

Meditation 20<sup>th</sup> July 2021

## Balance in our lives

Life is so very precious to us ; we are here only on earth for a candle flicker moment of time. I have long thought that one of the key things to living a fulfilling life is somehow getting the different aspects of our lives in balance so our minds, bodies and souls are working in harmony. Easier said than done. We all know people who have suffered “burn out” from working all hours of the day and night or who are suffering major anxiety problems under the weight of various responsibilities. How as Christians do we live God filled lives in such a busy world where we are judged and judge others ourselves subconsciously sometimes by things people do and how well they do them . How often have you been asked about the sort of car you drive, the sort of house you live in – the job you have or where you go for holidays. It could be about your volunteering for different causes , your good deeds and what they amount to.

I have found help in a few Bible passages

Ecclesiastes 3 v 1-4

For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven; a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep ,and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance ....

Proverbs 3 5-6

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

We know how much God loves us, we learn about His Grace and are told in

Philippians 4 6-7

Do not worry about anything , but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

David Cole has a couple of interesting pages in his recent publication “The Art of Peace” about this very issue of balance in our lives which is directly linked to meditation and time spent with God . The following is taken from this information.

Cole says that balance is key to the universe and also to you. Heraclitus, the Greek philosopher said that all things are held together by the tension of opposites and that it is the balance of the life forces between opposites which keeps the universe going. He used the Greek word logos to describe this tension – the same word logos, translated “ Word” is used in John 1 to describe Jesus.

For Benedict and the whole monastic tradition balance was essential too. Cole writes “Balance is key”. We must get the balance right between “being” and “doing” He goes on to say how “ We judge people by what they do, how much they do and whether or not we think it is worthwhile to do it” whereas “being” or intentionally doing nothing is not so well thought of. “ In fact , it could be seen as wasting time, as though we feel we should be getting on with something”

He quotes a Chinese proverb which says “I meditate for one hour every morning , unless I am very busy and have much to do , then I meditate for two hours” In other words if we have more to do then we need to “Be” more as well. There is this balance, all important, between being and doing.

Cole says he thinks the author of the book of James was trying to get this notion across when they spoke of faith and works (James 2 14-18) Faith and works need to be in balance – being and doing . A genuine saving faith in God leads to good and loving actions whereas a faith without action is like a body without breath.

Meditating can help achieve quietness and an inner stillness in life but Cole admits that maintaining this balance through the whole of life is difficult and we need to keep on with daily contemplations and time alone with God. By doing this and spending time in just “being” “We pass onto others what we have gained in contemplation not just by telling people , but also by the way we live our lives, by the way we express ourselves, by the way we approach life, by the way we deal with the difficulties and pressures, and by the way we embody Divine peace”

He concludes this section with a lovely prayer

A blessing of Divine peace be upon you:

A blessing of stillness rest upon your being.

A blessing of silence fill your being.

A blessing of solitude be in your being.

A blessing of sanctuary surround your being.