

MEDITATION 14

Mark 1: 43-45

⁴³ After sternly warning him Jesus sent him away at once, ⁴⁴ saying to him, “See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded as a testimony to them.” ⁴⁵ But he went out and began to proclaim it freely and to spread the word, so that Jesus could no longer go into a town openly but stayed out in the country, and people came to him from every quarter.

“After sternly warning him Jesus sent him away at once, ⁴⁴ saying to him, “See that you say nothing to anyone.”

Why does Jesus want nothing said about him? Is it that he is not ready to be known?... And yet he's doing all this body/mind/spirit healing of people publicly. What does he expect will happen?

Or is it that such telling about him may draw in the wrong kind of attention?... Maybe Jesus wants more control over the narrative about himself... Maybe Jesus wants people to know what kind of messiah-healer he is as he is rather than the many expectations people have with those titles and words... hmm...

What do people think of you?... How do they speak of you?... Do you know?... Does it matter to you?... What do you want people to think of you?... What are you open to share with others about yourself and what are you not?...

It's not easy being yourself with other people, especially people you don't know, people you don't trust, or people with whom you want to show certain sides of yourself while hiding other sides of yourself...

Prayer: Here I am, O God... You know me... All of me... You know me in all my glory... But you also know me in all my misery too... You know me when faith, hope and love are most alive in me... And you know me when fear, doubt, distress, hurt and resentment eat away at me... Ground me in the assurance that I am yours no matter what I am working out in myself or with others... Help me grow into my better self as you know I can be and become... Amen.

“But go, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded as a testimony to them.”

The man cleansed feels the divine healing coursing through him. But until a priest, who is like a public health official, declares him clean, he cannot go out in public to be with others without them fearing contamination... It sounds harsh and it is, but this is the system at the time... Jesus not only gives him back his health, but his social connection and freedom from isolation too...

How much may you feel isolated... isolated because of illness... isolated because of temperament... Isolated because of grief, or depression, or because you are away from close family, friends and meaningful community connection?...

Prayer: Liberate me from the ways I feel isolated, O God, and the ways I may contribute to my own isolation... Open my heart to trust, to reach out, and to share who I am inviting others to share themselves with me more meaningfully... I so pray... Amen.

“But he went out and began to proclaim it freely and to spread the word, so that Jesus could no longer go into a town openly but stayed out in the country. And people came to him from every quarter.”

The word is out and Jesus can't go anywhere without being swarmed by crowds. Is this a good thing or a bad thing?...

It's one thing to want attention and to get attention in order to influence and do something good. But what kind of attention is Jesus getting? People have needs, yes. All of it is about healing. And Jesus is full of compassion and healing energy. He can heal body, mind and spirit. But can he heal the people as a people? Can he heal them enough to shift the mood from despair to hope, from defeat to faith and from fear to love? And what about the authorities? What influence will they have? Will their grip of control over the people through fear and guilt win?...

How much time do you need to be alone?... How much is alone time too much and feels more like isolation and loneliness?... How much is fear a factor for you?... What about guilt?... How much is trust an issue?... How much are negative experiences of the past a hindrance to what is yet possible when faith, hope and love are active in you?...

PRAYER: Come to me, O God... Come to me as a healing presence... the healing I know I need, and the healing I don't know or think I need... You know me in ways I do not know myself, O God... See the beauty in me for all my inhibitions and fears... Empower me to step out of myself not in anxiety, but in trust, knowing you are taking me by the hand and no matter what happens I am yours... I surrender myself to you, O God... Amen.