

Session Fourteen (Year A)

Sunday February 4, 2018

[Come, Holy Ghost!](#)

[Pentecost Prayer](#)

Kiss of Peace

Questions? Thoughts?

Theme: Authority

Questions for the Candidates

- Whom must we obey?
- Whom do you obey? Whose authority do you recognize?
- Do you ever exercise authority?

The nature of Christian authority from [Matthew 20](#)

- 25 Jesus summoned them and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and the great ones make their authority over them felt.
- 26 But it shall not be so among you. Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant;
- 27 whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave.
- 28 Just so, the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Teaching by exhortation and example from [Matthew 23](#)

- 1 Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples,
- 2 saying, "The scribes and the Pharisees have taken their seat on the chair of Moses.
- 3 Therefore, do and observe all things whatsoever they tell you, but do not follow their example. For they preach but they do not practice.
- 4 They tie up heavy burdens (hard to carry) and lay them on people's shoulders, but they will not lift a finger to move them.
- 5 All their works are performed to be seen. They widen their phylacteries and lengthen their tassels.

- 6 They love places of honor at banquets, seats of honor in synagogues,
7 greetings in marketplaces, and the salutation 'Rabbi.'

The Ten Commandments

Not this session

The Beatitudes

Matthew 5

- 4 **Blessed are they who mourn**, for they will be comforted.

The word for “mourn” means “to be sad” or “to grieve”. It is frequently used in the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament for mourning over the dead. It is the word used of Jacob’s grief when he believed his son was dead. Paradoxically, Jesus appears to be saying, “How happy are the unhappy!”

It is a mistake to think that Christians should never be happy, that we should always go around carrying the world’s cares on our shoulders and that there should no joy and no laughter in church. Equally it is a mistake to think that Christians should never be unhappy. As the writer of Ecclesiastes points out, “There is a time for everything . . . a time to weep and a time to laugh, at time to mourn and a time to dance”.

It is not wrong to weep and mourn at the loss of those we love, just as Jesus wept at the death of Lazarus. We may also weep over the mess we see in the lives of others. Paul wept over the enemies of the cross of Christ. But these types of mourning are not the ones Jesus is speaking about here. Rather it is a weeping at our poverty of spirit. It means not only recognizing our own desperate spiritual poverty, but also being broken-hearted about it.

There is a godly grief which the Spirit of God brings. We see it often at the point of conversion, with weeping over past sins and tears of repentance. Even as Christians, we still make a mess of our lives and need to weep as Peter did when he realized how much he had let Jesus down.

When the Spirit of God comes upon a man or woman the experience is sometimes accompanied by tears. Sometimes past hurts are being healed. Often someone is mourning over opportunities wasted and a sense of spiritual poverty. There is great precedent for God’s children weeping, not simply for themselves, but for the cities they are part of and for the land in which they live. Jesus wept over Jerusalem because its inhabitants were so blind to what was going on in their midst. There is such a thing as godly sorrow for our personal and societal spiritual bankruptcy.

Jesus said that when this happened to people, “They will be comforted.” In this age when the Spirit is poured out “on all people”, we see how the Spirit of God, known as the Comforter, comes alongside a person and brings them encouragement. He assures them of forgiveness and cleansing and that “in Christ” they are proclaimed righteous. Often, as we observe the ministry of the Holy Spirit, we see tears turn to joy and even laughter, although our comfort will only be complete in heaven.

- from *Challenging Lifestyle*, by Nicky Gumbel

Lamentations 1

- 12 "Come, all you who pass by the way, look and see whether there is any suffering like my suffering, which has been dealt me When the LORD afflicted me on the day of his blazing wrath."
- 16 "At this I weep, my eyes run with tears: Far from me are all who could console me, any who might revive me; my sons were reduced to silence when the enemy prevailed."

Lamentations 2

- 11 Worn out from weeping are my eyes, within me all is in ferment; My gall is poured out on the ground because of the downfall of the daughter of my people, As child and infant faint away in the open spaces of the town.
- 12 They ask their mothers, "Where is the cereal?"--in vain, As they faint away like the wounded in the streets of the city, And breathe their last in their mothers' arms.
- 13 To what can I liken or compare you, O daughter Jerusalem? What example can I show you for your comfort, virgin daughter Zion? For great as the sea is your downfall; who can heal you?

Lamentations 3

- 30 Let him offer his cheek to be struck, let him be filled with disgrace.
- 31 For the Lord's rejection does not last forever;
- 32 Though he punishes, he takes pity, in the abundance of his mercies;
- 33 He has no joy in afflicting or grieving the sons of men.

Saints

St. Augustine of Hippo

Origen of Alexandria

Malachi 1

- 14 Cursed is the deceiver, who has in his flock a male, but under his vow sacrifices to the LORD a gelding; For a great King am I, says the LORD of hosts, and my name will be feared among the nations.

Matthew 18

- 8 If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter into life maimed or crippled than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into eternal fire.
- 9 And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into fiery Gehenna.

