

Daily Meditation 06/30/23

Post-Modern Holiness Sign # 4_ Justice

Good morning.

We continue our meditations on the meaning of holiness and our time, this time of bridging between modern consciousness and postmodern consciousness, between the Age of Pisces and the age of Aquarius.

Christianity as we know it has existed only during the Age of Pisces. So, of course, there's going to be a shakeup in our religious language and idiom and images, including the meaning of holiness. And this does not dismiss previous generations' versions of holiness. But it calls us to respond in today's context.

So far, we've named three elements of holiness: joy, generosity, and courage. Today, we fill out the number four, which is important number in itself: four directions. We bring in the fourth dimension of contemporary holiness, which is justice. And we begin with today's meditation, where we talk about the injustice that was baked into so many of our modern commercial-industrial hero systems that Ernest Becker names, hero systems, because holiness has something to do with the hero: it's about living a full life, fullness.

And Ernest Becker is quite blunt about how the systems we've inherited are

openly defunct. It so obviously denies reality, builds war machines against death, and banishes sacredness with bureaucratic dedication. People are treated as things and the world is pulled down to their size.

And religion itself has turned its back on the miraculous, which is to say, the sacredness of nature and creation, and also has been quiet about the need to do something holy in the world. As he says, Christianity's early promise was for all the sorts of justice that the ancient world was crying out for. This was the original Christian promise, but it has not delivered. And of course, one reason it has not delivered is that fourth-century Christianity married the Empire.

He says, we're as far away from it today as ever. No wonder it has trouble being taken seriously as a hero system, that is to say, a sacred system.

But we will be sharing the many teachings in the Western tradition about justice, and holiness. Walter Brueggemann says Jesus of Nazareth is the fulfillment and quintessence of the prophetic tradition. And of course, the prophets of Israel were busy announcing the need for justice in calling out where injustice was raining.

Krister Stendahl, the great biblical scholar, says it is important to revive and revitalize the biblical meaning of judgment as the establishment of justice, which by necessity means mercy for the wronged and loss for those who have too much.

So justice is something very real. And it is about bringing balance back, balance. That's why the image of Lady Justice has scales.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.