

On-line Service Notes EWBC
1 October 2023

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Texts 1 Cor. 1:18 and Numbers 21:4-9

Greeting & Announcements (Call to Worship Psalm 103:1-5, p. 454)

Praise Song

Opening Hymn #379 “There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy”

Prayer

Through the Bible Readings: Psalm 110; Job 1:1-12

The Lord Gives Dominion to the King. A Psalm of David.

110:1 The Lord says to my Lord:

“Sit at My right hand

Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.”

2 The Lord will stretch forth Your strong scepter from Zion, saying,

“Rule in the midst of Your enemies.”

3 Your people [a]will volunteer freely in the day of Your [b]power;

In [c]holy array, from the womb of the dawn,

[d]Your youth are to You as the dew.

4 The Lord has sworn and will not [e]change His mind,

“You are a priest forever

According to the order of Melchizedek.”

5 The Lord is at Your right hand;

He [f]will shatter kings in the day of His wrath.

6 He will judge among the nations,

He [g]will fill *them* with corpses,

He [h]will shatter the [i]chief men over a broad country.

7 He will drink from the brook by the wayside;

Therefore He will lift up *His* head.

Footnotes

- a. Psalm 110:3 Lit *will be freewill offerings*
- b. Psalm 110:3 Or *army*
- c. Psalm 110:3 Or *the splendor of holiness*
- d. Psalm 110:3 Or *The dew of Your youth is Yours*
- e. Psalm 110:4 Lit *be sorry*
- f. Psalm 110:5 Or *has shattered*
- g. Psalm 110:6 Or *has filled*
- h. Psalm 110:6 Or *has shattered*
- i. Psalm 110:6 Lit *head over*

Job 1:1-12

Job’s Character and Wealth

1 There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and that man was blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil. 2 Seven sons and three daughters were born to him. 3 His possessions also were 7,000 sheep,

3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, 500 female donkeys, and very many servants; and that man was the greatest of all the [a]men of the east. 4 His sons used to go and hold a feast in the house of each one on his day, and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. 5 When the days of feasting had completed their cycle, Job would send and consecrate them, rising up early in the morning and offering burnt offerings *according to* the number of them all; for Job said, “Perhaps my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.” Thus Job did continually.

6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and [b]Satan also came among them. 7 The Lord said to Satan, “From where do you come?” Then Satan answered the Lord and said, “From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it.” 8 The Lord said to Satan, “Have you [c]considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, [d]fearing God and turning away from evil.” 9 Then Satan answered the [e]Lord, “Does Job fear God for nothing? 10 Have You not made a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. 11 But put forth Your hand now and touch all that he has; he will surely curse You to Your face.” 12 Then the Lord said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your [f]power, only do not put forth your hand on him.” So Satan departed from the presence of the Lord.

Footnotes

- a. Job 1:3 Lit *sons*
- b. Job 1:6 I.e. the adversary, and so throughout chs 1 and 2
- c. Job 1:8 Lit *set your heart to*
- d. Job 1:8 Or *revering*
- e. Job 1:9 Lit *Lord and said*
- f. Job 1:12 Lit *hand*

Questions and Answers

Scripture Readings for Today: 1 Cor. 1:17-18; Luke 12:1-12; 36-40; 41-49

Hymn: “How Shall They Hear the Word of God?” (Insert)

Today’s Sermon: “Preach, Teach, Deliver and Heal”
Sermon for 1 October 2023

Jesus kept to His proper business which broadly speaking falls under two heads: preaching the gospel and healing the sick. If we speak less broadly, we would probably add to preaching and healing, teaching true doctrine and deliverance ministry. For assuredly, the world is no less devil-filled than it was in the days of Jesus’ earthly ministry. While this is not commonly addressed, the reality is that deliverance is often the first order of business. Unclean spirits, demonic influences and spiritual oppression—not typically described in such biblical terms!—so abound that clearing the ground is a vital first step to any and all other ministry endeavors.

Quietly, prayerfully and often unobtrusively, we do start there. Taking authority over evil influences and binding their power in the name of Jesus, through the blood and for the sake of advancing the kingdom is a necessary preliminary. If this step is overlooked, and deliverance is not performed, the resistance, often expressed through interference and distraction will hamper everything *and very little spiritually speaking will get accomplished*. In the setting of an evangelistic crusade, this phase of things is called “pre-evangelistic work.” Prayer warriors precede the technical crew, support staff and preaching team and pray over the location, the city residents and the whole district. Then it becomes possible or more possible anyway to make the truth evident as well as applicable. Jesus was always highlighting how things are, how things ought to be and what it takes to get there—affirming that until the *parousia*, the Second Coming of the Lord things will never be entirely as they ought to be. And, from then on, even through eternity, all things will be right, true, just, holy and perfect. Yes, following the coming home of the Bridegroom, with His bride—alluded to in Luke’s parable—we are to live expectantly, eagerly awaiting His return, His reign and rule as King of kings.