Sacraments

Not this session

Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Isaiah 11

- 2 The spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him: a spirit of wisdom and of understanding, a **spirit of counsel** and of strength, a spirit of knowledge and of fear of the LORD (or Piety or Reverence),
- 3 and his delight shall be the fear of the LORD.

Proverbs 2

- 7 The LORD has counsel in store for the upright, he is the shield of those who walk honestly,
- 8 Guarding the paths of justice, protecting the way of his pious ones.

Tobit 4

- 18 Seek counsel from every wise man, and do not think lightly of any advice that can be useful.
- 19 At all times bless the Lord God, and ask him to make all your paths straight and to grant success to all your endeavors and plans. For no pagan nation possesses good counsel, but the Lord himself gives all good things. If the Lord chooses, he raises a man up; but if he should decide otherwise, he casts him down to the deepest recesses of the nether world. So now, my son, keep in mind my commandments, and never let them be erased from your heart.

Wisdom 9

- 13 What man knows God's counsel, or who can conceive what our LORD intends?
- 14 For the deliberations of mortals are timid, and unsure are our plans.
- 15 For the corruptible body burdens the soul and the earthen shelter weighs down the mind that has many concerns.
- 16 And scarce do we guess the things on earth, and what is within our grasp we find with difficulty; but when things are in heaven, who can search them out?
- 17 Or who ever knew your counsel, except you had given Wisdom and sent your holy spirit from on high?
- 18 And thus were the paths of those on earth made straight, and men learned what was your pleasure, and were saved by Wisdom.

Wisdom 1

- 3 Perverse counsels separate a man from God, and his power, put to the proof, rebukes the foolhardy;
- 4 Because into a soul that plots evil wisdom enters not, nor dwells she in a body under debt of sin.
- 5 For the holy spirit of discipline flees deceit and withdraws from senseless counsels; and when injustice occurs it is rebuked.
- 6 For wisdom is a kindly spirit, yet she acquits not the blasphemer of his guilty lips; Because God is the witness of his inmost self and the sure observer of his heart and the listener to his tongue.

Sirach 37

- 13 Heed your own heart's counsel; for what have you that you can depend on more?

Sirach 32

- 18 The thoughtful man will not neglect direction; the proud and insolent man is deterred by nothing.
- 19 Do nothing without counsel, and then you need have no regrets.

Fruits of the Holy Spirit

Galatians 5

- 22 In contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness,
- 23 gentleness, **self-control**. Against such there is no law.

James 1

- 26 If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, his religion is vain.
- 27 Religion that is pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

Supplemental Readings

Genesis 37

Joseph Sold into Egypt.

- 1 Jacob settled in the land where his father had sojourned, the land of Canaan.
- 2 This is the story of the family of Jacob. When Joseph was seventeen years old, he was tending the flocks with his brothers; he was an assistant to the sons of his father's wives Bilhah and Zilpah, and Joseph brought their father bad reports about them.
- 3 Israel loved Joseph best of all his sons, for he was the child of his old age; and he had made him a long ornamented tunic.
- 4 When his brothers saw that their father loved him best of all his brothers, they hated him so much that they could not say a kind word to him.
- 31 They took Joseph's tunic, and after slaughtering a goat, dipped the tunic in its blood.
- 32 Then they sent someone to bring the long ornamented tunic to their father, with the message: "We found this. See whether it is your son's tunic or not."
- 33 He recognized it and exclaimed: "My son's tunic! A wild beast has devoured him! Joseph has been torn to pieces!"
- 34 Then Jacob tore his garments, put sackcloth on his loins, and mourned his son many days.

- 35 Though his sons and daughters tried to console him, he refused all consolation, saying, “No, I will go down mourning to my son in Sheol.” Thus did his father weep for him.

Ecclesiastes 3

- 1 There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for every affair under the heavens.
- 2 A time to give birth, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to uproot the plant.
- 3 A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to tear down, and a time to build.
- 4 A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.
- 5 A time to scatter stones, and a time to gather them; a time to embrace, and a time to be far from embraces.
- 6 A time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away.
- 7 A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to be silent, and a time to speak.
- 8 A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

Matthew 26

Peter’s Denial of Jesus.

- 69 Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. One of the maids came over to him and said, “You too were with Jesus the Galilean.”
- 70 But he denied it in front of everyone, saying, “I do not know what you are talking about!”
- 71 As he went out to the gate, another girl saw him and said to those who were there, “This man was with Jesus the Nazorean.”
- 72 Again he denied it with an oath, “I do not know the man!”
- 73 A little later the bystanders came over and said to Peter, “Surely you too are one of them; even your speech gives you away.”
- 74 At that he began to curse and to swear, “I do not know the man.” And immediately a cock crowed.
- 75 Then Peter remembered the word that Jesus had spoken: “Before the cock crows you will deny me three times.” He went out and began to weep bitterly.

Luke 19

The Lament for Jerusalem.

- 41 As he drew near, he saw the city and wept over it,
- 42 saying, "If this day you only knew what makes for peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes.
- 43 For the days are coming upon you when your enemies will raise a palisade against you; they will encircle you and hem you in on all sides.
- 44 They will smash you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave one stone upon another within you because you did not recognize the time of your visitation."