

November 13, 2022

23rd Sunday after Pentecost

Luke 21:5-19

The question that arises after reading this passage might be, why is life so hard? That is the question we have been asked to think about. Life does seem to be filled with struggles, challenges and temptations. However, I got to thinking and asked myself, why is life good and beautiful? People have tried to answer the first question for five thousand years. Unfortunately they pinned it on an apple, a snake and a woman.

Strangely enough we need the hard times to make the good times stick out in our memories. Many of us do not realize that we are living in the good old times now. When we do look back on the good old times, they were not that great. The hard times and the good times are part of this life. They actually have a purpose. They shape who we are as people. The hard times and the good times still existed after Jesus's resurrection! God did not eliminate hard times after we were saved. We were saved from sin and not human experiences. Hard times and good times have a purpose.

Many times we are the designers of our hard times and good times. There are times we have no control what comes our way. Ask anyone in Port Aux Basque. The things we do have control over is how we react to the hard times and good times.

I was listening to a pastor talk to a group of prisoners about, why life is hard? A tough audience for sure. This was an interesting lecture. He said the key is to keep a healthy and balanced perspective. He then went on and told a story of a woman who lost her son to suicide. Her son was diagnosed as suicidal for six years. She expressed her anger toward the pastor about the tragedy. She felt her boy's life was a waste. The pastor told her that her son was a hero. This was not what she wanted to hear. It was something she needed to hear. The pastor told her that her son had 2190 days of victory. Each day of those six years or 2190 days that her son did not commit suicide was a great victory. Each day that he did not take his life made him stronger. The pastor told her that she could not define her son's life by one day of weakness. Especially since he had 2190 days of victory.

This lady was not really convinced. So the pastor went on to tell a story about a group of soldiers. They were defending their city from an attacking army of superior strength. These soldiers defended their city for six long hard years. Each day for six years they repulsed the attacking army. Then one day in the sixth year the ammunition ran out. Their city fell but these men were looked upon as heroes.

Similar to a person who led a life of debauchery, lying, cheating and stealing. Their life has been bad. Then one day they do a good act that stands out against the rest of their life. That one good act does not redefine their life as virtuous. The opposite is also true. The person who has led a good, honest and clean life. Then had to do something bad. That one bad act does not redefine their life as bad. Keeping a healthy and balanced perspective is the key. How we react to situations is how we define a saint. They persist in trying to do good things in their life.

This morning Jesus is warning the disciples of the destruction of the temple. That the Romans will destroy Jerusalem. This will be a terrible thing but they must persist in their faith. The Jewish religious focus will shift from the temple to local Synagogues. That is how they responded to the destruction of the temple. Persecutions will come, but do not worry God will tell you what you need to say to defend yourself.

Good times and hard times are part of the human experience. Sometimes we have control over them. Other times they are beyond our control. We only have control over how we react to these situations. Try to rely on a healthy and balanced perspective. God bless and take care, D