

Sunday, March 17, 2019

Psalm 91 (808 VU)

Philippians 3:17 to 4:1

Luke 13:31-35

Crying at the Cross

Who lives in you? For a few moments just let your imagination run free and imagine yourself your personality, who you are really, as a house. Any kind of house will do- but it is your house—not the one you currently live in but a house- a shelter with walls, windows, doors. For some it may be a huge castle, with lofty turrets and banners waving in the breeze. There might be a moat around the outside and a huge drawbridge which keeps the place safe and secure. For others this house might be a log cabin, tucked away in the forest near a lake where it is peaceful and quiet. For others still, it might be a nice little retirement home close to everything. There might be a rocking chair or a swing on the front porch and a shade tree in front with a nice warm breeze stirring flowers blooming in front.

Now, let us move in closer and look at the front door of that house. A visitor is now pushing the doorbell, clanking the knocker, or knocking on the door. If someone came to the door of your house, who would they find inside? Who lives in you?

I'm not sure about others, but I have met people who gave me the distinct impression that if I went inside the "houses" of their lives, I would not find anyone there or to the other extreme that their houses are so cluttered with junk that there would not be any room for anyone. Or even if on the outside I saw houses which were so great and impressive on the outside, but once inside the house everything was fake or artificial. There was nothing real inside.

Who lives in you? That's the question for us to address this Second Sunday in Lent because Jesus was very clear as to who lives within him- God the Father. But how do we answer this question today when we are searching for who we are on this walk through Lent and hear Jesus words seemingly filled with anger. We might even wonder, why?

Jesus is with his disciples and was teaching in the synagogue when a woman who had been crippled for many years was healed by Jesus. The ruler of the synagogue was indignant towards Jesus but those who had listened and watched what had occurred were delighted with all the things he was doing. Jesus continued to teach as he made his way to Jerusalem. People asked him who would be saved and he answered those who know him.

As he taught, some Pharisees went up to him and told him that Herod wanted to kill him. Jesus' replied, ' Go tell that fox I will drive out demons and heal people today and tomorrow and

on the third day I will reach my goal. In other words, "Tell Herod I've got work to do first." Jesus was commenting on Herod's ineptitude, or inability, to carry out his threat because no prophet can die outside Jerusalem!"

And this is when Jesus cries out for the city where prophets have been stoned bearing good news. Yet Jesus is not crying in anger for the people not listening, but in empathy and in love because he just wants to protect the people and save them. He describes this like a mother hen who extends her wings over her growing chicks so that they will not get wet, cold, eaten or burned. He wants to save the people.

Jesus then warns them-- your house has left to you desolate with nothing inside—who lives in you and guides your life? You need to remember who I am because the next time you see me—your will be shouting- "blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" Did the people understand this? Did Jesus know what these people were doing by not listening to him?

Who lives in you? Twenty five years ago Disney released "The Lion King" which became one of the best movies with beloved songs of all time. The opening scene shows the animals of Pride Rock gathering together to celebrate the birth of a lion cub the one who will one day rule. The music reflects the moment of heritage, of pride and of knowing over whom this lion cub shall reign. The haunting words of this song calls us also to figure out who lives in us—who dwells in us. " He lives in you; He lives in me. He watches over Everything we see. Into the water Into the truth In your reflection. He lives in you.'

Jesus states, "my Father is in me" The question he asks, Who lives in you? Is it God the Father who lives in your house—whether the shelter is big, small, elaborate or plain? Does God live within your life for if this is so, then we have this as common to our faith? Common to who we are as brothers and sisters in Jesus. And does Jesus cry for us like he cried for the people of Jerusalem to turn to him?

As we continue on our Lenten journey—what does it mean to live in and with Christ? As Paul wrote, if we truly believe and know Jesus as our indwelling Saviour/ Christ we will be transformed to be like him because we know where we will be—in heaven. We will not focus on earthly things- but focus on what Christ risen to new life means for us. We will remember Jesus' suffering and death and yet also rejoice because of his resurrection. But we must acknowledge Jesus as Saviour and to be real about this.

Jaques Maritain, was a great French philosopher who stated that there were really only three questions that had to be answered: "Who am I?" "Where am I?" and "Where ought I to be going?" Jesus knew who he was, and where he was, and where he had to go. Do we know? Or are we out of focus, our goals fuzzy and ill-defined? Our world is filled with people who claim to

be Christian yet only a small percentage are real in their faith. Maybe most of these people have not asked these 3 questions. Yet we remember Jesus because he did.

Again let us take a moment and imagine your house—who lives in you? Christ's Spirit dwells within the house of those who truly have faith and believe. Jesus cries for those who have shut the door on him as they live focused on earthly things. Which are you? Real and knowing that He lives within and watches over everything? Or is Jesus crying and waiting for you to open the door?

As we continue our Lenten journey let us explore the cross where many cried the day Jesus died and let us explore the path leads us all to the place Jesus is today. Alive and waiting to hear our cry of becoming a real follower of Jesus, a disciples in faith and a faithful disciple of Jesus who walks each day knowing that Jesus leads the way.

PRAYER

God of grace and love, come dwell within us as your Spirit moves amongst us in these moments. Let the words of Jesus' cry for the lost people be a cry where we come to know him personally and without fear. Enable us to find the love that has been buried and call us to reach out and see Jess for who he is- Your Son and the one who lives within us We ask this in Jesus' name Amen.