

10/5/11

THE EPISTLE LESSON

Philippians 4:4-13 page

(With Jesus we can face anything!)

4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. 6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable-- if anything is excellent or praiseworthy-- think about such things. 9 Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me-- put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

10 I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you have been concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. 11 I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. 12 I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. 13 I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

THE GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 22:1-14 page

(The Parable of the Wedding Feast)

1 Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying:

2 "The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. 3 He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come. 4 "Then he sent some more servants and said, 'Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.' 5 "But they paid no attention and went off-- one to his field, another to his business. 6 The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them. 7 The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.

8 "Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. 9 Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.' 10 So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, both good and bad, and the wedding hall was filled with guests.

11 "But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. 12 'Friend,' he asked, 'how did you get in here without wedding clothes?' The man was speechless. 13 "Then the king told the attendants, 'Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' 14 "For many are invited, but few are chosen."

THE SERMON

“Do WE Ignore God?”

Matthew 22

INTRO ó Have you ever driven down the road in your car and heard something that might be a problem. But maybe you didn't have time to deal with it so you ignored it? You knew you should have it checked. If you deal with a problem early it is usually smaller than if you deal with it later. But it was easier, if a little less responsible, to ignore the noise for now.

- I. Jesus tells a parable about people who should have heard the noise.
 - A. The King called people to the wedding banquet. But, even though it was the king calling they had other things to do.
 1. Verse 4 and 5 say, **Come to the wedding banquet.' 5 "But they paid no attention and went off-- one to his field, another to his business. 6 The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them.**
 2. Imagine, the king called to a feast, but work and other concerns were more important. They should have paid attention but they didn't.
 3. Just like the noise in a car can lead to problems, and bigger problems if ignored. These people faced problems because when God called, they had something else to do
 - B. You know that this parable is first directed to the Jews. They ignored God's call to a holy life, to a life of love, to believe in His Messiah
 - C. This is also directed to us.
 1. How often do we ignore God's call?
 2. What does the Lord call us to? Obedience. Worship. Mission.
 3. Are there times when other things are more important to us than the call of God, more important than His work? More important than God himself?
 4. It doesn't seem so bad when we do it, but now we realize it is idolatry.
- II. Have you heard the joke about the man who talked to the doctor when his wife went for an appointment? He told the doctor he was afraid his wife was not hearing very well. The doctor said, "Speak to her from different distances across the room. Let me know how close you have to get before she hears you." So the man asked his wife from across the kitchen, "What are we having for dinner tonight, Dear?" But she didn't answer. He got half way across the room and asked, "What are we having for dinner tonight, Dear?" Again she didn't answer. Finally he got up right next to her and asked "What are we having for dinner tonight, Dear?" He heard her say, "For the 3rd time, we're having fried chicken." There are some people that we really don't want to miss what they say, and some things we don't want to miss hearing.
 - A. Think of the parable, is there anyone you would want less to miss what they say than the king? Is there anything you want less to miss than a big party? Yet, the people did so, intentionally, maybe carelessly.
 - B. How about us?
 1. Is there anyone we want less to miss than the Lord. He is our Maker. He is the Lord and Ruler of the Universe. Jesus loved us enough to die for us. Isn't that someone we want to listen to and respond to?
 2. Is there anything we want to miss less than the ultimate feast in the kingdom of heaven, eternal life in the presence of God? God gives it to us by faith as a gift through His mercy.
 3. The option to heaven is hell, a horrible place, a horrible thought?

- III. A number of years ago one of my best friends was, and still is, Warren Schumacher. He was President of our District. He had a style of asking others to work for him. Because He was my friend I did many jobs, including deal with some pretty messy situations in some churches. But, I did it because he called.
- A. When God calls it may be difficulty to which He calls us.
 - 1. Mission is not easy.
 - 2. Obedience is difficult, and righteousness is impossible.
 - 3. Worship can get in the way of other activities.
 - 4. Living in the world but not of the world can lead to rejection.
 - B. But, it is our Lord who is calling. Don't you want to answer Him?

CONCLUSION ó The story is told of a boy who was delivering tracts on a rainy day. Supposedly the story is true. Everyone else had quit because of the weather. But he felt a need to do what he had committed to do. He listened to that voice and went. He got to one house and knocked, and he had to wait. He could have just left the tract, but he heard the TV, and the door was ajar, so he figured someone was home. He knocked, and knocked, and knocked, but didn't get an answer. Finally he hollered in, "Is anyone home?" A little old lady came to the door and he gave her the tract. "I'm sorry for disturbing you. I was delivering tracts. I want you to know God loves you. We'd love to have you worship Him with us. A week later the lady was in church. She told the pastor, "My husband just died. My finances aren't that good. I was about to hang myself when a little boy from your church came and told me God loved me." I figured I could keep going. The boy listened. God Blessed.

Listening to the voice of God is a blessing to us, and a blessing to others.