

22nd Week After Pentecost – FRIDAY

TODAY'S READINGS, FOLLOWED BY A FEW PASTORAL & PERSONAL THOUGHTS.

Colossians 4:10-18 Aristarchus my fellowprisoner saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him;) ¹¹ And Jesus, which is called Justus, who are of the circumcision. These only are my fellowworkers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me. ¹² Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. ¹³ For I bear him record, that he hath a great zeal for you, and them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis. ¹⁴ Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you. ¹⁵ Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nympha, and the church which is in his house. ¹⁶ And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea. ¹⁷ And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it. ¹⁸ The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you. Amen.

Luke 10:1-15 After these things the LORD appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come. ² Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest. ³ Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves. ⁴ Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way. ⁵ And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. ⁶ And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again. ⁷ And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house. ⁸ And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you: ⁹ And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. ¹⁰ But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, ¹¹ Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. ¹² But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city. ¹³ Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. ¹⁴ But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre

and Sidon at the judgment, than for you. ¹⁵ And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell.

Luke 10:1 After these things the LORD appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.

The sending of the 70 disciples was prophesied in the OT:

“And they came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm trees: and they encamped there by the waters.” (Exo 15:27)

The 12 and the 70 foreshadow the 12 and the 70 apostles. Note how the 12 Apostles are wells (or fountains) of water, which in turn nourish the 70 palm trees. The teaching of the Apostles is preeminent, and feeds their disciples, and the entire church. It is fully appropriate that these fountains and palm trees were found at “*Elim*”, which interpreted means “ascent”. The fruit of the palm tree fully describes the teaching of the church, because, as Blessed Theophylact points out, the fruit is “sweet, yet tempered with astringency” (Commentary of Luke 10:1-3) This same idea is expressed when the Good Samaritan, our Savior, poured into the wounds of the traveler *oil and wine*.¹ Any true Christian teaching will have these qualities. We need to be encouraged and rebuked, many times at the same moment in time. The oil soothes us, and without it we would lose heart, but the wine cleanses us, and without it, our wounds, caused by our passions and sins, would fester and we would die.

We know these things about this passage because it is part of the mind of the church. Correct biblical exegesis is not possible unless we share the mind of the church. This is obtained not only by reading the commentaries of the holy fathers (the meaning of this passage, for instance is expounded in Blessed Theophylact), but also especially by living the life of the church, and worshipping in an Orthodox manner.

The scriptures are continually interpreted in our services, especially in the matins service, and its canons. We can learn the inner meaning of the scriptures if we think and live *liturgically*. The word “liturgy” means “the work of the people”. It is not only a Sunday morning service, but the whole of our life. It is a terrible shame that we moderns have become by and large a non-liturgical people, with the liturgy confined to less than two hours on Sunday, instead of including daily perusal of the Holy Scriptures, fasting, standing in the other services in worship, with intent to learn of the things of God.

¹ Luke 10:33-34 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, (34) And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

I have stated before and do so again that the most important two hours of the entire week is the matins service on Saturday evening. In it we take time out to stop all other distractions of life, and try to learn of the things of God, where the scriptures, the commandments and the way of life is expounded. . The Divine Liturgy is the center of our liturgical life, but it cannot be fully appreciated or understood without the entirety of our life being liturgical. If we wish to understand the scriptures, we must not only read them, but also worship *with* them and follow them.

Luke 10:5 And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. 6 And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again.

For many years this verse was a puzzle to me. How can our peace return to us again? Now after many years, it is clear: in all things we should bless and be bringers of peace. This describes a way of life, an attitude which we should bring to every encounter. There is no trace of cynicism in this way of life, and neither is there simple mindedness. We are to be “harmless as doves and wise as serpents”.²

This passage tells us that we will never lose our peace, no matter how it is received. We must, give the “benefit of the doubt” to every man, in every situation. If our teaching, or help is rejected, our peace returns to us, and we are no poorer, but only if our efforts were accomplished in the spirit of peace. I have learned the hard way that nothing in my ministry has ever been successful unless I first said “Peace be to this house”, and then proceeded.

Bibliography

The Explanation of the Holy Gospel according to St Luke, by Blessed Theophylact, published by Chrysostom Press - <http://www.chrysostompress.org/>. ALL FOUR BOOKS ARE HIGHLY RECOMMENDED!

Priest Seraphim Oct 18/31 2008.

[St Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church, McKinney, Texas](#)

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² Mat 10:16 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

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