

TRINITY NEWS

Easter VII Only the Truly Humble Can See God: Only the Broken Can be Truly Humble

The passage set for the Gospel today is part of an extended prayer in St. John's gospel. It occurred shortly before Jesus was arrested and put on trial. It is obviously a prayer about his own self-identity and the corporate identity of the people around him. It shows an enormous trust in his Heavenly Father. The later Rabbis which speak of the Yekara glory, the glory of God displayed in human conduct. It was not the glory that guided them on the Exodus or the glory that filled the tent in the wilderness of their journey home. This glory was something that is displayed in human actions, thinking and words.

The strange thing is that we can neither sense, or put into practice, or demonstrate such glory unless we have been broken in some way. This is what is meant by taking up the cross in following Christ for those who would later follow Him. Carrying the cross of Christ involves denying one's self. It requires humility. Only the humble can truly see God. Most of us are not humble by nature. We are only humble either when we are broken or when we cannot function as we have been used to doing.

I suspect that this goes with finding a quiet place within us where we can look at ourselves without blinkers. We often speak of truth in the Church and some people think that they have all the right words for it. But truth in Biblical sense can never be separated from our thoughts, words and deeds.

Jesus of Nazareth was not a hermit. He was gregarious, he needed people around him. At the crucial moment, when his arrest was near, and the closing stages of his life were to be enacted, Jesus spends time with his friends and with God. He had been with them in the Upper Room in Jerusalem and conversed with them at some length according to the discourses in John 13-16. Now he pauses and shapes a beautiful prayer to God. It is not just about himself, but about others. He wants to share with them and us the unity that he feels with his Heavenly Father. He wants to share the glory

of God like the Inner circle of Peter, James and John had seen on the Mount of Transfiguration. It is beginning to envelop him again. And he wants those with him to be drawn into that circle of love and glory.

When we are broken, we cannot go on in the usual way. Then we have to look into other resources. Prayer draws our attention into ourselves and outward and upward into God. Prayer also allows us to listen to God, and to be conscious of our own breath, and our own being without being driven by our own ego.

If you are young and you are reading these words, do know that you are growing up in a world where you will spend a good bit of your time and waste many hours wondering what it is all about. If within those hours you can find some space to drag yourself to a standstill and lift your soul to God, then you receive answers that you cannot generate yourself. The next step that you take after that will be one in which you are conscious of where you are putting your feet. It is like stepping on a dance floor and becoming committed to the dance. If you are older and you are reading these words, then you have been where the younger person has not been. What have you learned on the way? You have met good people and bad people, and you have experienced what it is to know love and what it is to be rejected. You will have untold love stories that you hope no one discovers. Those love stories and perhaps a true love story that everyone knows about may have made you realise that the love story is more important than the details about it. We are all interested in what appears to be a beautiful love story and how it began. We don't like such love stories to ever end, and we do our best to help people hold them together. The love story of Jesus was with God and humanity. He wanted God's dream to come true in the world. What makes him more attractive to me is that even under the layers of tradition about him he emerges as a vulnerable and deeply perceptive human being. He resists manipulation of any kind, whether it is the temptation to do it to others, or the manipulation of others in his life. He is not interested in coercion or in pulling anyone down. We fall into that trap ourselves more times than we are prepared to admit. Silencing our tongues about others is a huge gift of freedom for them and for us. We can stop it at this

instance. It need go no further. Christ said in effect to the woman caught in the actual act of adultery, “Don’t commit that particular sin again!”. That was her admonition and her forgiveness. The unforgiveable sin against the Holy Spirit is to call evil good and good evil. That is, to blaspheme against the goodness of God which is the source of our own goodness. But in every-day matters the forgiveness of God is always at hand, even when we have broken every one of the ten rules written on our ancestral memory. If you think any of this is easy, read the first three chapters of the Book of Job!

I was recently broken by a loss of someone who will always be part of my journey. That should show up in a deeper understanding of the brokenness of others. Job had false friends. When you are broken, don’t take any notice of anyone who tells you that “you’ll have to get over it”. That is ‘basura’. When we are broken we can only it take into ourselves and become more sensitive to the brokenness of others. If we do not become more sensitive, then our real friends should come and tell us that we of all people should have known better. Christ calls us into unity with him in the heart-prayer in John 17. He wants us to draw close to God and to have God close to us. He wants us to experience the glory of God and to allow it to change our lives.

Amen to a beautiful prayer.

Bishop Arthur Jones

TO PLAN:

May 15, Wednesday.

- Bible study, 10am.
- Group discussion about Christian Meditation on the Scriptures, 7:30pm, Parish office. **Booklet: When God Speaks** (by Henry & Richard Blackaby)

May 16, Thursday.

- Midweek Eucharist, 10am, Chapel.

NEXT WEEK’S READINGS:

Acts 2:1-11; Psalm 33 *or* Psalm 104; 1 Corinthians 12:4-13
John 20:19-23 *or* John 14:8-17

COMING UP: Saturday, May 25, 2013. Dinner Dance.

See Mrs. Ruby Benitez for tickets and information.