

Jesu Juva

“Learn and Live!”

Text: Isaiah 50:4-9 (with Third Passion Reading)

There has never been a time when the Christian faith and life has been without opposition. From the moment our first parents were created and placed into the Garden of Eden, Satan was there. And you know what he was doing? Teaching. He was teaching lies. Satan taught Adam and Eve to not trust their good and kind Father who had created them and given them everything they could ever want. He filled their ears with what was not good and not true and led them in the way of death and down the highway to hell. And when they believed the father of lies instead of the Father of truth, the result was shame. They were ashamed of themselves, ashamed before their good and gracious Father-Creator, and consumed with the pangs of hell. For their sin had indeed separated them from God.

But we heard tonight something very different than all of that. The Servant of the Lord that Isaiah has been teaching us about was taught not by Satan but by God. His ears drink in the Word of the Lord. He learns the truth. And with that Word that has entered His ears and found a home in His heart, the Servant is also able to teach. And so we later hear of a twelve year old Jesus in the Temple, surrounded by those who were the teachers, teaching them. And they were amazed.

So what, we might ask, did He learn? This Servant, this Jesus. The Word of God, the word of truth, yes. But more than that - He learned what all the Word of God is about: the promises of God and the faithfulness of God. Against the lies of Satan and the lies of the world and the lies of the well-intentioned but misguided religious leaders of His day, Jesus learned that His Father is trustworthy and true, that His Father provides and protects, that His Father is gracious and merciful. Always.

And that learning He put into action. The Servant-Jesus commits Himself completely to His Father. And so when He is arrested, when He is put on trial, when they begin *striking His back* and *pulling out His beard* and *spitting in His face*, **He turns not back. His face is set like a flint** - not because He is so strong and determined, but because of the Word of truth He has learned and the faith it has given. That no matter what this world may bring upon Him - even death - **He will not be put to shame; He will be vindicated**. So *adversaries*? *Contenders*? They are nothing. **Behold, the Lord God helps me**, the Servant says. And that is enough. *More* than enough.

In contrast to that, then, is you and me. You and me and Peter and Judas and the Jewish leaders and all men. For not in the footsteps of Jesus do we walk, hearing and learning and believing the truth, but in the footsteps of our first parents. That is why we sin - *we do not believe*. We do not believe our Father will provide, will protect, will sustain, will

love, will help, will do good to us in any and every time of our lives. We believe the lie. And so Israel turned back. Peter turned back. We turn back. We're not resolute, but get blown and buffeted about by the troubles of this world. And not really sure how things will turn out we look to make our own way. But that's really just looking for life on a road that leads only to death.

So repent . . . and listen . . . to the Servant. For, Isaiah tells us of the Servant, *The Lord God has given me the tongue of those who are taught, that I may know how to sustain with a word him who is weary*. Him who is weary - that's us. Weary, exhausted, beat up and beat down by sin and the challenges of this life and this world and its lies. Weary.

But the Servant gives us His Word to teach and sustain us. His Word of forgiveness, His Word of promise, His Word of assurance, His Word of truth. His Word which says *Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest* (Matt 11:28). That you may rest in Him who battled the devil and won. Rest in Him who bore your sin and failure for you. Rest in Him who took on hell and rose triumphant and victorious. He was shamed by man but vindicated by God, and now through His Word does the same *for you* and gives you all that you need. That you believe. Believe that there is nothing that can separate you from His love (Romans 8:37-39). Believe that all things are working together for your good (Romans 8:28). Believe that all the promises of your Father are trustworthy and true. For you. So much so that even a cross of shame can be turned into a throne of glory.

And so we see in the Servant not just an example, but *proof* of God's faithfulness. He is the One who relied on God's promises, fulfilled God's promises **for** you, and now gives God's promises **to** you. That you not *wear out like a garment*, like those who oppose the Servant, but receive that garment that will never wear out, the robe of Christ's righteousness, and the life that will never end.

So there's a saying in the world that goes: *Live and learn*. But the Servant shows us tonight something better than that: to *learn and live*. Learn of Him and His Word, and then you can live, and will live, forever.

In the Name of the Father and of the (+) Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.