

Meditation from the LAAMB

Jesus said, 'Love your neighbor as you love yourself.'

These words of Jesus raise the age old question: How can we love our neighbour if we don't know how to love ourselves? How do we learn about ourselves everyday?

Take for instance this challenging time. I want to call it a special time. It is special because it is helping us to learn to continue loving ourselves...to continue to get to know ourselves.

It is also a special time because it is challenging us to learn more about ourselves by doing different and new things than we have never done before.

Try this little exercise: Think of all those different new things that you have done since this pandemic started.

I have made perogies (my son said I hadn't made them in 5 years!)

I have spent more time with both my cats then I have ever done in a long time.

I have not driven my car in a week.

When I do drive, I am not driving as fast and I actually noticed that!!!

I have had more Zoom, GoToMeeting, OnCall and Conference calls then ever before!

I have made my first bird house with Lore.

I have been involved in conversation and got to know two new people on my street.

Our conversations at the dinner table (we added two new leaves) are far more interesting these days!!!

I have walked in different places of Wiarton that I never did before.

I have organized new ways to record information from all these computer meetings.

I have found new ways to connect with people

I have enjoyed the simple things in life-like sitting outside in the sunshine while I am writing.

I don't find myself in such a hurry.

Although I always enjoyed God's creation in my walks- I am seeing & hearing new things!!!

Now look at your list. Would you have done all these new and different things if we hadn't experienced this Pandemic? I don't think so. This special time has enabled us to get in touch with so many other areas of our life that we simply would not have had time for or would not have made time for.

Listen to what psychologist, Larry Alton says:

"Whether you realize it or not, you spend the majority of your day doing things you've already done hundreds or thousands of times before. We really don't learn anything about ourselves or about others through doing these repetitive things. There are many benefits to doing new and different things.

He lists three of the benefits of trying new things:

1. Overcome Fear

Some level of fear is always present when trying something new, something different but you'll soon realize that your mind exaggerates things. Eventually, once you make it a priority to try new things, fear will cease to be a crippling factor in your life.

2. Stimulate Creativity

When you try new things, you put your brain into unique situations that force it to really think. This stimulates creativity, which eventually rubs off in other areas of your life. As a result, you begin to think about everything in a new light.

3. Get to Know Yourself Better

Whether you are 9 or 99 we constantly need to learn about ourselves. It's weird to think that you don't know yourself as well as you could, but this is almost always the case. As you try new things, you'll naturally recognize who you are and who you want to become. This will prove invaluable as the years go on and in your relationships. Remember, it is an ongoing process in life."

So let me go back to what Jesus said, 'Love your neighbor as you love yourself.' Jesus wasn't the first to come up with this idea that we need to continue to learn about ourselves in order to love others. But he did do something about it. He experienced it, in all the different new ways that he reached out to others. This is a special time for us to learn more about ourselves and more about how we love others. All by embracing different new ways to do things and to connect with others.

Perry