

MEDITATION 11

Mark 1: 32-34

That evening, at sunset, they brought to Jesus all who were sick or possessed by demons. ³³ And the whole city was gathered around the door. ³⁴ And he cured many who were sick with various diseases and cast out many demons, and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

"That evening, at sunset, they brought to Jesus all who were sick or possessed by demons."

Evening and sunset represent a more difficult time of the day. When we are going through a hard time, evenings and nights are especially hard. We have few distractions and more time to focus or obsess on the illness, pain and trouble. In the ancient world, especially, there is no electricity, devices or programming to distract and occupy. People are in the dark literally as much as figuratively...

How do you fare in the nighttime?... What troubles or worries keep you up or get you up?... Why do problems seem so much bigger and more irresolvable at night?...

And so they bring those sick (physical ailments) or possessed by demons (mental distress).

What ailment or distress afflicts you or someone you love which then burdens you?... What torment or anguish can possess your mind at times and what pain can possess your body?... What do you anticipate down the road you don't want to think about but creeps upon your consciousness or dreaming at night?... What memory of the past or injustice continues to burn inside you, or what situation are you currently struggling with that just keeps turning inside you without any clear resolution on the horizon?...

Is such questioning relevant for you? Or is it something that afflicts others and not you so much?... Will you ponder such questions only when they fall on your lap as they will at some point?... Or, may this gospel invitation to seek out good news be relevant for you whatever your circumstance?...

There is affliction all around us if not also in us, if we have eyes to see and a heart to feel. To find light, inspiration, courage, grace and empowerment to pass through and rise up in the midst of it all is among the most important things in any of our lives no matter our circumstances...

Prayer: Come to me, O God... Awaken me where I need to be awakened... Comfort me where I need your comfort... empower me where I feel powerless or weak... Fill me where I feel emptied out... Give me fresh faith, hope and love as only you can give...

"And the whole city was gathered around the door."

Wow! That's a lot. That's overwhelming... Being overwhelmed by the need, by the affliction, by the size of it all... What would it take? ... What has it taken to overwhelm you?... whatever it is, obvious or surprising, being overwhelmed is a reality for all of us at some point in our lives... And sometimes, it doesn't take all that much...

"And he cured many who were sick with various diseases and cast out many demons."

Jesus is a healer... What kind of healing do you need?...

Many are healed but not all... What makes any of us ready and open for healing to happen in some way?... More to come on this as the gospel story unfolds...

Prayer: Help me, O God... Help me discern and see the healing I need... Maybe I don't want to see where I may need some healing... Or maybe I am so overwhelmed by a certain ailment I cannot see the full scope of how healing may help me cope with what does not change or improve in any obvious way... Help me discern and help me see, O God...

"And he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him."

Why this? Why silence the demons from revealing Jesus?... Maybe Jesus wants people to be ready to see him and receive him... Maybe who he is cannot yet fully be revealed... Maybe, we need to a fuller scope of the kind of healing toward wholeness we need before we can understand and embrace the healing Jesus has to offer us... Maybe... More to come as the gospel unfolds...

PRAYER: Meet me where I am, O God, whether I am fully aware of where I am or not, meet me where I am...

I know some things about myself... where I am strong and where I am struggling... where I am confident and where I am tormented by doubt and fear... where I am caring and loving and where I am resentful, envious, judgemental, even bitter...

Help me see, O God... Give me greater trust in your love despite my imperfections... Give me hope that I can keep growing in ways I have not imagined yet... Give me love that is greater than any indifference or hate in me... Help me heal in ways I don't even recognize or know I need healing... In Jesus' name... Amen.