

TRANSCRIPT OF MY SERMON

Grace, mercy and peace be to you from God our Father, and our Lord and Savior, Jesus, Christ, Amen.

We have this word of Scripture, from the Holy Gospel from Mark, where it ends: "Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with one another." So far, God's word; so let us pray: Bless us, O Lord, in the meditation upon Your Word and the following of Your ways, in Jesus' Name, Amen.

Jesus speaks of the feet, the hand and eye, and so we sang this hymn: "Lord, Help Us Walk Your Servant Way". Jesus speaks of misuse of our life, and so in the hymn, we have the right ordering what Christ has done for us, and we serve one another with our hands, our feet, our eyes and our mouth, as servants looking at how may we serve our neighbor?

There seems to be two different lessons, two different readings. No doubt each one could stand on its own, but there is this connection: The problem with evil, and what does it do?

And strangely, John is all concerned that someone, other than the apostles, is casting out demons. And they tried to stop them. Well, we are not to stop someone casting out demons.

The demons are where the problem is, and they try to cause trouble each and everywhere. And if you ever wonder, CS Lewis was able to describe this in *The Screwtape Letters*, where chapter after chapter, the demons are discussing and writing letters and trying to get advice from Satan how to do stuff. And of course, CS Lewis works his way in.

Jesus is always at work to thwart and to stop much of the work of demons, but we must always take care that we don't become a part of that, and rather help us walk your servant way. So whoever is not against us is for us. We are to look at each other in the church this way. If someone is helping and someone is doing and someone is stepping up and someone is doing things for the church, don't stop them.

And yet it happens, or some people want to.

So, if someone is doing something, encourage them, thank them, tell them and let them do it. Whoever gives you a cup of water to drink, because you belong to Christ, will by no means lose his reward. You see, your servant, if you give a cup of water to someone, that is good enough on the last day to get you into heaven.

You love your neighbor, give them a drink of water, okay, at least you could do that.

You know, you can't preach like Paul. You can't talk for three hours like Pastor Taylor (which you know I can do, so be careful!)

But you can give someone a cup of water, because it goes to the heart and soul of a person, so that what are you doing with your hands, your feet and your eyes? What are you doing with it?

And he has this understanding: It would be better for him if a great millstone were hung around his neck, than to cause these little ones who believe in me, to sin.

And the word there for “little ones” is micron. In the metric system, the smallest amount of measuring is micron.

When people work on the submarines for the US Navy, they have to make sure that everything is made within microns. And so the littlest one then is known by Jesus. He loved by Jesus, cared for by Jesus, and someone comes along with their feet, their hands, their eyes, and causes them to sin. You see, the opposite of giving a glass of water is causing a little one to sin. See the complete contrast.

So, Jesus sees hell. He knows who's in hell. He knows why people are in hell, but he doesn't want to see you, he doesn't want to see you there.

He's not saying all this [for you] to say, “Oh, I guess I'm one of those.” No, he's saying this so that you're not one of those. You know, examine your heart, examine your mind, examine your faith. If something causes you to sin, hand, foot or eye, cut it off. Now we know he's not literally saying cut off a piece of your body. Otherwise, what would we have left?

The point is, the source of that sin comes from the heart and the evil desires. Not to mention the demons trying to cause us, egging us on to do them. You see, the demons egg us on, our sinfulness eggs us on. And so, we are (excuse me).

We are to take the understanding of why serve our neighbor in love: cup of water, whatever it might be.

And if your eye causes you sin, better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell, WHERE THEIR WORM DOES NOT DIE AND THEIR FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED. Those words printed all in capitals, there for your convenience, for your notice is a reference to a passage of scripture in the Old Testament, which very conveniently is included at the end of the gospel lesson. So that saves me from quizzing you and saying, “Where is that found?” Oh, Isaiah 66, verse 24, oh. Why does Jesus quote this passage? Jesus quotes this passage [because] it is the last word of Isaiah. It is a prophecy and a promise that God makes through Isaiah.

All the evil in the world, all the destruction of the demons and the sinfulness of man, all the unbelief will be seen “where their worm does not die and their fire is not quenched”, in Hell.

The believer looks upon that, and sees the final victory, that Christ has made, that has been given to us, and all the things that trouble us, all the things that anger us, all the things that we speak out against, all the things that we cry out for, all the abominations and all the horrible things that we can't believe that people would do, are in that fire that cannot be quenched.

Now that doesn't include bad coach or referee decisions, but the sinfulness of man will all be put in that hell where their worm does not die, and their fire is not quenched.

Jesus is saying, you believe in me, you follow me, you trust in me alone for salvation and it shall not touch you.

And what does God promise through David, that” You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies”, and what's that table? That table is the meal.

The table of that meal was in the temple where the faithful came and ate, in the presence of my enemies, those who had no care for it, were sinners and unbelievers, and did not desire it or seek after it, despised it.

“You prepare a table before me, in the presence of my enemies.”, when the unbelievers are all, where the fire is not quenched, we will be having that great and glorious wedding feast of the last Lord's Supper, that we shall enjoy with Jesus, our Bridegroom, through the forgiveness of sins, the same meal which we receive today and enjoy the meal prepared for us in the presence of our enemies. So we are to understand this victory, this salvation, this promise, this hope that is made more clear and more sure and more confident, because we're at the table.

So all this stuff about global warming, (because the idea is that, you see, global warming will wipe us all out. Which God says not, is not going to happen.) So, Who do we want to believe? Believe God, we're not going to be wiped out by global warming. We're not going to be wiped out by atomic bombs. We are not going to be wiped out by zombies. You know, all of these things, the post-apocalyptic. You know, the secular world has taken on all of that, and wish to portray this as the future of mankind, that Christianity is just slowly ebbing away, like, like something that has no permanence or any hope.

Christ is victorious. We have this victory. So have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another. This salt is the faith, the hope, the love, the forgiveness that we have. That's the salt, the things that we have taught, the things that Christ has taught us, the things of which help walk your servant way wherever love may lead, bending low, forgetting self, serve the other's need: that's having salt. Believing in Jesus Christ, receiving the forgiveness of sins, having this hope. And knowing that on the last day, we will look upon all the evil of the world in a place where the fire is not quenched, and then to have peace with one another.

If there isn't peace, make it happen. And if there isn't peace, go and make peace.

To have peace with another person is a to love your neighbor. To have peace with one another is to participate in, to express, to show and to demonstrate the forgiveness of sins. If you are not demonstrating the forgiveness of sins, if you're not at peace with one another, FIX IT!

Be at peace with one another. It's already been done by Christ.

We are the microns, the little ones, and we may feel very small at times, but Christ knows us, the little microns, and he watches over us and helps us. And let that be our confidence, not in our strength, but in the strength of Jesus Christ. Find our strength in Jesus Christ, who has defeated the enemy and has given us the victory. Amen. Now may the peace of God which passes all understanding keep our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.