

Daily Meditation 05/22/2023

Love, Courage & Moving beyond Fear

Good morning.

We continue our meditation on fear and it's opposite--courage, fortitude.

And Earth spiritual traditions are very well endowed with addressing issues of fear. Rabbi Heschel frequently talks about how the prophet casts out fear. Prophet casts out fear. Fear is part of interfere. And to interfere, of course, you make enemies. Speaking truth to power, for example.

So, one has to stand up and be counted, and cast out fear, which is what people we admire, like Dr. King and Fred Shuttlesworth or Gandhi or many others demonstrate, bear witness to.

The epistle of John in the Christian Bible says that love drives out fear. Love drives out fear. That's what psychologist Jerry Jampolsky builds his movement, attitudinal healing, on. Attitudinal healing. That we can choose in life between love and fear. And he strongly countenances choosing love.

Joanna Macy, the Buddhist teacher, says, "Have confidence in the Buddha nature in all things." That this is how you stand up to fear, to have confidence in the Buddha nature in all things.

And you can translate and do that advice into Christian language. You have confidence in the Cosmic Christ that is found in all things. All things bring the divine doxa and glory with them.

One practice that I recommend, when it comes to facing fear, is to ask fear, "What are you here to teach me?" What are you here to teach me? "Why have you come?"

Set up a dialogue with fear so that fear becomes a second person to you. Speak to the second person of Fear. And speak to Fear as a second person. So it's not some looming object that's bigger than us.

But you have to enter into an exchange. And you'd be surprised what happens when you do that. And you could do that by journaling, you can do it by writing, and you may well get answers, interesting answers when you pose that question.

What did you come to teach me? Why have you come?

And, of course, for us to call on ancestors, the communion of saints, and people whom you admire, because they do carry courage and give evidence of courage in their lives. They may be living, they may be deceased, but reading stories of people who have demonstrated courage in their lives is a wonderful way to build your own.

That's one of the dimensions to hagiography, that it's healthy to read the lives of people such as Fred Shuttlesworth and Martin Luther King and others whom we admire around the theme of courage. Dorothy Stang, for example. How they lived out this choice between fear and love.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.