

Trinity News

Pentecost 14 Daily Mental Chatter: Affirmative Action

Then he called the crowd again and said to them, “listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile” (Mark 7:14-15).

Jesus appeared in a Jewish State overseen by the Roman Conquerors of his country. The daily way of life of the Jews was governed by external rules taken from the Torah, the Divine Instruction, in the Hebrew Scriptures. They paid little attention to Roman conduct, though they repudiated their way of morals and living life. They concentrated on their own externals that had held them together since they came out of exile in Babylon. The Torah was a rule book for them, in particular the 10 Commandments and the precepts laid down by Moses.

It was a world of external prescriptions for life in society. The prophet from Galilee came and searched **the inner heart** like no one before him in his tradition. The books of Job and Ecclesiastes and the heart thoughts of Jeremiah go after such matters. But in the case of Jesus it seems to be a central concern of the way in which he thought and lived and acted.

The portion from Mark 7:14-15 etc. that addresses this should be read in conjunction with Romans 7:14-25 where Paul talks about the tussle between the good and evil spirit within himself. The passage in Romans is really an examination of his own inner thought much in the same manner that Augustine adopted much later in his Confessions. Jesus and Paul and countless other raise these issues. What do we do about them in our time?

1. We are all aware of disturbing thoughts that can suddenly interrupt any serenity of the moment.
2. We are bombarded on the Internet by quick fix solutions for this inner chatter and its disconcerting consequences.
3. Jesus addresses the ‘shadow’ side of our person when he speaks of all of the negative matters that can come out of this jangling of our thoughts and the up-and-down emotions that go with them.
4. Both Job and Paul are defiant in refusing to have themselves dragged down by others who claim that they have become an offence to God. So should we, when we have as our defence “**an inner certainty that is greater than courage.**”
5. Jesus clearly thinks that mercy is the best antidote for attacks based on fear and that love is the best antidote for hate. The whole of his teaching is about entering a Realm of Love (Kingdom of God) filled with an overwhelming love of God for humanity that seeks a matching response from humanity in some way. He sees this as an opportunity, indeed a unique opportunity every time, to achieve peace of heart and the cessation of disturbing thoughts and emotions.

6. Following some input from a parishioner I have looked again at the interpretations of the opening words of Psalm 46:10, “Be still and know that I am God.” Some translations say “Stop striving” or “Cease from striving” or just “Cease” instead of “Be still”. This may well be part of the original intent of the composer of the psalm.

7. Just stopping and noting and observing can diminish the power of intrusive thoughts, especially damaging ones loaded with the icy entrancement of evil. **Talk back to your negative intrusive thoughts either verbally or with thought-words today and make it habitual. Talk-up your life enhancing thoughts!** When that happens others will note your inner peace. Jesus and all the Saints will smile from heaven and endorse your circle of peace and its outcomes in stronger lives!

Bishop Arthur Jones

THIS WEEK:

Wednesday.

- Bible study, 10:00am.
- Group Discussion, 7:30pm, Parish Office

Thursday.

- Midweek Eucharist, 10:00am, Chapel.

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:

Isaiah 35:4-7a; Psalm 146; James 1:17-27; Mark 7:31-37

SEPTEMBER 6. START OF SUNDAY SCHOOL. Registration forms are available at the church entrance.
