

This afternoon's reading is from the Gospel of Luke...

He also told them a parable:

“Can a blind person guide a blind person?

Will not both fall into a pit?

A disciple is not above the teacher

but everyone who is fully qualified will be like the teacher.

Why do you see the speck in your neighbor's eye,

but do not notice the log in your own eye?

Or how can you say to your neighbor:

‘Friend, let me take out the speck in your eye.’

when you yourself do not see the log in your own eye?

You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye,

and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbor's eye.”

A Reading from the Gospel of Luke....

Meditation

Apparently one morning a grandmother brought her granddaughter to Gandhi

and commanded: “My granddaughter eats too much sugar.

Tell her to stop!

Gandhi said, “Bring her back to me next week.”

The grandmother and granddaughter returned next week.

But Gandhi again put them off, saying the same thing,

“Bring her back to me next week.’ This happened three times.

Finally Gandhi said to the granddaughter,

“You should not eat so much sugar. It is not good for you.”

The grandmother was nonplussed.

“we waited four weeks for this simple remark!”

Ah! Gandhi sighed. “It took me that long to stop eating too much sugar myself.”

How can you say to your neighbor,

‘Friend, let me take out the speck in your eye.’

when you yourself do not see the log in your own eye?

I have a morning ritual...or habit...that I reallllly like!

I get up around 6, turn the coffee pot on...

then I light a candle...

and...

check my Instagram,

my emails

and the day’s news headlines...

then I do my morning spiritual reading

and my morning meditation sit...

**Well, this weekend Bill and I were hanging out with all 8 of our grandchildren,
five of whom spent an overnight with us..**

The oldest of the five now has a cell phone:

and when he woke up on Saturday morning what did he do?

Got out his phone...and I almost told him to put it down

until I thought of my own early morning habit...

How can I say to my grandson:

‘Friend, let me take out the speck in your eye.’

when you yourself do not see the log in your own eye?

You know, there is a lot of wisdom in the twelve step recovery tradition ... one favorite saying of mine from that tradition is:

“If you spot it, you got it!”

I have to believe that when we see the same thread of wisdom coming from so many different angles and traditions... we must pause and a consider whether it is true or not for us.

In my own experience, I would have to say that more often than not whatever I criticize about another is something that I eventually see in myself.

And...believe it or not, that is very good news!

**Because in all spiritual traditions,
self knowledge is the path,
the key to transformation...
and transformation is what Jesus is all about!**

The reason self knowledge and self awareness is so vitally important to our spiritual journey is because we all have blind spots.

**We all have done things and said things which..
well...let's just say: we didn't put our best self forward.**

**but most often we justify our actions and words
because...well in this situation what else could we do?**

Of course, everybody would do the same thing!

Of course that wasn't the nicest thing to say...but come on...they started it!

and then time moves on and we 'forget'...
until someone else does something similar and we get on our high horse and chastise, or
confront them and/or gossip about them.

And if we were truly honest with ourselves,
doing so somehow makes us feel better about ourselves..
because we are not like them...or so we think.

"You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye,
and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbor's eye."

I'm not bringing this up to make us feel rotten and guilty...
While feeling appropriate guilt is appropriate...
prolonged guilt is really ego serving...
if we can't be the best about the something...
at least we can be *the* worse...
either way that is our ego at work.

But when we hear ourselves criticizing and judging others,
either out loud or in our heads...
we can use all of those occasions as opportunities
for our own enlightenment and transformation.

When we can catch ourselves criticizing another...
when we then turn our gaze inward and
when we are willing to see what needs to be seen...
we finally have an opportunity to change.

We cannot change what we do not see!

So now, we can allow the grace of the Divine to hold those parts of ourselves we deny or do not like...

we can ask for forgiveness...

we can make amends if we must...

and we can make a different choice in the future...

and then...and only then...if we still need to share

if we MUST share what we notice in the other

it is no longer a judgment or a criticism

because we have been there, done that.

We cannot and do not judge the other...

we cannot and do not place ourselves above the other

as better than the other...

and we find ourselves more gentle, more compassionate...

more forgiving...

and that, my friends is the grace of God at work...

that is the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth...

so of course, then all we can say, is THANK YOU! amen...