



Daily Meditations

June 1-6, 2020

The Biblical readings are taken from the Daily Office in the Book of Common Prayer for Year 2 and written by the St. Stephen's Meditation Writing Team: Dave Boyd, Becky Denton, Pat Gillory, Traci Maxwell, Jay Nickel, Bob Reed, T.Cay Rowe, and Carroll Wilson.

Click on the scripture reading for each day to go directly to link.

COLLECT, PROPER 2

Almighty and merciful God, in your goodness keep us, we pray, from all things that may hurt us, that we, being ready both in mind and body, may accomplish with free hearts those things which belong to your purpose; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Prologue:

As I began to write these meditations, it was May 10. On the prior weekend, our sleepy little town was filled with visitors, over-nighters, and shoppers. They clogged the square with no masks on themselves or their young children. Once things started to re-open per the governor's orders, folks just decided that all the danger had passed. I am more afraid now that I was just one week ago. There are even churches in Wimberley returning to Sunday schedules. Meanwhile, I continue to distance myself from harm as much as possible. I miss all of you very much. Bless you all. Jesus, have mercy!

John the Baptizer Has a Question for Jesus

Monday, June 1, 2020

Matthew 11:1-6

"Are you the One we are expecting, or are we still waiting?" - The Message Remix Bible

John is in prison. But, from prison, he dispatches his disciples to ask the foregoing question of Jesus. Jesus replies to them: "The blind see. The lame walk. Lepers are cleansed. The deaf hear. The dead are raised...Is this what you were expecting?"

I don't know about you, but I always wanted to be witness to a miracle. I know, many of you will probably say that you have seen miracles. I cannot say that. Things have happened in my life, for which I have no explanation. But, a miracle? I just don't know.

I'd love to go on the road with Jesus. I would love to see Him in action, to see Him heal. We could use a few good miracles in this country right now. Lord, have mercy. Thank you, Jesus (TYJ)

Jesus Talks to the Crowds about John the Baptizer

Tuesday, June 2, 2020

Matthew 11:7-15

"What did you expect when you went to see him in the wild? A weekend camper?...What, then? A prophet? That's right, a prophet! And, probably the best prophet you'll ever hear." - The Message Bible

Jesus is teaching among the crowds in the hometown villages of his own disciples. He is explaining to them the role and the importance of John.

Seems like we could use a good prophet right now. And I'm not talking about some lame fortune-teller. I'm talking about one being "sent ahead to make the road smooth." Maybe in all the clamor, I'm just not hearing them.

I think the only way out of the mess we find ourselves in right now is through caring for the **needs** of others. The physical health of others is a **need**. Likewise, a job and an income are **needs**. Somewhere there is a balance to be found through **caring**. Crowding into bars and onto beaches--these are **not caring** and **not needs**. And I don't believe that refusing to wear a face-covering is an act of **caring**. TYJ

Results

Wednesday, June 3, 2020

Matthew 11:16-24

"John came fasting and they called him crazy. I came feasting and they called me a lush--a friend of the riffraff. Opinion polls don't count for much. The proof of the pudding is in the eating." - The Message Bible

So, here again, Jesus is saying: "What do you see from My actions?...The blind see..." He ate with tax collectors. He conversed with Samaritan women. He cared. Many did not like the recipe for His pudding, but it didn't hurt anyone, and it tasted pretty darn good.

So, by our actions, what kind of pudding are we cooking up with our response to this virus? Are our actions motivated by caring? What's it gonna taste like? Right now, it looks like to me that we are in for a very bitter and selfish dessert. Lord, have mercy. TYJ

Keep Company with Me

Thursday, June 4, 2020

Matthew 11:25-30

"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to Me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with Me and work with Me--watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythm of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly." - the Message Bible

It works. For me, it works. I'm often tired, worn out, and burned out. But if I try--if I try to watch how He does it--if I try to walk with Him--if I try to keep company with Him, I can recover my life and rest with Him for awhile.

Yes, it's hard right now. I can't choose any of my usual avenues to trod down in

pursuit of keeping company with Him. There are fewer of my usual ways to do good, and more instances (for me) of frustration with others as I wrongly judge them.

But I can still thank the cashier at the grocery store. And I can assure a person that I encounter at the post office that: "Under this mask, I am smiling at you."
TYJ

A Flexible Heart

Friday, June 5, 2020

Matthew 12:1-14

"I prefer a flexible heart to an inflexible ritual."

Jesus healed a man on the Sabbath. The inflexible laws of the Pharisees did not allow such a thing. Jesus told the Pharisees that he was no lackey to their laws regarding the Sabbath.

It seems to me that rights and rules and laws are all confounded now. People are over-the-moon at the present about their "right" to refuse to wear a face-covering in public, when the reason for doing so is to help prevent others from contracting the virus. What's more important: the discomfort of wearing a mask or the health of others? Where is the flexible heart in all of this? Jesus would refer to those refusing to wear a mask as "a stiff-necked people."

Jesus would have mercy. TYJ

He Healed Them All

Saturday, June 6, 2020

Matthew 12:15-21

"Jesus, knowing they were out to get Him, moved on. A lot of people followed Him, and He healed them all."

Jesus continued His flexible heart work of caring and healing in spite of the inflexible laws of the Pharisees. He knows that His life is at risk for doing so, but Jesus would have mercy.

In case you haven't noticed in my writings by now, this is one of my favorite phrases from the Bible: "Jesus would have mercy." For me, it's kinda like the answer to the question of "What would Jesus do (WWJD)?"

Maybe this is just another way for us to direct our actions in this whole virus mess. In moments of indecision (or even frustration), perhaps we should be asking ourselves what would be the merciful action or direction to take. Jesus told us to walk with Him and work with Him and He'd show us what to do.

Jesus would have mercy. We should as well. TYJ

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