So if a pastor is to keep to his proper business: preaching, teaching, delivering and healing, there are many things which we can say they are not. He is not a politician, not a judge, a divider of properties/inheritances/estates, not a market expert/broker, not a real estate agent, financial planner, or a life coach in recovery. All of these vocations, or “callings” can be very fine things in themselves, but they are not the main thing for a preacher. Selfishness is the chief cause of much wrong doing, of spiritual decline to deviance. To live godly is to be generous for God, for others and to win friends as well as to be a blessing to those around you. Worldliness is another drag on spiritual excellence, **where your treasure is, there your heart will be also**. (Matt. 6:21) And obsession with material, temporal stuff will also hamper your discipleship. Your “life” is not what you own, or win, possess, store, or drive. To think it is is folly, and it is very foolish to live in such ways: selfishly, worldly and for the moment.

Well, what’s the alternative? The alternative is to be the faithful steward, or home servant, who lives for his Master’s return. Be a person who lives for what’s next on God’s agenda! Be centered on the Lord’s return and you will not live carelessly, dissolutely and impenitently whether rich, or poor. To be a hoarder is to live fearfully, folks, it defines a life that is all about me. Keeping it all to/for yourself is immoral. Remember the prosperous farmer who had large barns and a bountiful harvest, In Luke 12:18-20 we read of his self-destructive decision to tear down his barns and build bigger ones—little knowing that that very night his soul would be required of him! And there would be no ease **to eat, drink and be merry!**—not for him!

It is far, far better to drink in God’s love, and that both fully and deeply, for the purpose of your life dispensing it to a world in need!

How I praise God with huge joy whenever I witness a co-worker in this work, face alight with joy to greet a brother, sister! With most sure welcome, most evident affection, God’s love as evident as the splash of cold water from a pure fountain! The high wall of inhibitions o’er thrown! Pet dogs do better at welcoming their master home than we do in this business of awaiting the Lord’s return. How Christian-like! Be awake, alert, prepared by love and expectation: **And be you like men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes home and when he knocks on the door, they straightway open it up and welcome him in!** The first order of that day is the waiting and watching! When we meet one another it should be as reinforcements, or relief arriving, our greetings textured with joyous anticipation, festooned with happy and glad hope. We know our dogs are glad to see us home and so we are to be to our Master’s return. Be finished with folding napkins and the

sweeping of floors . . . the master's home. He is truly at the door. Adjust your appearance, look to the door and smile. Yes, smile just this once and so smile forever.

In this manner, Jesus urges us, as God's own family, to focus on the spiritual realities—the main event is all about him. Thus aim at heaven and get earth thrown in, aim at earth and that's all you get . . . dirt! Get the essential things and the common things, things that God knows you need and things that He provides in great abundance in diverse ways, *those things will be added to you*. Remember, the Kingdom that you are to inherit as a child of the King! Remember that God provides or we would have nothing! Let gratitude for what you do have overthrow your hunger for what you think you have to have! He who knows your needs better than you know yourselves meets those needs—according to his measure of love, not our urgency, our clamoring demanding.

But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that.

Luke 12 reports Jesus' teaching on proper fear. He then details, **the leaven of the Pharisees which is hypocrisy**. And the reason is: *all hypocrisy is bound to be exposed*. And not just by time and opportunity but because of a fundamental rejection of secrecy and deception. **Truth will triumph in the end—secrecy will terminate indeed it will end with open proclamation**. We see that human cleverness, deceitfulness or duplicity, all “time out”—or expire. And the only way to escape that exposure is simple: don't go there in the first place. Next Jesus deals with death threats. Death threats pale in significance when compared to the hell threat of eternal punishment. The link between hypocrisy and eternal punishment is real if not immediately apparent. We are not to fear hypocrites, and we are not to fear death threats—*but we are to fear God who, after death, determines whether you eternally thrive, or are punished*. This is Christian realism. Verse 6 has Jesus comparing our divine regard with that of sparrows, or hairs on our heads. Arguing from the lesser to the greater, God would have us prioritize our lives in terms of eternity. Be afraid of those who can effect your eternal destiny: fear God!

