

Daily Meditation 7-6-26

Robert Thurman & Brendan Doyle, continued

Good morning.

This morning, in this video, I'd like to address two areas. One is the daily meditation, the interview continued with musician Brendan Doyle. And then, secondly, to say something about the July 4 weekend that we've just celebrated.

First, I want to speak to what I found especially valuable in Brendon Doyle's daily meditations, this interview that I've been sharing with you. It is that he's applying the Four Paths of Creation Spirituality to his work, to his vocation as a musician. And he derives great benefit from that for us, for us to more fully grasp that the contribution of these great musicians have been to our spiritual lives. This is what the Four Paths do. They give us a hermeneutic, a methodology by which to dig deep into the many spiritual gifts we've been given.

In the West, many of our spiritual practices come from our Art: musicians and filmmakers and playwrights and so forth. And it's not just Brendan who has done this, although he was early on the scene, because Creation Spirituality began in an explicit way, back in the 70s, with our Institute in Culture and Creation Spirituality at Mundelein College. He was there for that. And I want to point out, engineer Bernard Amadei, his new book I wrote about a few weeks ago, entitled *Engineering With Soul*: There too, as an engineer and professor of engineering for many years, he took the Four Paths of Creation Spirituality and he adapted them to his vocation, his work as a professional engineer. And as he told me on several occasions, the Creation Spirituality experience for him gave him the impetus to launch Engineers Without Borders. Well, this most recent book of his, which I highly recommend, *Engineering With Soul*, does the same thing. It applies Creation Spirituality, it applies the Four Paths of spirituality to his profession, and the results are significant.

And the same is true, I think, of the work of people like Brian Swimme, the cosmologist, who again was with us in the late 70s and early 80s at Mundelein College in Chicago, and then following that at Holy Names College in Oakland. He too applies the Four Paths to his reflections on what Einstein, for example, has given the world in his deepest sense, his deepest gifts. Just want to point that out, that this reflection with bringing to our music and musicians is an example. Engineering too; science and cosmology also. How

applicable the Four Paths are to the work that we do. And how work is so important. That is the footprint we leave, the gift we leave behind in our time here on Earth, after all.

Now speaking of our time on Earth, we remembered, commemorated this past weekend the 250th anniversary of the founding of America. And I've always been struck by the amazing talk that Frederick Douglass gave, entitled *What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July*. What to the Slave is the Fourth of July. You may have read it. I know I've read it many times. But one thing that really hit me hard this weekend, when I re-read it, was that it was delivered in 1852. So early, that's eight years before the Civil War. And it is a brilliant piece, and I think it's appropriate that we remember this at this time in history. And here are some of the observations that he makes:

Fellow citizens. above your national tumultuous joy, I hear the mournful wail of millions whose chains, heavy and grievous yesterday, are today rendered more intolerable by the jubilee shouts that reach them. If I do forget, if I do not faithfully remember those bleeding children of sorrow this day, may my right hand forget her coming, and may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth. A quote from the Scriptures. To forget them, to pass lightly over their wrongs, and to chime in with the popular theme would be treason, most scandalous and shocking, and would make me a reproach before God and the world. My subject, then, fellow citizens, is American slavery. I shall see this day in his popular characteristics from the slave's point of view. Standing there, identified with American bondman, making his wrongs mine.

I do not hesitate to declare with all my soul: the character and conduct of this nation never looked back to me than on this Fourth of July. Again, he was anticipating the Civil War. What to the American slave is your Fourth of July? I answer: (and of course he was a slave) A day that reveals to him, more than all the other days in the year, gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim. I will not enlarge further on your national inconsistencies. The existence of slavery in this country grants your republicanism a sham, your humanity a base pretense, and your Christianity a lie. It destroys your moral power abroad. It corrupts your politicians at home. It saps the foundation of religion. It makes your name a hissing, and a bye-word to a mocking Earth. It is the antagonistic force in your government, the only thing that seriously disturbs and endangers your Union. It fetters your progress. It is the enemy of improvement, a deadly foe of education. It fosters pride, it breeds insolence, it promotes vice, it shelters crime. It is a curse to the Earth that supports it. And yet you cling to it as if it were the sheer anchor of all your hopes.

Oh, be warned, be warned! A horrible reptile is coiled up in your nation's bosom. A venomous creature is nursing at the tender breast of your youthful Republic. For the love

of God, tear away and fling from you the hideous monster, and let the weight of 20 millions crush and destroy it forever!

He says, *The Constitution is a GLORIOUS LIBERTY DOCUMENT.* In capital letters, he writes it: A GLORIOUS LIBERTY DOCUMENT. *Read its preamble, consider its purposes. Is slavery among them? Neither slavery, slave holding, nor slave can be found anywhere in that document. Take the Constitution according to its plain reading, and I defy the presentation of a single pro-slavery clause in it. On the other hand, it would be found to contain principles and purposes entirely hostile to the existence of slavery.*

Allow me to say, in conclusion, notwithstanding the dark picture I have this day presented of the state of the nation, I do not despair of this country. There are forces in operation which must inevitably work the downfall of slavery. I therefore leave off where I began, with hope. While drawing encouragement from the Declaration of Independence, the great principles it contains, and the genius of American institutions, my spirit is also cheered by the obvious tendencies of the age to improve and to make right.

I want to recommend too the wonderful event that Rachel Maddow sponsored in Philadelphia one or two days before the Fourth of July, where among other things, she interviewed a constitutional expert named Sherilyn Eiffel. One thing that Sherrilyn Eiffel said about what's going on today with SCOTUS, the Supreme Court, is that "it is not law." That's a quote, "it is not law," what is going on in the Supreme Court. And she urged the next presidential administration to broaden the Supreme Court, bring in more members in order to set it right. And as a constitutional expert, she was getting concrete about evolving our constitution, putting it into practice. And as she pointed out, there are many times when the Supreme Court has had a different number from nine, and Congress has the authority to expand the Supreme Court. And that should be an integral part of the agenda in the debate that is coming down the line with this election in 2026, but certainly in 2028.

Thank you. We'll see you next week.