

“We Are What We Do and What We Don’t Do!

WE ARE THE WORLD!”

Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7; 2 Timothy 3:14 - 4:5;

Luke 17:11-19

September 15, 2019

Rerun of October 9, 2016

So, on our webpage, under the tab for our Outreach and Justice ministry there is a set of questions we are to ask ourselves even as...especially as we go out in mission. These questions:

Reflective questions to ask yourself as you participate in outreach

1. What is the nudge I am feeling that prompts me to serve in this ministry?
2. What is the thing most needed at this time...in this ministry, within me?
3. How have I received during this time of outreach...in other words, how have I become the mission project?
4. What is God inviting me to do or be or know or become that is just about and just for me through this experience?
5. What is the prayer that is rising up within me?
6. How can I remember this in ways that are life-giving to my daily choices?

What this all comes down to, and you’ve heard it before, is an awareness that we are the mission project. What we do, forms us.

This one I seek to help, is helping me. And I need it!

I am to be aware of how my preconceived ideas of being the giver/helper are keeping me from the very help, support, growth I so desperately am seeking? It may not be

holier to give than to receive!

Will I allow my courage to bring forward my vulnerability?

Am I willing to release the fear around my vulnerability so I can see my need and so receive what is now needed most...often from the least likely/powerful source?

With these questions in mind. Watch this.

What do you *now* know about this mission?

Which scene with children stands out to you?

What about it captures you?

How is this related to what is seeking wholeness and wellness in you?

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What we do and say and don’t do and don’t say matter!

And in tough times, it’s definitely harder to know what to do or say.

Harder to be self-aware, reflective...to own a role in what’s going on...around us, to us. Wanting someone to step in for us so we don’t have to!

Those exiles to whom the prophet Jeremiah speaks ...well, what they probably wanted to hear in that moment

is that their almighty and powerful God was going to rub out the enemy so they can return to the land they have been promised without changing a thing about themselves. Cause by gosh, “we” deserve it!

Don't you?

Don't you want God to rub out those that wrong you...oh, you wouldn't say it that way but most of us at times want to get even, come out on top, have our just rewards, get a little something for nothing.

Are we more likely to get even, to get mad than not?

But through the prophet these exiles are told "bloom where you are planted", don't hold back,
live your life
and make it the best life you can.

In fact, they are to help their captors prosper.
At first that sounds bizarre.

Jeremiah isn't saying be a part of the corruption and what is wrong.
He is saying be a part of what works and get some positive momentum going for yourself and the nation.

What you do is powerful! You are the world!
We are all connected....what any one of us does has a ripple effect on all of us.
And no one of us
can build ourselves up in isolation and think those heavily gated castle walls will hold forever...

there are no ivory towers, no locks that can withstand the test of time or money.

Grandmother use to say it this way:
You catch more bees with honey than with vinegar.

When you see the positive in yourself, and live from there, you respond rather than react to the world around you.

If you see the positive in someone else,
they meet you there.

Jeremiah is saying live your life the way you desire to live it....and pray for those around you.

Be proactive. You are the change you've been seeking!

You can change your responses to life by...
changing your responses to life!

Psychologists tell us that repeatedly doing an action will eventually normalize it. So

new responses.....

Practice. Practice. Practice. Right here!

Start right here at Tippe.

This is your sanctuary laboratory!

When someone bumps into your feelings,
when you're mad that a mistake was made,
when you're feeling someone isn't pulling their weight...
practice! practice! Practice a new response!

Instead of assuming the worst of that person, assume the best. This is their best or they wouldn't be doing it!

Wonder what is going on in them that they would be doing their life this way?

And don't just dismiss them, *work with them!*

**Go to your deeper, better, God-centered self
and reflect on how you want to be you in this exiled moment...**

don't get hooked by the negative initial energy,

take a moment and respond with positive energy

and you will be helping not only yourself and the other, but this church, our world prosper!

And it is safe to try it out here.

Here!!

