

3/21/2010

**THE PSALM AND THE CALL TO WORSHIP**      Psalm 130 A song of ascents.

Lay Minister: 1 Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD;

**People:**      2 O Lord, hear my voice. Let your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy.

Lay Minister: 3 If you, O LORD, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

**People:**      4 But with you there is forgiveness; therefore you are feared.

Lay Minister: 5 I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I put my hope.

**People:**      6 My soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning, more than watchmen wait for the morning.

Lay Minister: 7 O Israel, put your hope in the LORD, for with the LORD is unfailing love and with him is full redemption.

**People:**      8 He himself will redeem Israel from all their sins.

Lay Minister: We come into your presence, Lord, worshipping you for your forgiveness and mercy.

**People:**                      We gather in the name of the Almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**THE PRAYER OF THE DAY** Almighty God, our Redeemer, in our weakness we have failed to be your messengers of forgiveness and hope in the world. Renew us by your Holy Spirit, that we may see the new life you work through forgiveness in Jesus, follow your commands, and live your reign of love; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON**      Isaiah 43:16-21

*(God works new life for His people, even when life seems a desert!)*

16 This is what the LORD says-- he who made a way through the sea, a path through the mighty waters, 17 who drew out the chariots and horses, the army and reinforcements together, and they lay there, never to rise again, extinguished, snuffed out like a wick: 18 "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. 19 See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland. 20 The wild animals honor me, the jackals and the owls, because I provide water in the desert and streams in the wasteland, to give drink to my people, my chosen, 21 the people I formed for myself that they may proclaim my praise.

**THE EPISTLE LESSON**      Philippians 3:4b -14

*(Paul's example to Christians is to forsake past accomplishments, reaching for the greater new life God has eternally for us in Jesus..)*

4. . . . If anyone else thinks he has reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: 5 circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; 6 as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless.

7 But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. 8 What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing

Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ-- the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. 10 I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead. 12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

### **THE GOSPEL LESSON    Luke 20:9-20**

*(When Jesus reveals sins of spiritual pride and self-righteousness, the people of His day deny their sin and seek to kill Him.)*

9 He went on to tell the people this parable: "A man planted a vineyard, rented it to some farmers and went away for a long time. 10 At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants so they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed. 11 He sent another servant, but that one also they beat and treated shamefully and sent away empty-handed. 12 He sent still a third, and they wounded him and threw him out. 13 "Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my son, whom I love; perhaps they will respect him.' 14 "But when the tenants saw him, they talked the matter over. 'This is the heir,' they said. 'Let's kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' 15 So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. "What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? 16 He will come and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others."

When the people heard this, they said, "May this never be!"

17 Jesus looked directly at them and asked, "Then what is the meaning of that which is written: "'The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone'"? 18 Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed."

**19 The teachers of the law and the chief priests looked for a way to arrest him immediately, because they knew he had spoken this parable against them.** But they were afraid of the people. 20 Keeping a close watch on him, they sent spies, who pretended to be honest. They hoped to catch Jesus in something he said so that they might hand him over to the power and authority of the governor.

### **THE SERMON**

### **"Wounds that Heal"**

### **Luke 20**

INTRO - There was a violent murder at the Dimond Mall recently, one man shot another. More information has now come out. According to the radio yesterday morning, the police theorize that one man robbed another man's house. The man who was robbed found out who the thief was and contacted the man who had taken his possessions. This probably was not smart. When the man who was robbed met with and confronted the other man, the thief shot the owner. It seems, the thief did not like being confronted with his misdeeds.

