

August 12, 2020

I want to continue to think with you about the workings of “God” and you do not have to agree with me but I think that what we mean when we say or use the term “God” is important.

It is difficult for me to disassociate the word “God” from a male authority figure, a kind of boss or manager, acting as other bosses or managers might act, a guy who ultimately calls the shots, in other words, and, certainly, the Old Testament, more correctly, The Jewish Bible, gives us that kind of image and conventional Christianity of which I am happily a product perpetuates that kind of image.

For many people “God” is like a Marlon Brando godfather character and, we have all kinds of notions about offending the “godfather” or pleasing the “godfather” as we seek favors.

For many, many years European history depended on the belief that “God” chose their leaders, that kings and queens, royalty, was selected by “God” for better or for worse. Today the United Kingdom in maintaining at least the image of that offers the United States a constant flow of silly and irrelevant data keeping us up to date on that front but does anyone seriously believe that Elizabeth II is any more involved in the workings of “God” than anyone else?

Now, I know that there are many people in our country who have high regard for “God” when their favorite football team wins and, I have no doubt, that there are many who believe that “God” places the deciding vote when their candidate wins an election, but where is “God” in their minds when their team or candidate loses?

The core action of Jesus in the New Testament is one of giving thanks not petition. In the so called raising of Lazarus in the multiple feedings of the crowds, the response to the return of the 72 from

their missionary work in proclaiming the Kingdom, and, most centrally, in the narratives at the Last Supper in the Gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

All of these “situations of gratitude” were in response to the vulnerability of others being taken seriously.

So, in my mind, the principle work of “God” is evoking gratitude and inspiring thanksgiving, not in being the hidden force behind our plans, but the Spirit breathing gratitude into the unfolding picture of what has happened that is a cause for giving thanks.

My ability to be thankful is underdeveloped as I find myself almost always looking ahead rather than remembering, anticipating what is next rather than living with what has been.

I do not think “God” allows anything bad or evil to happen to anyone or anything, I just cannot go that way because that would make the “workings of God” arbitrary and capricious just like Vito Corleone and that just doesn’t make sense.

I know that philosophically speaking it is logical that “God” is all powerful and “God” can do anything, and “God” is almighty, but there is nothing logical about the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

The workings of “God” are, I suggest, tied up with suffering and diminishment not displays of power and might.

If Jesus Christ is the incarnation of “God” what we find in him is not almighty, all powerful, all whatever, we find, vulnerability.

what terrifies
me most
is not being able
to make sense
of my vulnerability.

my softness
is my reward,
but the world is cruel
and constantly
makes me question it.

-Christopher Poindexter

**PERHAPS, WE MIGHT FIND HOW "GOD" WORKS
WHEN WE TAKE OUR VULNERABILITY, OUR
SOFTNESS, SERIOUSLY**