



**SPIRITUAL LESSONS
OF
SHAKESPEARE AND SAUL**

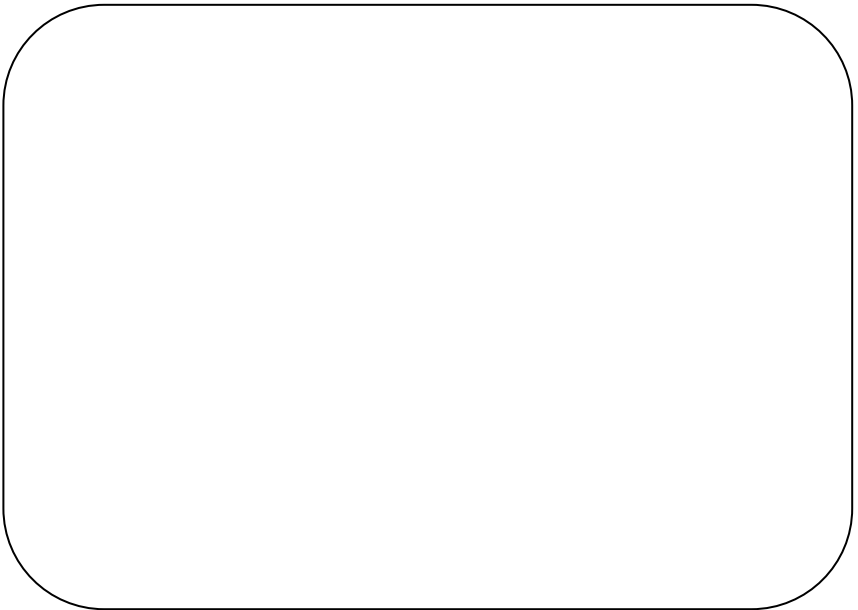
SHAKESPEARE AND SPIRITUALITY

While religion is concerned with adhering to shared belief systems, spirituality is concerned with questions about the meaning of life. While Shakespeare does not deal with specifically religious questions, his plays definitely explore key spiritual themes of meaning and purpose, the precarious balance between life and death, the temptations of human evil, and journeys into the paranormal and supernatural. In this brief sermon series, we will explore how both scripture and Shakespeare explore these key spiritual questions and issues. We will discover the parallels between the story of King Saul -- his rise to power, his fall from grace, his ambition, his madness, his desperate search for answers as he delves into the outer ranges of the supernatural, his inner violence, his familial relationships, betrayals and jealous rages and his disintegration of the self are all a part of the whole human drama and find their parallels in Shakespeare's darkest tragedies. In Hamlet, Macbeth and King Lear, Shakespeare deals with all of these human failings and evils. Come with us as we journey through the darkness and depths of Shakespearean tragedy and the tragedy of the life of King Saul in hopes of discovering holy redemption and moments of grace and hope. May the tragedies of our own lives find their own experiences of holy purpose and wisdom and rather than "signify nothing", signify something. It is our hope that both Shakespeare and our scripture will remind us of the darker aspects of human existence, so that we might emerge from the darkness of our own souls, purified and redeemed by the radiant light that we call God. This is our sacred task.

--Friedrich Nietzsche

Is the writer of Psalm 43 experiencing a sort of madness by laying down a condition that God rescue him before he worships and offers praise to God?

When have I placed unreasonable conditions upon myself? Others? God?



“Much Madness is divinest Sense -- to a discerning Eye -- much Sense -- the starkest Madness.”