When someone makes a mistake or doesn't follow up on something (says yes when they knew to say no) or doesn't do things in the usual ways we agree to get things done,
I have a choice of what to say to that....

I can get even, I can ignore and walk on by.

I can blame or shame, or....I can simply ask the person to share more of what they were thinking/what is happening,

and work together to figure it out, start out again.

Settle-in to the spirit. Settle down your emotions.

More. The 10 lepers were cured.

9 go off to the temple excited to get the priest's good housekeeping stamp of approval to reenter society.

I can't imagine their relief and joy and excitement about their restored life.

But they go so quickly, they miss the depth of the moment...they move on too quickly to really let that cure become a healing that touches more than their skin.

Touches their hearts....a heart healing that bleeds into all of life.

They, after the initial excitement falls away, having only their cures and not having their hearts and souls healed,

may find resentment and anger and expect God to now get even for them or do even more for them...
for them, not with them.

Unawares, they may find themselves settling for less and doing and saying less.

The one who experiences healing,
connects his cure with his God and takes that moment of deep appreciation to come before Jesus
and give thanks.

And he is the one who is truly changed and set free....
not needing any stamp of approval,
free to live fully with or without it. He settles for more.

And in doing so, he changes everything for himself and those around him by what he says and does, doesn't say and doesn't do.

And Jesus shares a truth...YOU know it's true...that once healed and thankful, you can't return to the way things were but have to be on your way!

That choice, changes everything for everyone! You...have the nerve to be the new you and that changes everyone...every one willing to be changed... everyone willing to stop resisting you, sabotaging you.

Everything we do builds us all up or tears us all down.

Everything we do says what we believe and how we imagine God to be...

if you get mad easily, feel you don't have to hold your tongue, judge others quickly, pout...

and you say you believe in God...

then you are saying these things are OK and our God is judging and vengeful and has favorites.

**And you are wrong about God...
the God revealed in the living stories of Jesus!**

All of us do these things from time to time.
And most of us don't connect
how we act to what we believe *because*

**we rush from the moment too quickly, like the 9,
and forget our interconnectedness, like the exiles,**

and are satisfied too easily with a cure,
forsaking the healing that is offered.

**We settle for less rather than more.
We don't even darken the threshold of possibility!**

Jesus didn't really need the 10 to thank him.

He knew who he was and did not define himself on the basis of other people's approval or thanks.
A good lesson for us.

No. He wanted them to be thankful, not for His sake,
but for their own.

How many lepers do you know?
Who is cast out of your family, your church, your workplace, our neighborhoods?
Behind locked doors?
Who do you cast out?

How are you being held captive, feeling yourself to be exiled from the place or people you love?

When you are with those exiled,
Or when a leper approaches you,
Or when someone really makes you mad and you see red!try to see their humanity.

Try to imagine the burden they are carrying aroundall the unresolved sadness,

anger, grief, regret that is pushing them to act the way they are acting.

But not as an excuse for them or a way to give in to them.

Rather as a reminder to think before you react.

To choose to open to your faith and live it.

Bloom wherever you are planted and with whomever you are planted.

Every rotten thing, unfair thing, upsetting thing

that is done to you is an opportunity

to change yourself and the world.

“We may not be able to choose our wounds in life,
but we do have the power to choose
what those wounds are going to mean.”

(Jan Goldstein in Sacred Wounds, Harper Collins, 2003)

You are what you do and don't do, eat and don't eat, share and don't share, learn and won't unlearn, open to or stay closed to...You are Living Waters, Divine Intervention, just.good.food Garden, Arts and Science Literacy Camp.

YOU are the world.

Responsibility. Possibility. Accountability.

You and God working together in creation...Christ Power!

We are the World.

There comes a time when we hear a certain call.

We are the world, we are the children.

***We are the ones who make a brighter day
so let's start giving.***

***There's a choice we're making,
we're saving our own lives.***

It's true we'll make a better day, just you and me.