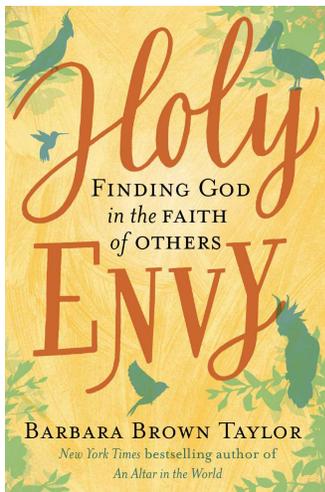




Monday June 24, 2019

“Holy Envy”



This Discussion is based on the book “Holy Envy” by Barbara Brown Taylor. In this book Taylor recounts her moving discoveries of finding the sacred in unexpected places while teaching the world’s religions to undergraduates in rural Georgia, revealing how God delights in confounding our expectations. She is a New York Times Bestselling author of many books including *An Altar in the World* and *Learning to Walk in the Dark*.

## Discussion

*Krister Stendahl a biblical scholar former Dean of Harvard Divinity School and Bishop of Stockholm proposed three rules of religious understanding:*

- 1. When trying to understand another religion, you should ask the adherents of that religion and not its enemies.*
- 2. Don't compare your best to their worst.*
- 3. Leave room for holy envy.*

What do you think of these rules?

++++

*When I asked her to define spirituality for me, she thought for a moment and said, ‘Spirituality is the active pursuit of the God you didn’t make up.’ My view of God is my own creation, made from bits and pieces of received or perceived knowledge about divine reality that I hope or fear*

*are true. My mosaic has my fingerprints all over it. Ask anyone what she means when she says 'God' and chances are that you will learn a lot more about that person than you will learn about God.*

What do you think about this definition of spirituality? Have you ever thought about your image of God reflecting more about you than God?

++++

*Once, at the end of a field trip to the Atlanta Masjid of Al-Islam, the imam ended his meeting with students by saying, "Our deepest desire is not that you become Muslim, but that you become the best Christian, the best Jew, the best person you can be. In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Thank you for coming."*

What do you think of this word of encouragement? Can you imagine Christian leaders encouraging others to be the best Muslim, Jew, Buddhist, etc. that you can be?

++++

*"Judaism actively discourages converts, since a person does not need to be Jewish in order to be righteous in God's eyes. Why take on so many extra responsibilities if you are fine with God the way you are? Judaism has always recognized that God made more than one covenant with humankind. God's exclusive covenant with Jews exists inside God's inclusive covenant with all people."*

What do you think about this view of God's covenant? Can you imagine a Christianity discouraging converts? Why might this be a good or bad thing?

++++

Jesus says in John 10: "I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd."

Could it be that the sheep he is referring to are those of different faiths?

## Other Quotes

*The God of your understanding is just that: the God of your understanding. What you need is the God just beyond your understanding. RAMI SHAPIRO*

*My best view of divine reality is still a partial view.*

*Who had convinced us that faith was a competitive sport and that only one team could win for all eternity? With an attitude like that, who could blame a neighbor for sensing that Christian love was mostly charitable condescension?*