

Pentecost 13            9/3/17  
Matthew 16:21-28      17A

FROM THAT TIME JESUS BEGAN TO SHOW HIS DISCIPLES THAT HE MUST GO TO JERUSALEM AND SUFFER MANY THINGS FROM THE ELDERS AND CHIEF PRIESTS AND SCRIBES, AND BE KILLED, AND ON THE THIRD DAY BE RAISED.

Do you remember last Sunday's Gospel? Jesus asked the 12, "Who do you say that I am?" And, Peter made that marvelous confession, "You are the Christ, the Son of the God who lives." That's who Jesus is – the Christ, the Son of God.

Then, Jesus sternly warned the disciples NOT to tell anyone about this confession. **What?** Isn't this the same Jesus who said we are to go and make disciples of all nations? But there He was, strictly charging the disciples "to tell no one that He was the Christ" (16:20). It almost seems as though Jesus did not want people to know that He was the promised Messiah. We are almost at a loss of words to explain these words of Jesus. They are puzzling, to say the least, aren't they? Why wouldn't Jesus want people to know His true identity? Why did He strongly warn His disciples not to tell others about Him at this time?

Well, today's Gospel lesson answers that question. The disciples, Peter answering on behalf of them all, got the words right when they confessed that Jesus is the Christ, but they did not know what those words meant. If you read last week's Gospel and this week's Gospel together, you understand that right after Peter made this marvelous confession and Jesus "strictly charged [them] to tell no one that He was the Christ," "Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised" (vv. 20-21). Basically, Jesus had heard this great

confession and now He wanted the disciples to understand what it means to be the Christ. It means suffering, death, and resurrection. It means taking your sin onto Himself and carrying it to the death of the cross, and rising to life again the 3<sup>rd</sup> day.

Peter correctly confessed that Jesus is the Christ. That's who Jesus is -- the Christ, the Anointed One. And He Himself tells us WHAT He was anointed to do, "From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised" (v.21). So, He MUST go to Jerusalem; He MUST suffer; He MUST die; and He MUST rise again the third day. He MUST do that to ransom many, to save you from sin, death, and the devil. That's what He was anointed to do.

But, Peter took the Anointed One of God aside and corrected Him. I know, it reads [Peter] "began to rebuke Him," but the word really means "correct". That's right, Peter corrected Jesus. When the Anointed One talked that he must suffer go to Jerusalem, suffer, die, and rise again the 3<sup>rd</sup> day, Peter thought He had made a mistake, so He corrected Jesus.

Peter knew He was the anointed one; He had just confessed that. But, Peter had his own idea of what Jesus was anointed to do. At the time of Jesus, there were any number of popular notions of what the Messiah would do and that's the reason Jesus told them not to tell anyone before His resurrection from the grave -- because before He rose, people would not understand what the Anointed One had come to do. For the pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem in the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter of John's Gospel, they wanted to take Jesus "by force" to Jerusalem to make Him their Bread King, to give them bread to eat every day (Jn 6:15). Chiefly for Peter and many of the Jews of the day, they thought the Messiah would be a political leader, to

drive the hated Romans out of their land and make Israel into the world's super power, and rule and reign over it. That's what He was anointed to do in the eyes of Peter and many.

What about you? What was Jesus anointed to do for you? We all too often fall into the footsteps of Peter and make Jesus into nothing more than a magic genie, a genie we can summon forth at our command and give us wealth and blessings. "Name it and claim it," is the mantra for many in the church today.

There is another camp that says you can have your best life now, that Jesus was anointed to be your life coach. Jesus is your financial guru, who will give you wise advice on what to do with your money so that you can have untold wealth. Or, Jesus is a child-care expert who will give you the 10 steps for raising above-average children. Or, Jesus is a marriage counselor, to give you the 7 keys to a successful marriage.

What about you? What was Jesus anointed to do for you?

Jesus tells us that He was anointed to suffer and die. His death must happen. Popular theology today doesn't even mention it. They act as though it was not even necessary. His suffering and death and cross are not even mentioned; they are simply ignored, because, at the root and core of our selfish sinful self, we want GLORY. We want Jesus to be a magic genie to give us our every wish; we want to "name it and claim it;" we want our best life now, we don't want to suffer, to be inconvenienced, and we certainly do not want to sacrifice. We don't want to deny ourselves in any way, shape, or form. We want glory, and we want it our way, right away.

Did you notice the words of Jesus to Peter when he tried to correct the Anointed One of God? "Get behind me, Satan. You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the

things of man” (v. 23). Satan perfectly understood why Jesus had to suffer and die. The prince of the demons held you captive with sin and its wages of death. He wanted to drag you into hell, there to dwell with him forever and ever, without end.

But, Jesus has in mind the things of God. And that meant entering Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, riding on the colt of the donkey, amidst the cries of the crowd, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord” (Mt 21:9). He is betrayed and arrested, put through the mockery of a trial, where lying witness after lying witness came forward and He did not hide His face from His accusers. He suffered the injustice of mockery and beatings. He was pronounced guilty and sentenced to death, then led to Calvary where He was numbered with the transgressors, and crucified upon a cross.

But, that’s not how the story ended. The 3<sup>rd</sup> day, He was raised to life. The women came to find the stone rolled away and the tomb empty, because God would not allow His Holy One to see corruption.

Child of God, His going to Jerusalem, His suffering, His dying, His rising again are FOR YOU. That’s what had to happen, and that’s what did happen for you.

Your sins are forgiven because Jesus died. Because your sins are forgiven, death and hell have no power over you. You will rise to eternal life in Jesus.

You have that joy, you have the certainty because Jesus gives you all His suffering, all His death, all His Easter resurrection in the means of grace. Jesus just gave it all to Summer as she was baptized, just as He gave it all to you in your baptism. And, as you hear His Word and feast

upon His life-giving body and blood, His suffering, His death, His resurrection are all made yours.