

John 14: 25-28

**“I have said these things to you while I am still with you.
But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit,
whom the Father will send in my name,
will teach you everything,
and remind you of all that I have said to you.
Peace I leave with you;
my peace I give to you.**

**I do not give to you as the world gives.
Do not let your hearts be troubled,
and do not let them be afraid.”**

Meditation

**Peace I leave with you...my peace I give to you...
but the kind of peace I give you is not like the world's peace...**

**Don't you think it would be much easier to have internal peace
if we could have at least a little bit of external peace???**

**Let's be honest... It would be a LOT easier to feel calm and grounded
if there wasn't so much mayhem, arguing, name calling and violence
on the radio, TV and internet!**

**It would be soooo much easier to feel at ease
if we didn't have to worry about terrorism, nuclear bombs,
cancer, ADHD, addictions...
downturns in the economy or break ups in our most important relationships?**

Don't you think so???

**When I hear Jesus when he says "Peace I leave with you,
my peace I give to you,
but the kind of peace I give you is not like the world's peace"**

**I want to say, "Come on Jesus! Inner peace is fine...
but what I think we all really need is a little...or a lot... more world peace!"**

**But then... as I was preparing for today it dawned on me...
the trouble with this kind of thinking, my kind of thinking,
is that to have my kind of peace
is that everyone has to agree with ME!!**

**They would have to think the way I think...
and value the same things I value,
In other words...
They would have to see the world through my eyes!**

**Well...as they say,
"So what's the problem?"**

**The problem is....I'm not that smart, that wise, or that brilliant to
know the right answer for ALL people.
I'm just this one woman in Palos Park
who has her own blindness,
her own biases,
her own issues....
My goodness...I have a hard enough time sometimes figuring out
what is right for me....let alone everyone else!**

So...perhaps Jesus is on to something!

You know...I love it when I find different streams of wisdom that seem to intersect and flow in the same direction....

As I was doing my research for today,

I was reminded of the movie “ONE”...have you seen it?

ONE was produced by 3 guys out of Detroit who knew nothing about making movies but they began to ask people on the street a list of 20 questions.

Questions like:

what are we all so afraid of?

why is there poverty and suffering in the world?

what is God like?

What happens after you die..

They asked the “big” questions.

They asked all sorts of people....rich and poor, atheists, fundamentalists, Hindu yogi’s, Catholic priests, famous gurus and homeless teenagers.

One of the men who were interviewed was from Africa...

Swami Bhakti-Tirtha...

And what he said seems pertinent to today:

To quote the swami:

“Our thoughts produce our words

Our words produce our actions

Our actions produce our habits

Our habits produce our character

Our character produce our culture...”

So if we want to have more world peace...
we must start with our own mind...with our own thoughts...

If we want to start thinking more peaceful thoughts,
we need peaceful hearts....

and now, back to today's reading and the gift of that Jesus' offers...
as I prayed and pondered this week...I realized that I stopped reading and listening
when I found myself reacting to what I did not like or agree with.
Which, unfortunately I am beginning to realize is a habit of mine that I need to work on....
but back to the topic at hand...

I stopped being open when he said that his peace is not like the world's peace...
that's when I went on the tirade above...
but Jesus didn't stop there...he went on:

“Do not let your hearts be troubled; do not be afraid”
and then it dawned on me:
That's it...that's the key to the peace the world cannot give!
His peace does not depend upon circumstances we do not have control over...
because his peace is an inside job ...

His peace rests on our following his teachings of compassion, generosity, forgiveness and
love for all beings...for all humanity...for all of life,
not just those in our own group or in our own nation...
His peace rests on the Power of the Divine which flows through all of creation...
through all of humanity... not just those in our own nation, race or religion.
His peace rests on the Power of Love...which is at the core of all creation...
all humanity...

not just me and mine, not just those that we like.

**His teachings, his life, his peace, his Presence empowers us to have a peaceful heart....
and that is what is going to lead the world to Peace...**

Of course treaties between countries will be and must be made...

Of course laws will and must be created and enforced...

That is how we structure society,

that is what helps us live together in some sort of orderly fashion.

**But treaties and laws grounded in fear, anger, revenge or a desire for control and
domination lead to a much different world
than treaties and laws grounded in love,
generosity, forgiveness and compassion.**

Time and time again, Jesus told the people:

Do Not Be Afraid!

**I have been told that "Do Not Be Afraid" or some variation thereof
is said 365x in the Bible...go figure!**

Fear and Love have a hard time living together...

Fear is not of God.

Period.

ANYTIME fear is our motivation for making a decision,

I would advise that we press the pause button...and

**WAIT till we can find a better more loving reason to do
what we are considering.**

It has said that we make our decisions from one of two positions:

we either make them out of Love, or out of Fear.

**People who live in a fear live in a guarded, protective world.
They feel as if they cannot let their guard down,
and thus the world becomes threatening..
and we find ourselves locked inside prisons of our own making.**

**But when we live grounded in Love,
Life becomes an adventure,
an opportunity,
a noble journey.**

**Then even the difficulties of life are seen as times for growth and possibility.
Then other people are not our enemies but sisters and brothers struggling to find the
beauty, the wonder, and the joy of life on this wondrous Planet we call home just as we
are...**

**And this brings us back to the African guru:
When we live in Love then we think loving thoughts...
Then we speak loving words...
Then we move with Loving actions...
then we create loving habits...
Then we acquire a loving character...
and then we create a loving society...**

**And then we once again deeply know and trust
the wisdom of Jesus:
His Peace...inner peace...
is the way that our hearts will be liberated from Fear....
His Peace...inner peace....
is the way that our world will be transformed**

**His Peace...inner peace makes known the Reign of Heaven on Earth...
and for this all of us can be hugely grateful! amen.**