

## MEDITATION 33

Mark 4: 1-2

"Again Jesus began to teach beside the sea. Such a very large crowd gathered around him that he got into a boat on the sea and sat there, while the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. <sup>2</sup>He began to teach them many things in parables..."

How do you learn?... Has learning been a singularly positive thing for you? Or has learning also been a painful thing? Many of us have had some wonderful teachers over the years and we are deeply thankful for them. For many others of us, however, there has also been pain in our experience of learning.

Maybe the pain is in how you were made to feel by a teacher who did not appreciate how you learned and your learning style.

Maybe the pain is that the learning came the hard way after difficult experiences, mistakes, suffering or loss?

Maybe you had to learn certain things under pressure to survive but this has not served you in other situations or contexts where you have to unlearn some things you have learned in order to grow.

How we learn and what we learn are important things to discover however they come. How many people have shared with me over the years how they were made to feel ashamed or deficient because they couldn't learn in the conventional way in school because they were different kind of learners or they had some learning disability. But later in life when they were supported in discovering what it was and how they could learn differently, whole new worlds were opened up for them.

What has been your experience of learning? Who have been your teachers?...

We have already encountered Jesus the healer. Now we are entering into Jesus the teacher. One of the most effective ways Jesus taught was with the use of what are called "parables." Parables communicate deep spiritual truth using simple stories based on everyday life in 1st century Palestine. But the stories also have a twist as Jesus is highly aware of his audience, different groups within the audience with different agendas, and the different things they need to learn if they are open to learn them.

What is it you need to learn maybe you haven't learned sufficiently well?

What have you not been open to learning but may be open to learning at this time of your life?

What are we forced to learn because of challenging experiences in our lives, mistakes in our lives, or suffering and loss in our lives?...

Jesus will have so much more to teach us! Will we be open to learning?...

Are we willing to make the time and the effort?...

Are we willing to be vulnerable as such learning will require an openness of heart where there may also be the pain of facing challenges and difficulties?...

PRAYER: What is it I need to learn, O God...

What is it I need to learn at this time of my life?...

Is it something new I'm afraid of trying?

Is it a different way in a relationship?

Is it patience?

Is it trust?

Is it an openness at a level I have not been open before?

Is it about making peace with something I have not been at peace with?

What is it I need to learn at this time of my life, O God...

Teach me... In Jesus name and through his leading and inspiration... Amen.