

All You Need, Really Need, is God's Love – Bill Morse, May 17, 2015

Jesus in today's Gospel reading is praying to his heavenly Father: "I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours." We are God's – we are not our own. You were bought with a price. What was that price? Jesus prayed on Holy Thursday evening. On Good Friday morning, he paid the price on the cross, for my sins and your sins.

You are immensely important to God. As it says "For God so loved the world, that He gave his only son." God loved, and God gave. If you were the only sinner in the world, Jesus would still have paid your penalty on the cross. In today's reading, Jesus prays: "All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I have been glorified in them." You are Christ's glory! You are God's child. Just as you love your children, God loves you. Jesus came to earth for thirty years – why – for you. Not because you deserve it, but because you don't deserve it. That is love. God loves you, because you are you. God so loved you that He gave His only son.

But there's more, so much more. Jesus prays "But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world, so that they may have my joy complete in themselves." You were not made to survive, you were made to thrive. You were made for joy. Be jubilant with joy. Rejoice! The only thing you need, you really need, is God's love – and you have it. Paul wrote: "Rejoice dear brothers and sisters, when you encounter hardship and suffering, because suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and your hope will not be disappointed, because God's love has been poured into your heart through the Holy Spirit. The love of God is being poured into you through the Holy Spirit now, this very moment, in this very time and place. Can someone say Amen!

Jesus continues his prayer: "They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is the truth." Another translation reads: "make them pure and holy." Sara, and then later Sara and I, started coming to this church in 1977. I noticed that the people I met during coffee hour had something that my neighbors didn't have, something that I didn't have, and I wanted it. Now I know what it is; it is the fruit of the spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, and self-control.

Story about Dotty Herrera and Adult Home Christmas party..... Dotty was sanctified in the truth.

Jesus continues his prayer: "I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one." Paul writes: "Satan is the great liar, and the father of all lies." Satan whispers in your ear: "You are not worthy of God's love". Satan whispers: "God will ask more than you are capable of." The word of God protects you from Satan's lies. When Satan whispers "God will ask more than you are capable of", you will remember how Paul wrote to his friends in Philippi: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Jesus continues his prayer: "As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world." God gave you a job – your life has a divine purpose. Jesus said that the word is truth. Bring His word into the world, bring truth into the world, and it will expose the lies for what they are: lies. As Paul writes to his friends: "Take up the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God."

Story of witnessing to janitor. Of course, it was God's word that brought him joy, not me. I just brought him God's word. Jesus said "Go into the whole world and tell people what I told

you, and when you do this, they will hate you, and revile you, and make fun of you, but rejoice when this happens, for great is your reward in the kingdom of heaven.” What reward are you pursuing?

Finally from Psalm 1:

“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”

And you will prosper in everything you do in Christ, because you are not your own, you are His, you are His glory, you are His joy, and you carry His word into the world, you carry the sword of the spirit. You were bought with a price, you are sanctified in the truth, you have a purpose, and you have His love, which is the only thing you need, really need. Amen.

Hymn 453: “More Love to Thee”