

SERMON FOR MAY 19, 2019

TEXT: JOHN 16: 33

THEME: THE REMEDY FOR WHAT AILS THE WORLD

33 I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

In the name of Jesus:

When a person is placed under oath on the witness stand, he is asked to raise his right hand so that he will “tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help me God.” Once under oath, the witness then is to plainly speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. There is to be no exaggeration, no interpolation, and no falsification. That person is expected to tell the truth so that the testimony is trustworthy and can be relied upon.

Jesus today tells the truth to His disciples. And why wouldn't He tell the truth? Jesus as the Son of God bears witness to the truth. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Jesus only deals with the truth and can only tell the truth, Jesus always tells the truth, He tells no lies. Satan, on the other hand, only deals with lies. Satan doesn't tell the truth, he twists the truth, and he molds the truth to suit his own evil devices. But not Jesus, Jesus tells the truth.

So what is this truth that Jesus tells today? In verse 33 of our text, Jesus says quite plainly: “**33** I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.” Jesus speaks plainly to the disciples, and to us, that while we are living in this world, we will experience trials and tribulation.

But the question many will ask is why? Why are there trials and tribulations in this world? Do they exist solely to build character? Are they punishments from an angry God? To that end, why do people suffer?

Jesus speaks the truth in telling us that we live in a sinful world. God created this world to be perfect, without trials and tribulations. However, when Adam and Eve disobeyed God, sin entered the world, and with sin came trials and tribulations. In a perfect world there is no suffering, there is no trial, no tribulation, only peace and harmony. But his world is far from perfect. You are far from perfect, in fact it would be accurate to say that this world is broken as we know it, and you and the life you live is broken. When something is broken, it doesn't work correctly, things don't happen in ways that would be expected. That is

what Jesus is talking about, and this is why there are trials and tribulations today.

Jesus told His disciples plainly about what would take place in His life and their lives. He says that He is leaving, and even though Jesus speaks plainly, the disciples don't understand. Oh, they think they know what Jesus is talking about. They think they understand, but they really don't. So, when Jesus tells them that they will forsake Him at His death, Peter chimes in and says: "Not me Lord! I'll never deny you." But you remember what takes place, Peter denies the Lord three times. And later, all of the disciples go into hiding at Jesus' crucifixion, except John, who is at the foot of the cross with Jesus' mother Mary.

Things didn't work out the way the disciples thought they would. Many thought Jesus would come to usher in a heaven here on earth. What could go wrong, when God became man? Everyone would accept Him, wouldn't they? No, Jesus wasn't accepted, not by His family, not by His hometown, His Church, His nation, and His people rejected him. He was despised and forsaken on the cross, rejected by man and by God. This isn't the way it is supposed to work in a perfect world, is it?

But it is all according to God's plan. For God sent His only Son Jesus into this world to be despised and rejected by sinners, to forgive

the very ones who rejected Him. But on Easter Sunday Jesus conquered sin, death and the grave for His followers, so that their sins would be forgiven and they would be made right with God. And Jesus forgave His disciples, sending His Spirit at Pentecost and empowering them to be His witnesses to the end of the earth. And they did this, going from Jerusalem to Judea, Samaria, and throughout the world.

But it wasn't easy. Jesus told them that they would expect to suffer for Him, that they would experience trials and tribulations. They should expect trials and tribulations because they still were sinners living with their sinfulness and they still lived in a broken and fallen world. As they lived for Christ they witness would at times be accepted, but many times rejected by those who were God's enemies and lived in opposition to the will of God. They should expect that as they lived for Christ, Satan would be right at work seeking to upend God's kingdom and undo the work God was doing through them. This was God's promise to them, they could take it to the bank, but they would know of God's other promise, One that is rooted in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Even though they would meet with trials and tribulations in this world, they would be assured that Jesus has overcome the world for them. Jesus died and rose again to defeat the enemies that work against

God and His Kingdom. God's answer to the trials and tribulations that the disciples faced was the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave! Because Jesus lives His disciples live, and nothing would ever separate them from His love. They would know for certain that all things would work to their benefit and God's glory because of Jesus.

But what about you? You live in a sinful and fallen world. You know well of the sin and brokenness in this world. Yes, you presently have trials and tribulations. And you will continue to have trials and tribulations. You know well your sin. Your thoughts words and deeds are tainted with sin and the people who live among you and around you are sinful as well. All have sinned and fallen short of God's expectations. Your life is filled with broken promises and shattered dreams. You know all too well the reality of sickness and hospitalizations. You have grieved with others at the funeral home and gravesite. You know well of the trials and tribulations that come in your life. You see it in the lives of others, of those who hunger and are homeless. And you read about it or hear about it in the news, as earthquakes upend the lives of families across the globe. As terrorists seek to kill innocent Christians on Easter Sunday. As Christian values are rejected; Christians are marginalized; and many reject Biblical truth

today. Today people are more anxious, fearful and wondering where to turn for help, where to turn that we might have peace.

But God's Good News is that Christ has come for you and for the broken world that we live in. Jesus has come to keep God's demands for you and for all. Jesus lived for you, He died for you, and He rose again on Easter morning for you! Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world and forgives you of your sin. He was damned on the cross so that you would know that God loves you with an eternal love. In Holy Baptism God has called you by name. He knows your name and you belong to Him. In the Supper Jesus comes to speak His word of forgiveness to you. Now you can depart in peace. Your sins are forgiven. No matter what happens to you, God is on your side, and His promise is that He will never leave or forsake you. Nothing will separate you from His love. God is good to you. He forgives you. He calls you by name, you belong to Him. No matter what happens, God's promise is that nothing will separate you from His love. He is with you always, even to the end of time. Jesus has conquered all of your enemies and has given you the victory. Faith receives this victory so that you can live having God's peace and the assurance that He works all things according to His will.

Jesus tells the truth. In this world you will have trials and tribulations. But there is a Remedy for what Ails the World. His name is Jesus. Christ has conquered the world! In your trials and tribulations, God invites you to call upon Him in the day of trouble, for He will answer you and deliver you. Jesus says, "Whatever you ask in My Father's name I will give you." God is your friend; He hears your every cry for help. And God does help. This is God's certainty, all because of Jesus. So cast your cares on the Lord. He cares for you. And the peace of God that surpasses all of our understanding will keep you in Christ Jesus.

Amen