

**So last week I received some good feed back after Chapel on my meditation.
Interestingly two people, one after each service, asked me:**

Sounds great!

**Love what you said...but what does that exactly mean in our everyday lives?
How do I do it, how do I be it, when so much of my life is out of my control,
and sometimes I just feel as if all hell is broken loose....**

**So, I've been really pondering and praying that question all week
I firmly believe that our faith- and what I speak about each week-
must have a real effect in our lives and in our world.**

**Just 'believing' something in our heads, just talking 'pretty' so to speak,
can be philosophical jibberish...it can be sweet chapel in the woods escapism...without
concrete action and without real, palpable transformation of ourselves and our world**

**So... "Where *IS* the kingdom of God in our messy, complicated lives?
Where *IS* the God consciousness that I spoke of last week when I'm arguing with my
spouse, my kids, or even my self?**

**I think much of our problem that prevents us from seeing God's kingdom
is our expectations....**

**We expect, if we do it right...our lives will be without conflict and struggle.
we expect, if we do it right to have a world without death and sadness...
where everyone is happy all the time
and everyone gets along somewhere people are strumming guitars all the time
singing 'kumbya'...**

**It seems as if people have been having these expectations for thousands of years.
800 years before Christ, the prophet Isaiah offered this vision for the Jewish people:**

**On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food,
a feast of well matured wines...
and he will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples,
the sheet that is spread over all nations;
he will swallow up death for ever...
then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces
and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the spoken...
let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation
For the hand of the Lord will rest on this mountain.**

(Isaiah 25: 6-8, 9b, 10)

**So it seems to me, there is something inside of all humanity
that has always yearned for a world where there was no sorrow, no hunger, no pain,
no struggle, no death.
And most of the time we have expected God to come ‘down’ and take care of it
for us!**

**But of course, humanity has never experienced such a time.
Does that mean that we simply haven’t been good enough or faithful enough
or that we haven’t worked hard enough or even loved broadly enough?**

**Last week I spoke of seeing with the eyes of Love
and of loving with hearts so large that nothing was left out...
and if we could do that ...we would help to create the Reign of Heaven on Earth.
And I do believe that is true...But...but...that statement doesn’t go far enough.**

yes....we do help create the Reign of Heaven on Earth.

**Every act of justice, every act of compassion, every act of kindness and mercy
and forgiveness and joy...all of those acts help to make visible**

the kingdom of heaven on Earth...

but the Reign of God is not 'out there' it is in here...

The Reign of Heaven on Earth flows from the Reign of God that is inside all of us...and that is our true nature, our most truest self.

Coming to that awareness....realizing this amazing truth IS kingdom consciousness...

The kingdom is already here...in each and every human person ...

I take that back...in all of creation...

only it is not realized completely by all of reality...

and there's the rub.

Sometimes we get it and sometimes we don't.

Sometimes we let our true nature shine and sometimes we don't

Sometimes we shut down with fear or in anger and sometimes

we forgive and rejoice....

Sometimes our kids, our spouse, our boss, our government makes brilliant compassionate, wise and just choices and sometimes they don't.

Perhaps the real challenge of life is to be willing to keep starting over and over and over again, to let our true nature, our God consciousness,

our kingdom consciousness show itself in and through our lives.

Marianne Williamson once said it this way:

“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates other.”

The kingdom of heaven on earth is most fully realized when we touch the kingdom of God in here...and then we ARE the kingdom out there.

When we let mercy, kindness, justice, peace, compassion and joy flow out of our hearts and into the world the Reign of Heaven is visible on Earth.

This is the task of every person....and since not everyone 'gets it' so to speak, evidence of the kingdom is scattered and incomplete.

**Our primary task is to do the best we can do to let our light shine.
we are called to be honest and just..
we are called to be compassionate and kind...
we are called to BE kingdom consciousness
so that the reign of heaven is made visible on Earth...**

Can we help others to know the kingdom inside of them?

Sure!

Can we help others grow in compassion and kindness and justice

Sometimes....

But all peoples, and that includes our children, our spouses, our parents, our friends and our neighbors each have their own work to do...

We can't do it for them...

I'd like to close with a small poem, prayer often attributed to Mother Theresa..

for it was inscribed on the wall of her hospital in Calcutta.

I find that it speaks to "Being" the kingdom of God, of living in kingdom consciousness...

I suspect you have heard it before, but it is well worth repeating:

People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self centered

Forgive them anyways.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives.

Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some unfaithful friends and some genuine enemies.

Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and sincere people may deceive you.

Be honest and sincere anyway.

What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight.

Create anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous.

be happy anyway.

The good you do today, will often be forgotten.

Do good anyway.

Give the world the best you have, and it will never be enough.

Give your best anyway.

You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and God.

It was never between you and them, anyway.

The reign of God exists inside of us, no matter the external circumstances.

When we become aware of that we begin to live in Kingdom consciousness...

We can help make known the Reign of Heaven on Earth through our choices, our words, our actions. Sometimes people get it and grow...sometimes they don't.

That is something we cannot control.

We do what we can do...then we must let go and let the Power of the Holy One enter. That is Faith.

**All of this is not just pie and in the sky philosophical jibberish...
it is not sweet chapel in the woods escapism...it is real and hard but beautiful truth.
and for THAT we can only say thank you! amen.**