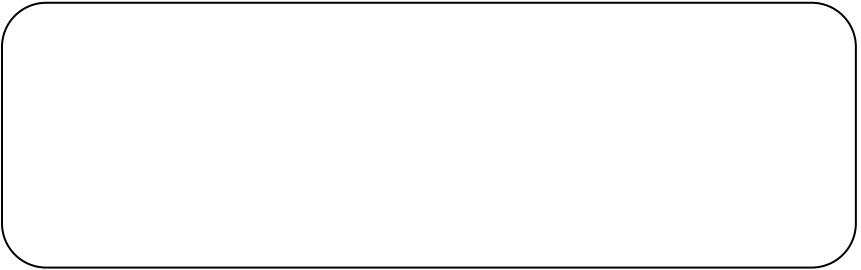
-- Emily Dickinson

When have you felt like the gods conspired against you?



“Look like the innocent flower, but be the serpent under’t.”
-- Macbeth

When have you come face to face with your own evil – be it hate, violence, jealousy, deceit, meanness, cruelty, greed, selfishness... what do you do with it?



“Out, out brief candle! Life’s but a walking shadow, a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage and then is heard no more; it is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.”
-- Macbeth

Where do you find redemption?



SHAKESPEARE AND SPIRITUALITY: KING LEAR
“THE DISINHERITANCE OF EGO”
FEBRUARY 19TH, 2012

“PRIDE MAKES US ARTIFICIAL AND HUMILITY MAKES US REAL.”
THOMAS MERTON

MY REFLECTION

I SAMUEL (SAUL), ISAIAH 66:2 & LUKE 4:11

How has my ego benefitted the building up of the Kingdom of God?



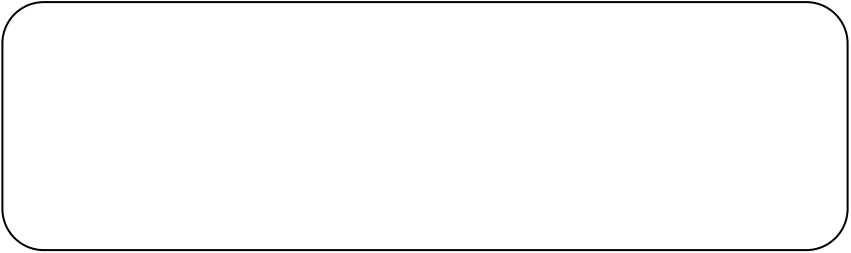
How has my ego hurt the building up of the Kingdom of God?



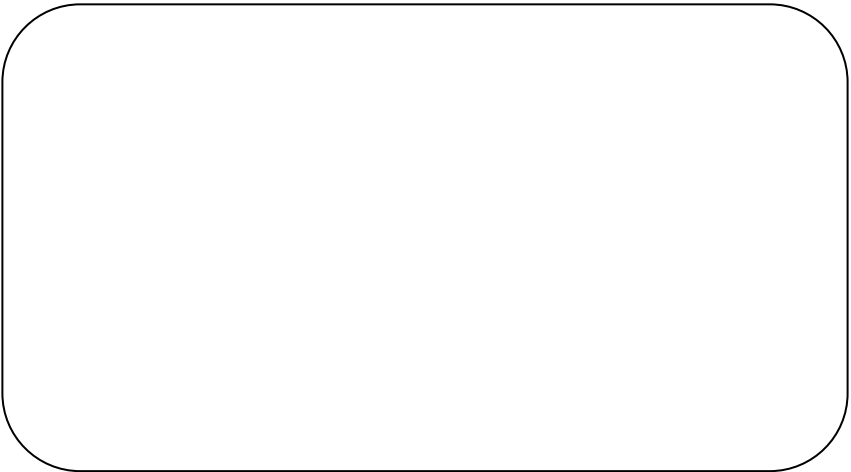
“Every normal person, in fact, is only normal on the average. His ego approximates to that of the psychotic in some part or other and to a greater or lesser extent.”

-- Sigmund Freud

When have I felt disinherited and what did that feel like?



What will my relationships gain if I disinherit the part of my ego that is self-serving?



“I think any spiritual experience that's worthwhile is not about ego and it will humble you in some way. And also, a Zen monk once said to me, 'If you're not laughing, then you're not getting it.'”

--David O. Russell

