

Mark 1: 6-8

⁶ Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the strap of his sandals. ⁸ I have baptized you with ^a water, but he will baptize you with ^b the Holy Spirit."

Now John was clothed... Why tell us how John was clothed and what he ate?... Is it telling us that John was not in his right mind? Was he some kind of freak? Or were his choices intentional? What if John's kind of "purification" (See last week's meditation 3) is about living more simply and more off the land?...

So much of the stress in life and our lives no doubt, has to do with complexity and what we have to have and need to do. But how much of that is socially influenced or put upon us in a world where comparisons and judgements are constant?... Can we live more simply than we do? Is some of the purification we need in our lives about making a few more choices to do less or have less of what we've thought we've needed however such "need" has come into our consciousness?...

How much would a little more simplification in your life reduce your stress, distractedness and the kind of preoccupation that undermines your ability to be present in the now moments or available to others in a way that is life-giving to both of you?...

John is preparing us to encounter "**one who is more powerful than I**" and in fact, so powerful that John feels he is "**not worthy to stoop down and untie the very strap of his sandals.**" Wow! That must be some person! But think about John though. Have you ever felt something like what John feels for some other person in that way?... Perhaps it's not about feeling unworthy in the sense of your own worth, but rather, a way of being humble in recognition of something astonishingly beautiful and significant about another person... It's not about social recognition but value...

How much do we value the beauty and gift that is another person?... We need to know such value in ourselves to be able to see it in another... Have you ever thought of that?... If others are just to be compared to us, how poorly do we see our worth?... Is your worth simply to be compared to someone else or is it infinite?... And if your worth is infinite, do you live as if you believe that?...

John is seeing as God sees... What about you?... What do you see in that someone special?... What is the value they possess? Is it something that makes them valuable in the world's eyes which is external, measurable and tangible, or something of value that is far more internal?...

Do you see as God sees?... Do you see yourself and your value as God sees you?...

“I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

What does that mean?... To be baptized not just as purification, but to actually receive the thing itself, the gift itself - the Holy Spirit. Have you received the Holy Spirit?... Does it flow in you?... Do you feel worthy of it even as it is the very movement of God, creator Love, embodied and flowing through the universe ready to enter any humble and open heart... to enter you?..

PRAYER: Come to me anew, O Holy Spirit... Fill me at this time of my life... Flow through me so that I am awakened anew to the wind of your breath and the fire of your love...

Come to me anew, O Holy Spirit... May I know my worth as infinite before you... May the judgements of others not carry so much weight in my soul... Liberate me ever more deeply to know my value and worth before you as infinite, beyond calculation, and to rest in that...

Come to me anew, O Holy Spirit... Help me simplify my life so that I have space to be filled with good things... Some things I can't change right now... I surrender them to you... But some things I can change... Give me the courage and the trust to let some things go and give them up so that I have room to take up other things that will more genuinely serve my fullness and flourishing before you... In Jesus' name, Amen.