Homiletics Carl Thrun

GOOD FRIDAY

Phil. 2: 5-11 (Swedish Pericopes.)

The Working Brief

Intro.: Human pride is a powerful force in our lives. It was toward human pride that the devil directed his temptation in the garden of Eden. Yes, it was human pride that truly made this temptation so enticing, for pride told man how nice it would be to be like God; pride told man that he was really good enough to be like God; pride told man that God was holding out on him; pride made man unsatisfied with his position and status. And so also in our lives today human pride tells us what really good people we are and how self-sufficient we are. Pride takes his stand in our hearts and says, "You, Sir, you have worked hard for everything you've got. With diligence, concentration, and hard work you have gotten everything you own. Now certainly compared to the bum on Skid Row, you are looked down upon by God with more favor." Again pride will say, "You, Sir, why you truly love God. Look how much you gave to missions during the past year. Certainly God cannot overlook this great deed. You have truly gained favor for yourself in the sight of God." And a third time pride will speak to you and say, " You, Sir, you certainly love you neighbor, for you have given a great deal of your income to charity. God will bless you for this deed." And so human pride would set us apart from people such as the bum on Skid Row or the drunk in the gutter as truly better people. Human pride makes us feel that with our good works we are able to gain favor with God and also salvation. But salvation and favor with God is gained only when pride is done away with. Only when we see that we cannot so much as lift a little finger to contribute to our salvation, only when we cling to the cross of Christ in true faith, knowing with a certainty that He carried the punishment of all our sins, that it is what He did and not what we can do; only then will human pride be abolished and salvation ours. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus!" CHRIST BECAME OBEDIENT UNTO DEATH, EVEN THE DEATH ON THE CROSS: THIS IS THE SOURCE OF OUR OWN LOVE FOR PEOPLE AND ADORATION OF CHRIST.

I. "Christ became obedient unto death, even the death on the cross."

A. Christ, true God, became true man.

1. He left the honor and glory which were His in heaven. -- Text: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. Equality with God was nothing to be grasped for Christ, since He already was equal with God, being God Himself. Think of it! Christ, our Savior, was true God, having incomprehendable honor and glory with the Father and the Spirit in heaven. He was Lord and Ruler over the universe. At His feet the angels bowed and sang their praises. All this He left.

2. He made Himself of no reputation and became a slave to men. Text: But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. Leaving the honor and glory which were His in heaven, Christ became true man. He did not leave the glory and majesty of heaven to obtain glory and honor somewhere else, but rather He made Himself of no reputation. He became a slave to man, and a like servant mankind will never have again. What greater humility could the Son of the Most High God have than to become a slave to men? He did not come to rule over men, but to serve men. This He did not only in the physical sense by healing the sick, making the lame walk, making the blind see, and feeding as many as 5000 at one time; but also in the spiritual sense in that He bore the punishment of all the sins of mankind so that man might be saved from everlasting torment in hell.

B. He became obedient unto death.

1. He was crucified by man. Text: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. This greatest of all servants man sought to destroy. Human pride told man that he was not in need of a Savior, that he could do everything in and of himself, including the reaching of heaven. And so, they despised and rejected Him; they spat upon Him, mocked Him, cursed Him, and even crucified Him upon the cross. In all this Christ, true God, was obedient. He subjected Himself as a lowly and humble servant. And we, are we any different from the Jews who cried, "Crucify Him, crucify Him?" Every time we puff ourselves up with pride or fall in line behind the world in sins of lust, anger, wrath, malice,slander, and foul talk -to name only a few- we are driving the spikes through the hands of our Savior, as He stands before us with arms outstretched in a blessing of forgiveness.

2. He was crucified for man. Christ, as a true servant of man, submitted Himself to the desires of man and "became obedient unto death." But even more than this He served man by subjecting Himself to the wrath and punishment of God for the sins of the whole world. As the prophet Isaiah foretold, "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." He shed His life-blood that we might be reconciled with the Father. What greater service is there than this that Christ redeemed mankind?

3. God has exalted Him in token of the completed task. Text: Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. God has truly accepted His sacrifice for our sins. Our salvation is sure.

II. Let us exalt Him.

A. We demonstrate it by

1. Becoming humble. We cannot exalt Christ to the glory of God the Father, if we cling to our pride. When we set ourselves up as extra good people, glorying in our own accomplishments and good works, we are cutting ourselves off from the cross. We are showing God that we are not in need of a Savior, but that we can of ourselves gain heaven. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." When we look toward thd cross and see the Son of God shedding His blood for our guilty stains, then we are forced to bow down before this cross and cry out, "What manner of Love is this that the very Son of God should humble Himself to die on the cross that we might live?"

2. Showing love toward all people. With the cross ever before our eyes we will not deem ourselves better than the bum on Skid Row or the drunk in the gutter, but filled with love we will offer our services to him. Yes, we too must become servants of men, else the love of Christ is not in us. Christ loved all men without exception and gave Himself for them. And so, because of the faith which the Holy Spirit has worked in us, we burst forth in love toward our neighbor, helping the poor and the needy, showing mercy and compassion upon the sick and the maimed.

3. Becoming witnesses of Christ's love. Apart from helping the physical needs of our fellow man, it is our obligation also to tell him of the love which Christ, his Savior, had for him. Both in words and in our actions we must witness the love of Christ. May I never think myself too good to sit in the gutter with the bum and tell him of the love which his Savior has for him. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."

4. Singing praises of adoration toward Christ. Both with our lips and our hearts let us exalt Christ. Let us thank and praise Him for this wonderful gift of salvation. When we do this we will not fall into the ways of the world or let our pride rule over us. Realizing the real significance of the cross we cannot help but glorify God in songs of thanksgiving and praise.

B. Let us grow in faith by holding this work before us always. Though diligent study of the Scriptures, through discussion of the Word of God, through family devotions, through hearing the Word of God in Church, Bible classes and the like, we are thereby making ourselves more and more conscious of the tremendous sacrifice of God's only Son in bearing the full wrath of God for our sins. And with this learning the Holy Spirit will strengthen our faith. First we must hold the cross of Christ before our eyes, God's plan of salvation for us, then God will work a certainty of faith in our hearts. In holding the cross of Christ before our eyes He will completely suppress our pride. Christ's suffering and death will become a living force in our lives, which is the motivation of love toward man and God. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

Hymn: 151 "Christ the Life of all the Living"

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