

Mark 1: 21-28

They went to Capernaum; and when the Sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

Within us, among us, before us,
CHRIST IS COME TO MAKE ALL THINGS NEW

By willing endurance we cause suffering to pass. Evil becomes a spent force when we put up no resistance. By refusing to pay back the enemy with his own coin, and preferring to suffer without resistance, the Christian exhibits the sinfulness of contempt and insult. Violence stands condemned by its failure to evoke counter-violence.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

If evil is to succeed, all it needs is for good people to do nothing

Martin Luther King Jr.

We are in week 2 of what I am planning to be an 8 week series focused on some of the BIG WORDS of the Christian Faith or of the spiritual life, essential words in any theological vocabulary. The idea here is to give us some ways to speak these words in polite company or maybe even speak them politely in impolite company—but to speak them with a sense of healthy humility-----with a sense that we have given these words some thought but with a healthy notion, too, that these are BIG WORDS and that they are rightly to be approached and talked about with a measure of humility.

Our culture needs more spiritual conversations, theological conversations which properly honor these big words and their power to help us make meaning of our lives and what we experience in the world around us. These words are too often used carelessly or even ignorantly-----we want to be a people, I would hope, who are not doing that. We want to be a people, I would hope, who do not shy away from using these big words, and who can use them with some at least modest sense that we know what we are talking about.

Last week we considered THE KINGDOM OF GOD, Jesus' favorite or the most oft mentioned element of his teaching. This week our word is EVIL.

My first approach to this word is to note how frequently I hear it used by people in talking about other people or describing events or situations “out there” in the world.

We need to begin with some clarity and, again, humility. Whatever evil is, we are all complicit in it in some way or many ways. We are all interiorly de-formed by sin are we not? Does that make us evil people? No. But we carry, all of us, what we might call an egoic willfulness which is a resistance to God, to neighbor. When this willfulness is writ large in groups or tribes or cultures, it can begin to look like evil.

In polite or impolite conversation these days then something like this might be offered by you: Evil is not something we can, with spiritual integrity, or moral integrity, attach as a label to others and not in some sense also to ourselves.

Maybe we can express it this way: It's evil to call other people evil. When people begin to call other people evil they put themselves on a slippery slope of dehumanization----we have seen how that can happen and what can happen in those cases----the Holocaust being history's most tragic example of this.

So that's my first approach to this BIG WORD... as with all our BIG WORDS, humility, humility, humility.

A second approach is informed by our text today and it's essentially this-----evil has met its match in Jesus the Christ.

Too often I hear evil talked about as an inevitability, as something beyond our control, something against which humanity is helpless, something in which humanity is “caught.”

THAT'S what evil would WANT us to think right?

Jesus of Nazareth lived and died and was risen to disabuse humanity of this notion.

“Be silent and come out of him!” That’s all Jesus had to say to the unclean spirit. The unclean spirit was way overmatched, out of its league.

Jesus’ mere presence set the unclean spirit to tremble in panic mode.

When evil meets the Kingdom of God, when evil comes into God’s sphere of influence, it begins to gasp for air.

Our text offers us a snapshot of the transformation we are invited to undergo in our own lives with Christ-----he would, with our consent, turn OUR will-full hearts into willing hearts, turn our hearts of stone into hearts of flesh, cast out every darkness in us with his light.

And he would make of us a people who would, with his grace and wisdom and deeply grounded serenity filling us, address evil as he did; with loving presence, with soulful authority, and finally on Good Friday, not by meeting violence with violence but by non-violent” willing endurance” as Bonhoeffer says.

When we arrive then, at the cross and find our way to Easter morning, what begins to dawn on the Church is a growing and stunning and previously unimaginable conviction that history has turned, material history has turned, a new age has dawned.

Evil’s most intimidating calling card, death itself, has been shown to be disarmed, impotent.

Evil is on its way out of our world.

This is the proclamation of the Church and it is the work of the church, to bear the power of the resurrection in us individually and collectively. Those are Paul’s words, not mine. The same power by which Jesus was raised is in us.

The Christian spiritual life is essentially about our prayerful consent to this power, the power of grace, to rise in us...

...and to silence evil with love.

SHAPED BY GOD'S WORD-GRACED AT CHRIST'S TABLE

NORTH OAK CHRISTIAN CHURCH-DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

January 13, 2019

In Jesus' Name, Greetings!

