

Lessons for Second Sunday in Lent

February 21, 2016

Psalm 4 (*antiphon: v. 8*) ~ *David rebukes those who turn away from God and seeks God's mercy.*

Jeremiah 26:8-15 ~ *The people didn't want to hear the one message that could save them from destruction.*

Philippians 3:17 – 4:1 ~ *As citizens of heaven, we live in a way that calls people to the cross of Christ.*

Luke 13:31-35 ~ *Nothing would turn Jesus aside from His mission to cover His people with God's love.*

GATHERING THE TEXTS: When You are Sure You are Right, You'd Better Be!

The people of Jerusalem were ready to kill Jeremiah because he warned them of God's coming destruction. They were so sure they were right that they ignored Jeremiah's repeated warning: "The Lord has sent me to speak against this city." In Jesus' day the people of Jerusalem were sure they were right and would not listen to Jesus' message. They were willing to kill him rather than admit they were wrong. St. Paul reminded the Philippians and us that sometimes the way we live is at odds with God's gift of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. To be sure we are right, we need to be right with God through the cross of Christ.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE: Lord God, give me a humble heart that willingly hears your instruction so that I may learn from your word and so be renewed and reformed to live according to the pattern of your love expressed in Jesus Christ my Savior. Amen.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT: As citizens of heaven, we use the earthly goods God has given us to represent His love for people still caught up in the shameful ways of this world. Our lives show God's love as we point people to the cross of Christ, where God covers our sin and transforms our hearts with the promise that in Christ He will transform even our bodies to be like Him.

OFFERING PRAYER: Lord, bless these earthly goods to serve Your purpose from above
So people trapped in sin and shame may come to know Your love. Amen.

CONVICTION AND COMFORT: We become defensive and self-righteous when we are living contrary to God's Word. Such a course will bring us to destruction, just as it did the people of Jerusalem in Jeremiah's day. We have a message that needs to be delivered to turn people from their disastrous ways and call them to God's love in Christ. Instead of justifying our earthly ways, God has justified us in Christ Jesus and made us citizens of His heavenly kingdom.