Confessing Him is a case in point. Confess Me before men and I will confess you before God. Don't risk being denied before God by denying Me before men! **Do not blaspheme the Holy Spirit of God**—denying Me while on trial for your faith is forgivable *but the limitation is blasphemy*.

Preach, Teach, Deliver and Heal. My proper business, my lane, my calling. We know that **the wages of sin are death** but, I fear we too often forget, that *sin begets death* and those who dwell in the home of sin, see and taste and feel and know enough of sin's living hell, sin's imprisonment—incarceration—to bang on its bars and cry to be let out! Iron bars and steel doors are physical evidences of our separated state. And although a great variety of sin exists, the particularity of what you are in for does not detract from the stark reality—we are all trapped, all subjected to sin's captivity. *And that is why we preach repentance and join that word to grace!*

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

For through faith by grace forgiveness of sins occurs—and the result is freedom, and purity; acceptance, absolution and acquittal.

14 How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? 15 How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who [preach the gospel!]bring good news of good things!”

Beautiful, happy feet belong to those who lead others to call on God, who inform them of His love, His receptions, His return—yes, **good news of good things!**

Those who think themselves as good, and so without sin, see no need of repentance. “I am good enough as I am and God should accept me for what I am.” Are they aware that they are dictating terms to God? Do they not realize that things are quite the other way around? They must be taught the truth—yes, about God and about themselves.

There are none so lost as those who imagine they are not lost, lost in a fog of self-approval, of sin negating pride and presumption. They say, “I’m a good person” and forget that the sinless Lord once said, **Why call you Me good? There is only One who is good.** (Mark 10:18) Thankfully, it is better to know you are loved than it is to imagine that you are “good.”

Deliverance is, I think, most commonly found in the realm of knowledge. There, where ignorance reigns, we can deliver through insight, through revelation. Uncommonly, though universally, deliverance is in the spiritual realm. There we find that people are in bondage to the demonic, to Satan, and principalities and powers (evil forces) in high places. People, places and things are subject to infestation—and powers of darkness can become quite ensconced in our institutions, our customs, laws and ways of doing things. They hide in these places, shielded by ignorance and obliviousness—but the light penetrates, and the power of God exposes, expels and eliminates them. Cleansing’s are of both the ordinary and extraordinary sort. The first is carried out by common prayer, devotion and the latter requires more focus, elaborate even ceremonial treatment.

And, finally, healing. God is presented as the Great Physician in Scripture. He has acted in the natural realm by putting plants and herbs—medicines and treatments in the hands of healing practitioners: herbalists, naturopaths and doctors. And into the bodies of living beings God has also placed recuperative powers. And, often, these provisions are sufficient; however, not always. Sometimes these pathways fail us and loved ones sicken and die. There is yet another level of intervention—in a sense it is already present in the natural order, but there is healing by faith, spiritual healing. This latter healing comes with an unction, an anointing from on high. I have at times experienced this extraordinary empowerment and gone to pray with a special sense of urgency and power. Something akin to an electrical charge is present, or the pain relocates and/or migrates either out of the body or to another place in the body. We can ask for evacuation of this sort, but the whole business of laying on of hands is, quite functionally, out of our hands! God heals in His way and in His timing. All we need to do is ask in faith, believing.

I am not boasting when I say, I have had the privilege of functioning in all four of these dimensions of ministry. I have prayed for healing under duress. An insistent

mother demanded it. I was unschooled in the practice so *I went to those more adept than I and got schooled*. The intervention was an entire success. The Lord visited us and healed her son. I have collaborated in healing by command. My brother in ministry commanded healing and, clinically and immediately, there were results. God gets all the glory. My experience in command ministry is largely that of invoking the Holy Spirit to expel any devils present. But every Christian has authority to do the same, if not more! Deliverance is a branch of healing.

I appreciate the opportunities this church has afforded me over the years to preach, teach, deliver and heal without restraint or censure within the bounds of Scripture. It has occurred with discretion and subtlety—so much so that this might be more news than not to some of you. Yet this is what pastors do after the practical example of Paul **as he followed the Lord Himself!** And so, **bade us be imitators of him!** I pray that we can celebrate this month together!

Amen

Testimony Time

Prayer of Confession and The Lord's Prayer (debts, evil one)

The Lord's Supper

Closing Hymn:#369 "Jesus, I Come"

Giving Blessing & Benediction

Closing Fellowship: (Stop by and see and greet your friends on-line.) We are meeting on-line for the foreseeable future as well as meeting in person. Follow whatever social distancing and mask wearing that you are comfortable with.