Music for Gathering

Holy are you and blessed be your name gracious God
SOURCE OF ALL MERCIES. FOUNT OF LOVE BEYOND ALL MEASURE
You fill us with your love as glorious as the sun
EVERY DARKNESS IS OVERCOME WITH LIGHT

Lighting of the Candles

"When God comes into our midst, it is to upset the status quo." Kathleen Norris

9 Come Christians Join to Sing

Sharing Christ's Peace

115 There's Something About That Name

The Morning Prayer and Musical Response

Silence

"Most of us don't realize how united we are with God." Gerald May

Children's Circle

All children thru 5th grade are welcome to come forward. A small outreach offering will be collected for our money jar. Following this time of sharing and prayer, children may attend their very own "Worship and Wonder" time together in our classroom annex. Child care is offered for infants and toddlers but they are also welcome in the sanctuary.

Prayer for Illumination

Healing, Sovereign God, overmatch our resistant ears with your transforming speech
TOUCH OUR YEARNINGS BY YOUR WORDS, WE ARE READY TO LISTEN. AMEN.

THE GOSPEL MARK 1: 21-28

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end, amen amen.

The Meditation "To Silence Evil" Rev. Rob Carr

May Your face shine upon us as You teach us of love, Compassionate One. We weep over our wounded world, our earth ravaged by greedy, insensitive hands. Your Love is the great transformer, burning away false ways of the past, and filling the heart with Light.

**Awaken us to Your Indwelling Presence that we might envision
the beauty that Love brings forth. Amen**

Silent and spoken personal prayers of thanksgiving confession, intercession

Vocal Solo "Ballade de Jesus-Christ" Jeff Nunn

The Offering

**Praise God from Whom all blessings flow, Praise God all creatures here below
Praise God above ye heavenly host, Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost**

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world.
As part of the one body of Christ, we welcome all to the Lord's Table as God has welcomed us.

413 Take Our Bread

Welcome to the Table

Holy God we offer into your loving care
OUR HEARTS, OUR MINDS, OUR WHOLE LIVES
We yield, in faith and trust
TO THE GRACE OF YOUR SPIRIT IN THE DEPTHS OF OUR BEING

Ever Living God
YOU SEARCH US AND KNOW US
Wash away our fears, flood our hearts with Your Spirit
FILL US WITH THE CHRIST LIGHT NO DARKNESS CAN EXTINGUISH

The Words of Institution

The Communion Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever, amen.

Following the Lord's Prayer, please come forward by rows to receive the loaf and the cup.

The cup is non-alcoholic by choice of the congregation

Gluten free crackers are available on the table for those who prefer this option

Children also celebrate communion weekly as part of "Worship and Wonder"

633 Lead On O Cloud of Presence

Grant us your light O Lord

**THAT THE DARKNESS IN OUR HEARTS, BEING WHOLLY PASSED AWAY,
WE MAY COME AT LAST TO THE LIGHT WHICH IS CHRIST, AMEN.**

TO OUR GUESTS----WELCOME!

SHAPED BY GOD'S WORD AND GRACED AT CHRIST'S TABLE

WE WALK HUMBLY, LOVE DEEPLY, LIVE SIMPLY, AND SERVE JOYFULLY

We are delighted to include you today. Your presence and participation is a gift to us all. We hope you experience among us the warm spirit of our family of faith and the gracious touch of Christ upon your life. Refreshments and welcoming conversation are available before and after worship in the Community Room just down the hall. More information about NOCC and the Disciples of Christ is available via Facebook and these websites

www.nocckc.org www.kcdisciples.org www.disciples.org

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

THIS WEEK

Today NOCC Youth to MLK Event
Monday 6PM Troop 900
Monday 630PM NOCC Elders
Tuesday 945AM Men's Bible Group
Tuesday 6PM Pack 900
Wednesday 7PM Music Ministry
Thursday 6PM Girl Scouts
Saturday 9AM Centering Prayer

UPCOMING

SOUPER BOWL SOUP FEST
SUNDAY FEBRUARY 3 FOLLOWING WORSHIP

INTRODUCTION TO CENTERING PRAYER—LED BY KEVIN KELLEY
SATURDAY FEBRUARY 9 9AM TO NOON

SPRING RETREAT AT MARILLAC CENTER IN LEAVENWORTH
FRIDAY—SUNDAY APRIL 26–28

Keep these items in mind as you consider the remarkable ministry
of our friends at CHERITH BROOK.
Blankets Blankets Blankets! Tennis Shoes, Cold Meds, Band-aids, Bike Locks,
Gloves, Hats, Chapstick
Cherith Brook Local Honey for Sale! Contact Eric 816-241-8047