

I have a confession to make....

What I read today is not all of the scripture that is cited in the program.

In your program it says that I was going to read

Mark, chapter 9, verses 38-48.

but I only read verses 38-41.

I thought I was going to read the others....

I wrote a meditation about the others....

but as I continued to pray and pondered on Saturday,

I knew that I could not stand here, in this holy place and read a Scripture passage that has been used to shore up and justify barbaric practices,

both back in ancient times and ...as hard as it is to believe...

barbaric punishments that are still practiced in some places around the world to this day.

What I did not read were passages about cutting off one's hand or foot or plucking out one's eye if they cause you to sin...

I actually looked on the internet to see if this kind of punishment was still being practiced yet today, and I was greatly distressed to find out that it is...

(PAUSE)

Long before I became involved in ministry

I can remember listening to certain passages both in the Old Testament, and in the New Testament,

and saying to myself: this must stop.

We must stop proclaiming as 'the word of the Lord' such passages that promote prejudice and violence...

I'm thinking of that passage in Exodus chapter 17: verses 11- when the Israelites battled the Amalekites...

and as long as Moses held his arms up the Israelites prevailed...

when his arms got too heavy and fell...the Amalekites were winning...
so Aaron and Hur...two other Israelites got a stone for Moses to sit upon
and held up his hands until all of their opponents were killed...
and then, according to this Scripture, Moses erects an altar on the site
and says: "The LORD has sworn; the LORD will have war against Amalek from
generation to generation."

Enough.

Passages such as that one from Exodus

and this one from Mark must no longer be read in Holy places...

which of course is everywhere...so, I believe, we must no longer pass them on.

These passages and others like them, must no longer be looked upon as Holy or Sacred or
Inspired...Period.

These passages and others like them only continue to support ancient prejudicial views,
not the unboundaried compassion and unconditional love of Yahweh
that Jesus gave his life for...

So...enough time on that....let's get back to the passage that I *did* read today...

Neil Douglas Klotz is an internationally known scholar whose work with the
the Ancient Aramaic of Jesus is well respected.

He has taught that when the Scriptures say "in my name" such as in our reading
it doesn't mean literally saying "in Jesus' name"

because for the ancient people, language was vibrational...it was energy...

For the ancient peoples, to pray in a masters' name was to vibrate with his vibrations...

The ancients, according to Klotz, used the words of the master, not for their linguistic,
not as a magical phrase nor for their elegance

but they used the master's words because they carried the masters' energy...

So... those people who were casting out demons in his name...
those that the 12 had so objected to and tried to stop:
They had been able to attune to Jesus' energy, his vibration
They were able to allow that energy, that grace, that healing presence of
of The Holy flow through them....
and then of course, they would not/could not speak evil of him..

Remember: even Jesus never claimed to heal anyone...
it was always the faith of the people which allowed the healing
grace and presence of Yahweh to be effective...

For Jesus and the ancient peoples,
it wasn't a head thing, or a creed commitment....
it was all about openness and willingness...

Let me use a modern example:
There is a stereotype of a TV evangelist who is railing against the devil
and using the name of JEEESUSSSS to cure people...
now, I have never been to such an event,
but we can all remember certain TV evangelists who claimed miraculous results
and have later come to be known as frauds and charlatans...

Those TV evangelists were certainly not flowing in Holy Energy nor Divine Grace...
They were using the literal name of Jesus to dupe their followers
for a gazillion egotistical reasons and monetary reasons...

So, for the ancient peoples and for us...
the question is not so much about the words we use

**or the groups we belong to
or the churches we attend,**

**What matters is: how well do we connect to the energy,
the grace, the vibration of the Holy?**

**How well do we allow that energy,
that grace, that vibration, to resonate in us and flow through us?**

How authentic are we? Are we living lives of integrity and humility?

**The essential question is how open are we: Body, Mind, and Spirit
to the Presence of the Holy One?**

**As I pondered and prayed about all of this yesterday
I was reminded of the prayer of Fr. Michael Judge
who was the chaplain to the New York Fire dept.
who died in the Twin Towers on 9/11.**

His daily prayer was this:

**Lord, take me where You want me to go,
let me meet who You want me to meet,
tell me what You want me to say,
and keep me out of Your way.**

Ahhh, yes: May it may be so!

Amen.

