

WORSHIP AT HOME

Happy New Year

Bad News

Bad News sticks to us like Post-it Notes on the calendar of our lives.

Good News

God pulls back the veil between heaven and earth.

God pours his Holy Spirit on Jesus while on earth.

God says, "This is my son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased.

God's Will

Repentance means we have a lot of Bad News to unlearn in order to experience the Good News.

The Way of the Lord.

Religion teaches us knowledge of God. Jesus reveals God as an experience. Those who read the Bible get knowledge. Those who are led by the Holy Spirit take the journey. The wise person does both.



Bad News Sticks to us like Post-It-Notes



The Blessed

Imagine Jesus coming out of the water of the Jordan River. Do you see the Second day of Creation?

And God said, “Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water.” **7** So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. And it was so. **8** God called the vault “sky.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

Friends, the Dove symbolizes Peace. Jesus makes Peace with Sin. The Holy Spirit leads us to make Peace with Death. The Father makes Peace with Life -Eternal

“Blessed is the Peacemaker, for they shall be called Children of God.”

Prayer

Father, we know how to count facts, figures, rights, and wrongs. We know how to divide ourselves from “those people.” Bless us in Christ Jesus with ears to hear your words of mercy and eyes to see you wrap us in Grace. Teach us how to count experiences of You with us as blessings. Amen

Hearing the Word.

The Baptism of Jesus

13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. **14** But John tried to deter him, saying,



“I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?”

15 Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.” Then John consented.

16 As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. **17** And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

Experiencing the Word

Linda called. I recognized her voice, but had difficulty discerning her words. Her cries and sobs muffled her words. Love that is patient listens to understand the other, not have the answer.

She had just gotten her energy back. She was recovering from surgery, chemo therapy, and radiation. When it looked like life was returning to normal she received more Bad News. Her husband, Walt, died in a car crash.

Bad News sticks to us like Post-it Notes on the calendar of our lives. Bad News blinds our eyes. Bad News demands all our attention. Bad News deafens our ears to Good News.

May we take a moment to look at the calendar of our lives. Dare we read aloud the Post-it Notes! Can we bear the sight and sound of our Bad News?

- God, am I good enough to enter into heaven?
- God, why do bad things happen to good people.
- God, what did I do that you would make me suffer _____?
- God, teach me to hate sin but love the sinner.
- God, I am glad that I am not like my sinful neighbor.

Hear the Good News! Jesus suffered, like us. Jesus died, like us. Jesus rose again to New Life on earth. Are you ready to rise to newness of life. (Romans 6:1-4)

Before we get all tangled up in Baptism. Long before we debate how Jesus fulfills all righteousness. Let us stop. Let us watch, wait, and listen to God.

- God pulled back the veil between heaven and earth.
- God poured His Holy Spirit from Heaven onto Jesus on earth.
- God said, This is my son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased.

Hear the Good News! God is with us in our Bad News. God is with us in our Bad News pulling back the veil between heaven and earth. God is with us pouring his Spirit out on all

people. All the while God is saying, You are my daughter, you are my son with you I am well pleased. Remember this is what Mary heard. This is the Good News that Joseph heard as “disgraceful” Bad News.

Like Joseph we have learned that our righteousness comes from Keeping the Law of Moses. Repentance means we have a lot to unlearn!

Like the people of Jerusalem we have learned that our righteousness comes from Presidents, Kings, and Religious Leaders. Repentance means we have a lot to unlearn.

Like Herod we have learned that our righteousness comes from being in control of power with authority. Repentance means we have a lot to unlearn.

Jesus tells a parable about unlearning Bad News to receive Good News.

3 “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? **4** How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? **5** You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.

What is the plank in our eye? It is the Bad News that binds us from seeing the Good News of Christ Jesus. It is the Bad News that prevents us from hearing God say, “with you I am well pleased.”

1. It is Righteousness that comes from the Law of Moses.
2. It is Righteousness that comes from religious and government leaders.
3. It is Righteousness that comes from our desire for control, power, and authority over one another.

How do we get the plank out of our eye? We look into Scripture to see what pleased God about Jesus. We listen to God not to reply with the “right answers”, but to experience God’s Love.

The Prophet tells us how to please God. Seek justice. Love Mercy. Walk humbly with God. Jesus did! Will we?

Benediction

I believe in God the Father. Give me ears to experience God’s still small voice.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his Son. Give see eyes to experience the way Jesus' Mercy makes Peace with Sin and Death.

I believe in the Holy Spirit. Create in me a pure heart that experiences God with me, in me, and working through me.

I believe in the Church as the Body of Christ on earth. Lead me in the way of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit so our neighbors will know us a Children of God. Amen