

Pentecost Twenty-Two

10.21.18

Mark 10.32-45

“In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence...And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him.” [Hebrews 5.7, 9]

In the Name of Christ + Jesus our Lord

Having walked into Lord's presence this morning so we can be in middle of his Scriptures / Sacraments,

There may be quite few realities running through our minds, our hearts / our spirits:

- Mysteries of stock market movements
- Freeing of pastor from prison in Turkey
- Major league baseball's push into World Series
- Parents agonizing over addictive issues in their children
- Political tumult in this country
- Disappearance of Sears stores

Because we have walked into Lord's presence, however, we let realities such as these slide into background,

So that these realities (chalice used in Lord's Supper / pitcher that pours out water for Baptism) can be set in front of our lives

Let's explore these two realities

In verses preceding today's Gospel, Mark tells us that people going up to Jerusalem with Jesus are both amazed / afraid

Pulling twelve disciples to him, Jesus tells them again (this is third time) what is going to happen to him in that city

- He will be delivered to chief priests / scribes
- They will condemn him to death
- They will deliver him to Gentiles
- They will mock him
- They will spit upon him
- He will rise after three days

James / John, sons of Zebedee (nicknamed sons of thunder), react to Jesus' words by asking him,

Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you

Note that request is totally imbedded in their lives, that it revolves around what they are wanting / what they are thinking

They want to sit at most prominent places with Jesus in his glory!

Note too, that Jesus does not discard their request or explode at them for making it!

Instead, he throws back his own questions to them,

Are you able to drink cup that I drink?

Are you able to be baptized with Baptism with which I am baptized?

Their answer is shocking – Yes, we are able!

Equally surprising is Jesus' observation, that they will drink from his cup / they will be baptized with his Baptism!

He draws line, however, at places where they will sit, commenting that such decision is not his to grant

Request by James / John is discovered by other disciples / they are naturally indignant (they don't appreciate these two getting jump on them!)

Indignation leads Jesus to comment how life is structured in world where rulers lord it over those who are ruled

He makes it clear that such structure is not to exist among his followers

He points out that greatness among his followers comes through them serving him / one another

Remember that our rescue from sin, Satan / death turns us from focusing on ourselves, rescue turns us from grasping for ourselves

Jesus makes it clear that Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve (remember that phrase, Son of Man, comes from OT reminding us that promised Messiah, Anointed One, would plunge into world's affliction / save people suffering from it)

Jesus also makes it clear that Son of Man is giving his Life as ransom for many persons

Point of passage spins around request by James / John to take part in Jesus' glory

What is Jesus' glory? His approaching resurrection!

That resurrection is found in this cup for his supper / this pitcher for his Baptism

When we drink from this cup, what is pouring into our mouths?

It is Blood, Lord's blood!

In this world blood is absolutely necessary for life

But in his rescue of us, Lord shut down his blood flow so we could truly live

Thus, when we drink from this cup, we are actually participating in glory that pours out

from Lord's dying for us, we are being flooded with his resurrection!

When water is poured from this pitcher into baptismal bowl, what is being splashed on our heads!

It is real Life, new Life of our Lord!

We know that in this world water is absolutely necessary for life

But in his rescue of us, Lord drowned this world's life in his dying so we could rise in him

Thus, when water from this baptismal pitcher splashes against our heads, we are actually participating in glory that pours out from Lord's dying for us, we are being drenched with his resurrection!

Thus, resurrection of our Lord is found in this cup for his Supper / in this pitcher for waters of Baptism

When we ask, like James / John, to take part in Jesus' glory, cup / pitcher sit in front of our lives

Drinking / pouring signal that our Lord has freed us from dominating / destructing concern for ourselves that has been given us by our births into this world

World has its versions of Jesus' glory, but its effects, at best, are temporary / constantly shifting

Such glory is seen in instinctive drive for one's self, in goal of amassing power, in desire for more income, in relentless attempts to have more pleasure

It is not that way, however, with rescued people of Father, Son / Holy Spirit!

Their glory days were initiated when they were baptized because they were drawn into Jesus' resurrection

Their glory days run on into eternity provided they remain faithful to promises spoken at their Baptisms

That's why this cup for Lord's Supper / this pitcher for baptismal water is set in front of our lives today

Their realities remind us we are people who have died to life of this world / who have been raised to resurrected Life of our Lord!

These holy realities make it possible for us to deal with:

- Disappearance of this summer's humidity
- Sexual abuses within Roman Catholic Church / other denominations
- Family member coming back from illness
- Hopes / fears surrounding the country's Supreme Court
- Lutheran church leaders anxious about their futures as numbers in their denominations show steady declines

- Shifting balances of power between our country, Israel, Saudi Arabia / Iran

Thus, realities seen here today (this chalice / pitcher) continually remind us we have been crucified with our Lord / we have been raised with him!

Now may the peace of the Lord God, which is beyond all understanding, keep our hearts and minds through Christ + Jesus our Lord