

November 8, 2015

Remembrance Sunday

Matthew 5: 43-45, 48

A few years ago I was listening to a talk about Mysticism, Healing and Wholeness, when in the middle of it Caroline Myss offered an aside, something to this affect: ***“I’m a student of war. I’ve been reading history books on war since I was ten years old. I love war. It changes everything.”***

I was shocked and dismayed. I couldn’t believe my ears. I was raised in the peace generation. I was influenced by John Lennon ***“Make love not war”***. So was she. What was someone seeking and teaching the mystic’s way doing, being in love with war? Well it turned out that along with her aggressive personality type, which she described as ***“Give me an army and I will change the world”***. There was also her insight.

Now this is my take on what she proposes. As people change or evolve; wars become necessary when those in power over them resist the change for their own narrow interests. To expand; this resistance to human self-determination whether by individuals, elites or nations holds back humanity’s unfolding. The resistance must be removed and almost always requires a war to do so. This is why Caroline Myss loves war because war gets rid to those un-evolving ones who are in the way. War frees peoples up to become all they can be.

So, I started checking her theory out. I came to realize that she had a point. When people are held back, be it because of gender or race or language or ethnicity or nationality or the poverty of a whole hemisphere; something eventually has to give and should give. Human evolution is a precious thing. A **God** guided process. Becoming a conscious self-actualizing Humanity is participating in **God’s** Dream. It is like a delicate flower that needs and deserves its place in the sun. Wars do blow away the resistance to this evolving self-determination ushering in all sorts of change and possibilities.

However, as a WW2 veteran so powerfully preached at one Remembrance Sunday service, ***“God is not in war. War is what we do to one another.”***

With **Jesus** the veteran wanted to challenge the persistent and perennial **assumption** that **God** is involved in our **wars**. That **God** is on our side in battle, helping out. The veteran had a powerful point and Caroline Myss had a point too. There is a paradox here.

We know the destructiveness of war and the destructiveness of not evolving. We know the huge loss of life in war and we know how precious and not to be lost our ever evolving life is. The challenge remains. Can we leave **God** out of our wars while recognizing **God** in the midst of our conscious evolving?

We see this challenge in our **gospel** lesson where **Jesus** questions the assumptions we all have around friends and enemies.

Look at the assumptions, love your friends and hate your enemies.

Look at the assumptions, **God** is supposed to have enemies. My enemies are automatically **God's** enemies too.

Look at the assumptions, **God** is supposed to play favourites, take sides, and be on our side for sure.

**Jesus** rejects these assumptions.

**Jesus** says, *“You are familiar with the old ways, ‘Love your friends. Hate your enemies.’”*

**Jesus** says, *“I am challenging that. I am telling you to love your enemies.*

*Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst. When someone gives you a hard time, respond with energies of prayer, for then you are working out of your true selves, you God-created, evolving, conscious selves.”*

The challenge and goal of our life together is to promote creative and redemptive coexistence. This has led one Christian group to ironically declare on a bumper sticker: *“When Jesus said ‘love your enemies’ he probably didn’t mean kill them.”*

**Jesus** continues, *“Look, this is what God does. God gives God’s best – the sun to warm and the rain to nourish – to everyone, regardless: the good and bad, the nice and nasty...”*

*“So, live generously and graciously toward others, the way God lives toward you.”\**

The Christian challenge is to live generously and graciously toward others, to live in creative redemptive coexistence so as to eliminate the need for war. And in order for this to work out as **Jesus** insists, *“God doesn’t choose anyone’s side! God remains on everyone’s side! God blesses everyone all the time. God gives God’s best – the sun to warm and the rain to nourish – to everyone, regardless.”*

#### *Application for this Remembrance Sunday*

God ensures that the sun shines on everyone and sends the rainfall on all of us, in the hope that one day we will figure it out and abandon war all together. Amen.

Hymn #527 God! As with Silent Hearts

\* Thanks to The Message paraphrase of the Gospel lesson