

SERMON FOR OUR SAVIOUR LUTHERAN CHURCH

NOV.28, 2010

JESUS THE PRINCE OF PEACE

Mathew 21:1-11

Grace Peace and Mercy of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen

Aslam-u-alakum, Shalom. These are two magic words which are used by Muslims and our Jewish brothers, when they meet their brothers in faith. The meaning of both these words is 'peace be to you'. These words of superficial assurance are necessary in a society where every second person could be an enemy.

In our Gospel reading this morning, we read about Jesus Triumphant entry into Jerusalem. All people including the disciples think that Jesus is going to bring about peace through fighting but His peace is not through wars but through eternal love and tranquility. Those were also trying times for the disciples because soon they were to be sent out as lambs among the wolves to forward Christ's commission. Personally I know it as I have been born and lived in that kind of society and faced it all.

Well, there is inadequacy of peace even in the West. You know that people do drugs and indulge in various activities to find peace. The absence of peace is the cause for sin and guilt, is like a volcano which may seem to be dormant for some time but when it erupts, it destroys not only the body but the soul as well.

The irony is that as much that we want peace with each other; the world is torn apart from pain, strife and turmoil. There is quest for peace in all the nations of the World but we know that instead of peace we get more trouble every day. We try to find peace on individual level by relaxing on a resort to find some peaceful surrounding. Of course this gives you temporary relief from the daily distractions, worries and anxieties of life.

Even the United Nations is trying its best to bring about peace. Their mandate includes:

"...commitments to eradicate war, promote human rights, maintain respect for justice and international law, promote social progress and friendly relations, and use the Organization as a center to harmonize their actions in order to attain these ends."

I like to quote another saying by Dag Hammerskjold, the former Secretary General of the United Nations: it goes like this.

"I see no hope for a permanent World peace. We have tried hard and failed miserably. Unless there is a spiritual awakening on a worldwide scale, civilisation is doomed."

Please don't understand me wrong, they are doing a wonderful work but this is all human effort, which cannot bring about peace that Christ is going to bring in the hearts of the people who are shouting Hosanna, Hosanna. Jesus talks about this peace in John 14:27

"Peace I leave with you, my Peace I give to you. Not as the World gives, do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled."

What greater legacy could the Saviour leave with His followers than Peace, Peace I leave with you. It is the peace that only he can give. This is the peace that the heavenly hosts sang at the birth of our Lord. "Glory be to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased", a peace well pleasing to God. Therefore those who trembled before the ominous events soon to come are to be neither troubled nor afraid. In this blessed assurance they should rejoice, for the one whom they love is going to be soon returning home to the bosom of His Father through His death on the Cross. That's why the Church has decided to place this lectionary at the advent because his birth and death are so interwoven that we cannot separate the two.

Peace is a fundamental dimension of humanness which is severely broken in relationship with God right from Garden of Eden, because fullness of peace cannot be achieved without proper relationship with God. We ignore God, we dismiss Him and we even fight Him. At times we embrace religion and religiosity without even encountering God, our maker.

The Bible paints vivid picture of brokenness of peace and let me share few quotes from the Bible:

"...justice is turned back, and righteousness stands far away; for truth has stumbled in the street"
Isaiah 59:14

"And they have healed the brokenness of my people superficially, say, Peace, Peace, but there is no peace" Jeremiah 8:11

So is there a solution to this brokenness of peace? Yes, there is! When Christ talks about Peace, he is not talking about temporary peace.

1. The first and foremost solution is having a loving relationship between us and God. My brother and sister, no man can be at rest down to the very roots of his being without having peace with God. The center and foundation of all the peace giving power of Jesus Christ is this, that in His death, by His one offering for sin forever, He has swept the occasion of antagonism and so made peace between, the Father in the heavens and the child, rebellious and prodigal, here below. Jesus is our peace and only He can say, 'peace I leave with you.
2. The second point is that we must have peace with ourselves. There must be no stinging conscience, no unsatisfied desires, no inner Schisms between inclination and duty, reason & will, passion and judgement but quiet and harmonized nature. This can only be achieved by cleaving to Jesus Christ and making Him our Lord, our righteousness, our aim and our all. Take that one for your treasure and you are rich indeed, true tranquility will prevail in your life, a tranquility which is serene and everlasting, the kind of tranquility which prevailed upon st. Stephen at his martyrdom.

My brothers in Christ, the right relationship with God and with you cannot be achieved by human effort; it is only possible by the gift of Jesus Christ which he is going to bring out as a small vulnerable child in the manger which he left with his disciples at the time of His going to Heavens. This is the gift of Eternal peace, to us this morning as well. It comes from a willing and obedient heart. It is the inward quiet, which no distress of mind & body is able to destroy. This peace is trust and confidence in Lord God in all circumstances. A peace which the World cannot give but

only Jesus can. This peace is established by his death as we read in Colossians 1:20, making peace by the blood of his cross.

We know today that the miracle has already happened. It is the miracle of God's forgiveness. God's forgiveness is no simple matter; it is very costly- but to whom, to God himself because He had to send his only begotten Son, who had to suffer sacrificial death on the cross for this forgiveness for you and for me. Jesus Christ does not impose upon us His act of grace because he paid our penalty once and forever. He invites us this morning, to receive it and be forgiven. Jeremiah wrote this four hundred years earlier in verse six of twenty three chapter that we read also, 'Behold the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will raise up righteous branch" true righteousness brings about peace which penetrates the hearts of people. This peace is available through Jesus only, which the World cannot give. The other day, I read a car sticker, which said, No Jesus, no peace. How true!

He wants to give His peace which the World cannot give. Let us share this peace with our neighbours who may be sitting in darkness and are inflicted by the Worldly affairs. Let them know that the Peace of Christ is the only solution.

'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' Mathew 11:28

Amen.

And now may this very peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, keep you in one true faith in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

Amen