I. That is the story of human kind. People do not like to be told of their sin.

- A. Did you see today's lesson? It sounds almost like the Dimond Mall situation.
  - 1. Jesus told a parable about the people of Israel. Using an Old Testament illustration He showed how the Israelites had constantly rejected God's prophets.
  - 2. The religious leaders of Jesus' day knew this parable was not only telling about the idolatry of the Israelite's past, but talking also about their refusal to listen to God in their day.
  - 3. Did you hear what they did when they were confronted with their sin by Jesus' parable?
  - 4. Look at verse **19 The teachers of the law and the chief priests looked for a way to arrest him immediately, because they knew he had spoken this parable against them.** They surely did not like being confronted with their sin.
- B. The same continues today. People don't like to hear of their short-comings.
  - 1. A child may get angry when told their room is a mess and needs cleaning.
  - 2. A student may get mad at a teacher for a bad grade on a test.
  - 3. A driver may get angry with a policeman for pulling him over for speeding.
- C. And today many close their minds to God when the topic of sin comes up.
  - 1. Non-Christians often want nothing to do with the Lord who will point out their failings, especially if there is talk of eternal punishment.
  - 2. But, I have seen Christians get mad and stop attending worship when God's law is taught, and the need for a new life is spoken.
    - A. I've seen people get angry when God's teachings on sexuality are talked about, or when God's teachings on not gossiping are discussed especially if their life is different.
    - B. I've seen people get angry when children are asked to behave.

II. Last week we brought my wife's car in for an oil change. While we were there we found another issue, her water pump was leaking. Now, we had not known this. It seemed to have been working fine. There was something in me that tempted me to ignore the problem. After all, we had not noticed the problem before. But, I know what can happen. Last November on the way to the hospital the water pump on my old car died. The engine started over heating and I had to stop and be towed. Ignoring a problem can allow it to get worse. But facing the problem can prevent worse problems down the road.

A. In Life Light Bible Class this past Wednesday we considered Proverbs 27: 6 **Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.**

- 1. A friend may share our short comings, our sins, because they care about us.
  - 2. These wounds may not be pleasant, but they are helpful, because then we can deal with them.
- B. It takes courage to listen to God tell us of our failure and sin.
- 1. But, if God tells us about helping the poor, or sexual purity, honesty or sacrificial love and we find we have not been living this way, then by listening we can seek to do a better job of living as God's children. We can face the sin that is harming our life and seek more healthy living.

2. And, by honestly considering our sin we can also turn to our greatest need, a Savior.

C. Jesus didn't tell the parable because he wanted to condemn the religious leaders, but, because they were not listening and He was trying to get their attention, for their own good. He wanted them to know their sin and their need for a savior.

III. I have what I now consider to be a good dog. When my dog misbehaved and I scolded the dog because of its disobedience, I didn't have much luck training it. But, when I rewarded my dog for doing good, it responded better and started behaving better.

A. Often, when people think there is only punishment if they admit sin, they are afraid to admit it. They are afraid to deal with the weakness or the evil that is hurting their lives.

B. But, there is another way that wounds are healed.

1. Isaiah 53:5 says, **5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.**

2. This is another way that the wounds of a friend can be trusted. Jesus was wounded for us.

3. Because Jesus took our punishment, God offers us forgiveness.

4. Knowing that we are forgiven makes it easier to admit our sin. It makes it easier to admit areas we need to grow and work on in our lives.

C. In today's parable tells of rebellion, hard headed-ness, and the need to change. He does this not only for the Israelites, but for us. But he does this not to hurt, but in love to point to His forgiveness. Today, we have also heard Jesus offer forgiveness.

1. We have heard/will hear that forgiveness in the confession.

2. We will receive that forgiveness in the Lord's Supper.

3. Even when we fail, God forgives.

CONCLUSION - In the early 1960's two relatives older than myself faced cancer. My grandfather's sister felt a lump in her breast, but did not go to the doctor. Treatment was painful. My grand mother's brother, however, discovered he had cancer and went in for surgery. Cancer treatment and surgery have never been 100% sure, and back then it was less so.

But, my aunt died, and my uncle lived. When Jesus points to our sin, it can be painful to admit and confront. But Jesus confronts us in love and forgiveness, and Jesus' forgiveness is always effective.