

Lent Day 13

Wednesday February 28, 2018

Reading: John 7:1-39

33 Jesus said, "I am with you for only a short time, and then I am going to the one who sent me. 34 You will look for me, but you will not find me; and where I am, you cannot come."

Reflection

Most of us know what it is to wait. We wait, not always patiently, for big events like Christmas or birthdays. In the church calendar our time of waiting is during the season of Advent. It's a time to anticipate the second coming of our Lord when all things will be made right. Lent is not a time of waiting, it's a time of preparation. In this one regard it might be considered the opposite of Advent. Or, perhaps it's better to see it as related to Advent, but from a different angle. Time is running out. Similar to a shot clock at a basketball game.

Jesus's time — when he will be glorified (that is, crucified) — hasn't come yet. However, he is still listening to the voice of his Father; going where he's called to go, doing what he's called to do and saying what he's called to say. What he is doing and saying is threatening to the leadership for a variety of reasons so they are seeking to kill him. As the temple guards come to arrest him, he warns them — time is running out. This stands as a warning to us as well; time is running out, we need to use the time we have to know Christ and put our trust in him.

Perhaps, from our modern day perspective, that sounds like a threat and we don't like to be threatened. We want to be inspired into believe, not threatened into it. I agree. However, neither Jesus's words nor mine are a threat, they are warning. Imagine the scene on the Titanic as the lookout spots the fatal iceberg and he calls up to the captain, "Iceberg ahead!" Does the captain reply, "Don't you threaten me!" No, he hears the dire warning and leaps to immediate action. This is what Jesus's words, scripture's words, my words are designed to do. We can all get comfortable; those in unbelief in their unbelieving and those in belief in their believing. We all prefer life to move to the status quo, but Jesus ALWAYS comes to break us out of the status quo because he's calling us to the Kingdom of God which is the opposite of status quo.

So, where are the areas of your life and faith that have become stagnant? Where are the areas that there is resistance? Where are the areas that are sin-full? The clock is winding down. God's mercy is great and it has the purpose that all may be saved, but it isn't infinite. The injustice of the world and the blood of the oppressed cry out for God's justice as well as his mercy. There is coming a day when Christ will return and put all things right — the call is for us to be in the right, now.

Prayer

Father, thank you for your wonderful mercy and grace. Help us to walk in those without ever taking them for granted, like we have permission to stagnate. Rather, forgive us for the times when we let it slide and rekindle our passion to live holy lives for you. Amen.