

No Easy Path for the Disciple

Promise: although difficult, the path of Jesus ends well

Pastor Timothy A. Duesenberg

Jer 28:5-9; Ps 119:153-160; Rom 7:1-13; Matthew 10:34-42
(4th Sunday after Pentecost (Pr 8), 6/28/20)

Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. – v. 34

Lead In – Scripture teaches in 1 John 4:8 that “God is love.” And because many today are confident that they know what love is, the image we bear of Jesus, God’s Son, is often one that is meek and mild. But the portrait of our Lord in the Gospel Accounts does not often comport well with this image. And that is especially true of the first words in our Gospel Reading this morning...

I. The Paradoxical Portrayal of the Prince of Peace

- A. So what’s this business about a sword?
- B. The unquestionable peace Jesus came to bring...

II. What Is Required For the Ultimate Peace

- A. Forgiveness and reconciliation related but not...
- B. Salvation involves a rescue operation...
- C. Tough love helps us to see we are lost and...

III. Good News That May Not Sound Like Good News

- A. Will we prefer the Jeremiah(s) or the Hananiah(s)?
- B. Will we prefer to listen to satisfy itching ears?
- C. Not an easy path, but rewarding one that ends well!

Parting Shot – Jesus put the matter so clearly in His famous sermon, referred to as “The Sermon on the Mount”. In that sermon Jesus said, “Enter by the narrow gate...” It is not that we have the ability to complete the difficult task. But rather, it is that the path Jesus leads us down, even though He accomplishes everything for us, is not an easy one. It is fraught with difficulties. Accordingly, we need to stop looking for shortcuts, and believing false promises. Take our Lord at His Word. His path is not easy, but it is a rewarding path that ends well.

Isa 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Lk 2:14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!

Lk 12: I came to cast fire on the earth, and would that it were already kindled!

Col 1:19-20 For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

Rom 5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Rom 3:10-12 as it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.”

Matthew 10:34-42 ESV

Not Peace, But a Sword

³⁴“Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

³⁶And a person’s enemies will be those of his own household. ³⁷Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. ³⁸And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

⁴⁰“Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me. ⁴¹The one who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and the one who receives a righteous person because he is a righteous person will receive a righteous person’s reward. ⁴²And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.”

Jer 28:8 The prophets who preceded you and me from ancient times prophesied war, famine, and pestilence against many countries and great kingdoms.

Jer 6:14 They have healed the wound of my people lightly, saying, ‘Peace, peace,’ when there is no peace.

Jer 6:16 Thus says the LORD: “Stand by the roads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls. But they said, ‘We will not walk in it.’”

2 Tim 4:3 For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions.

Our Lord Jesus instructs us to petition our Father in heaven asking, “Thy will be done.” But our sinful nature, the flesh, would rather, “My will be done.”

Mt 7:13-14 “Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

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Psalm 119:153-160

Resh

¹⁵³Behold my affliction and **deliver** me,*
for I do not **forget** your law.

¹⁵⁴Plead my cause **and** redeem me;*
according to your promise,
give me life.

¹⁵⁵Deliverance is far **from** the wicked,*
for they do not study your statutes.

¹⁵⁶Great is your **compassion**, O LORD;*
preserve my life,
according **to** your judgments.

¹⁵⁷There are many
who persecute **and** oppress me,*
yet I have not swerved
from **your** decrees.

¹⁵⁸I look with loathing **at** the faithless,*
for they have not **kept** your word.

¹⁵⁹See how I love **your** commandments!*
O LORD, in your **mercy**, preserve me.

¹⁶⁰The heart of your **word** is truth,*
all your righteous judgments
endure **forevermore**.

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