

MEDITATION 25

Mark 3: 7-10

“Jesus departed with his disciples to the sea, and a great multitude from Galilee followed him; ⁸ hearing all that he was doing, they came to him in great numbers from Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, beyond the Jordan, and the region around Tyre and Sidon. ⁹ He told his disciples to have a boat ready for him because of the crowd, so that they would not crush him, ¹⁰ for he had cured many, so that all who had diseases pressed upon him to touch him.”

This is a fascinating little episode giving us a glimpse of the impact Jesus was having on the crowds of people seeking his teaching and healing. The possibility of healing draws them out, but once they encounter Jesus, they experience being touched with healing power in their minds and spirits as much as in their bodies.

People are desperate and needy. The fear in the crowding is that they will crush Jesus, and so, Jesus draws them to the sea (a great lake) where he can get on a boat, just a little offshore, where he will not be crushed and yet still be close enough to speak and come to shore for some embodied contact in more controlled ways.

Once again we come to the question of healing, of “disease,” as people experienced such. We also come to this idea that a mere touching of Jesus can have dramatic healing effects. What kind of faith is required in people to believe that a mere touch can have such transforming healing possibilities?

And What about you? Is healing something you need in some way?... What kind of healing would it be?... Is it the physical kind?... Is it the mental or spiritual kind?... Is it some of everything given we are whole persons where one part of us unwell affects other parts of us too?...

And what about faith?... What do you believe is possible?... What do you believe can happen?... Is faith about trust that healing is possible?... Is faith about trust that God will provide for you even when your condition may not change for the better and may even get worse over time?... May healing also be about growing gentler and more compassionate as you suffer something, perhaps more understanding, perhaps more appreciative of the simplest moments and blessings given how precious they are given the pain, sadness and frustration that also come in life?...

No doubt everyone in the crowd was not healed in dramatic fashion. In fact, even as Jesus was a gifted healer in a time before modern medicine, he could not heal everyone, and this was so for any number of reasons. Besides this, everyone is mortal, finite and we move toward death at some point in life. How each of us builds our lives ahead of death and how we prepare for it are even more important than the healing itself should it come at some point.

How does healing and faith become much richer in their meaning in your life beyond a mere physical healing event should it come to be? How may healing and faith be an ongoing part of your life in process and development through every episode and season in your life in all your relations, situations and circumstances?...

We need to keep walking with Jesus and learning from him as we journey forward seeking healing toward ever greater wholeness. We also need to learn a faith that is ever more open and expansive in what's possible.

So then, we end as we began with core questions: What does healing mean for you?.... What does faith mean to you?...

PRAYER: Thank you, O God, for all we receive because we have somehow encountered Jesus. We don't know him in a physical way, but his words, his teaching and his actions impact us and move us into fresh conviction, possibility, trust and love.

May Jesus the healer also open us up to healing energy too. Even as we may not be able to touch him physically, may he touch us in our spirits. May we be filled with his healing light even as we continue to struggle and suffer in various ways physical, mental and spiritual.

Thank you for your grace through which you see us, love us and seek to provide a way for us even as the darkness sometimes feels thick.

Thank you for your embodied presence through the people in our lives who are there for us and will continue to be there for us.

Thank you for friendship and community and all those who can become as much family if not more family for some of us than our own families for all their possibility and limitations.

Continue to walk with us, above us, beside us and move through us too... In Jesus' name, Amen.