

Daily Reflections



Center for Spiritual Development

BALANCE

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Today's Gospel

On a certain sabbath Jesus went into the synagogue and taught, and there was a man there whose right hand was withered. The scribes and the Pharisees watched him closely to see if he would cure on the sabbath so that they might discover a reason to accuse him. But he realized their intentions and said to the man with the withered hand, "Come up and stand before us." And he rose and stood there. Then Jesus said to them, "I ask you, is it lawful to do good on the sabbath rather than to do evil, to save life rather than to destroy it?" Looking around at them all, he then said to him, "Stretch out your hand." He did so and his hand was restored. But they became enraged and discussed together what they might do to Jesus.

LUKE 6:6-11

Reflection

Whenever I reflect on this passage from Luke, I find myself growing irritated with what was happening in the synagogue that day. The irritation springs from the fact that some were trying to “set Jesus up,” to trap him as he was seeking to do good.

I paused and waited to see what else was surfacing within me. I was surprised to hear the refrain “take the plank from your own eye” flowing through my mind (Matthew 7:3). Ouch! While I may not be as crafty as those attempting to catch Jesus breaking the law, I asked myself, am I too quick to critique others about how they are leading their lives? Do I look for the good in others before looking to see what might not be quite right?

I hope I can answer that I do see the good in others rather than noticing what might not be so stellar about them. I also wondered if Jesus grew weary of having to be on the alert for those trying to catch him doing something counter to the cultural norms of his day. As I pondered this a bit more, I thought of what happens to me when I’m not my best self. It’s when I’m tired or experience myself being caught in the tyranny of the urgent with too much to do and too little time to do it. I need not look any further than myself to align what I’m doing with what I actually am being called to do.

When my life gets out of balance, when prayer, ministry, relationships, and leisure do not receive the time each need, I can move down the path of being too critical of others and myself. I think this is why that refrain from Matthew 7:3 came to mind as I read Luke’s Gospel’s passage. Jesus was teaching in the synagogue. He healed the man with the withered hand on the Sabbath to show what it means to live a life of mercy, charity, and love. If I was in the synagogue that day, and my life was out of balance, I probably would have found myself among those trying to catch Jesus in some perceived wrong.

This situation can be countered by leading a discerning life. Knowing this gives me hope and energy, and a desire to gently look within and assess how I’m doing with regard to living a just, merciful, and compassionate life; a life where I seek the balance that enables me to be my best self in the daily circumstances of life.

I doubt any of us want to be among those who look for what is wrong with another person. Something changes within us when we have balance in our lives. I experience a sense of joy and peace deep within, even when the inevitable chaos and randomness of life unfolds. With all that Jesus was about in his active ministerial life, he still found time for dining with friends, healing the wounded, and preaching. Are we not called to do the same?

Balance

O God of all life, we are given free reign to live our lives in accordance with gospel values. May we embrace the challenges and opportunities that abound for us to be the good our world so desperately needs.

May each of us seek a balance in life that fuels and creates an inner disposition where mercy, kindness, justice, and compassion flourish. In living a balanced life, may we not lose sight of your divine wish that we love one another as you have loved us.

When our inner disposition is steady and strong we radiate a sense of inner peace and calm, enabling those around us to experience it, too. Help us as we seek this way of being in life and points to the source of it all – Creator God.



Photo by styff22

For Pondering

- What helps you maintain a balance in your life? When you find yourself out of balance, to what or to whom do you turn to realign yourself and regain a sense of spiritual and physical well-being?
- As you reflect on this scripture passage from Luke, where do you find

yourself in this story?

For Prayer

*O God of merciful love,
as we seek balance in our lives,
we call upon your Holy Spirit to guide our way each day.
May we bring a calming and peaceful presence
to the people and situations in our lives
where negativity and harm have taken root.
Amen.*

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