

“Three Dimensional Peace”

Psalm 122; John 20:19-31

**As we looked at pictures of Jerusalem last week, I explained
that the name Jeru-salem means “foundation of peace”
and yet when we looked at a picture of Jerusalem,
with the Dome of the Rock where the temple used to be,
and the four quarters of Jerusalem that divide the city
into the Christian, Armenian, Jewish and Muslim
sections and the Dominus Flevitus Chapel
where Jesus wept over Jerusalem
*“If you, even you, had recognized on this day
the things that make for peace!” (Luke 19:41)***

**When I was in Jerusalem 2 years ago with Muslim, Jews and Christians
we invoked the Psalm 122 & prayed for the peace of Jerusalem.**

**It was obvious that this city with “peace” in its name was
anything but peaceful and that was true in Jesus day
just as it is today with all the occupying troops
who patrol the city to keep violence down
when there is at best uneasy peace.**

Certainly the disciples were feeling this in today’s reading.

They were huddled in this upper room “for fear of the Jews”.

They certainly weren’t yet the fearless apostles who

Went out into all the world preaching the gospel.

At this point they were like scared children-

Except Thomas, my favorite disciple.

While the rest of the disciples were huddled in this safe place

Thomas was out doing something. We don’t know what

But he wasn’t one that was holed up in the upper room

He was not one who was paralyzed by fear.

Thomas was the disciple in John 11:16 who responded to

The other disciples caution to Jesus about going to Jerusalem

By saying “Let us also go, that we may die with him.”

Thomas was courageous.

Thomas was also the one who when Jesus was giving that speech

About going to the Father and the way to the Father and the rest

Of the disciples we nodding their heads said to Jesus:

“Lord, we do not know where you are going.

How can we know the way?”

Fortunately Thomas was courageous enough to ask the question

So that Jesus could offer his timeless response:

“I am the way, and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father, except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also.”

So the fact that Thomas wasn't in the Upper Room for fear of the Jews

Doesn't surprise me in the least-Thomas was bold & courageous.

But he did miss out on the first two offerings of Peace

That Jesus gives to the disciples

in his Three Dimensional Peace offering.

When Jesus had spoken with his disciples before his death

He promised them peace:

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.

Not as the world give I unto you.

Do not let your hearts be troubled,

neither let them be afraid.”

When the Resurrected Jesus appears to the disciples he is

making good on the peace offering he promised them.

And it is a Three Dimension Peace:

Peace from Panic;

the Peace that comes with Purpose;

and a Personal Peace.

When Jesus enters he offers the traditional greeting “Shalom”

**But he was not just saying Peace but he was reminding them
Of the peace that he had preached and taught
During his whole ministry on earth.**

**When the Prophet Isaiah spoke of his coming he spoke of
“Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6);**

**When the angels came to announce his birth, they said:
*“Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace***

***Among those he favors.”* (Luke 2:14);**

**When he was on the bow of the boat in the storm he said
“Peace” and the winds ceased” (Mark 4:39);**

**When the woman anointed his feet with oil and the people
Began to grumble he said:**

***“Your faith has saved you: go in peace.”* (Luke 7:50);**

This was not just a greeting for Jesus- it was his mantra

And when he spoke peace... peace happened.

So when he spoke peace to the scared disciples huddled

In the Upper Room, they were transformed from panic

To the peace of Christ beyond all understanding.

That is the Peace from Panic.

But there was more to this three dimensional understanding of peace.

He gave them a job to do.

“Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so I send you.”

Has that ever happened to you?

A job so important, a responsibility so great that you
think you would never be worthy of it?

Then someone sends you & you discover not only can you
do the job but it gives your whole life purpose.

That’s what Jesus did with his disciples.

The work of proclaiming the Gospel

The very work Jesus did on earth

Was now the work of the disciples

And they were transformed from learners

To “apostles”- the ones sent.

So they had the Peace from Panic and the Peace of Purpose

But when Thomas showed us, courageous Thomas,

It became personal. *“Peace be with you. Put your finger
here and see my hands, Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do
not doubt but believe.”*

For Thomas, the Peace did not come from lack of Panic

Or a sense of purpose- Thomas had all those things.

What he needed was the Personal Peace that comes from

That personal connection with Christ.

And that is the third dimension of Peace that God offers in Christ.

It's Personal. I was talking to a young mom this week.

She talked about getting over the panic of having a child.

She talked about the good feeling she had in helping

To raise her niece and nephew- purpose,

But then she talked about raising her own child

And the difference was- it was personal!

Whatever happened to her child, happened to her.

So it is in our relationship with Jesus Christ.

God has personally entered into our lives

So that we might personally enter into life with God.

We are God's children, we have been engrafted into God's very being in Christ. We are blood brothers and sisters. Now it's personal.

And that's the final dimension of peace God offers in Jesus Christ.

And that offer is not just for Thomas who responded: "*My Lord and my God!*" It is the offer for all of us because we are in the story too. "*Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.*"

Jesus is breathing on you and me today- receive the three dimensional peace that God offers us in Jesus Christ. Amen