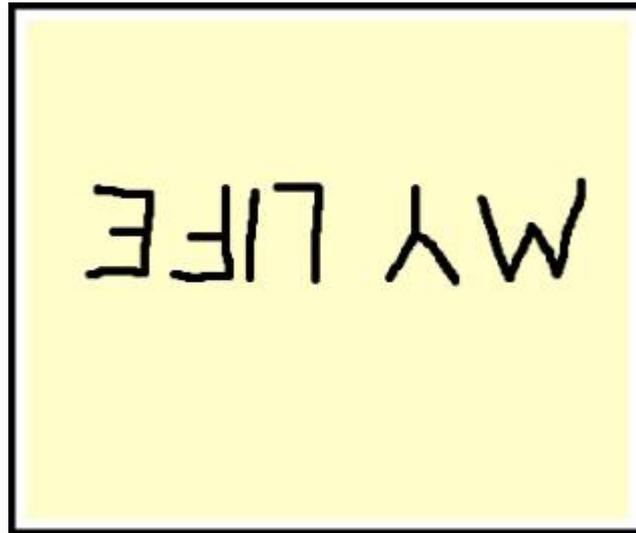




Third Sunday after Pentecost Sunday, June 10th, 2018

Putting 'the Sabbath' in Place A Kind of Madness



Last week we began the journey into the long period after Pentecost; “Ordinary time”. Our readings awakened us with a kick, as they centred upon the basis social charter of both the Hebrew and Christian worlds, grounded in the idea of the Sabbath: a message of reform, a message of liberation and freedom from systems that dominate and oppress. Our idea last week which forms the foundation for Christian social ethics is that people matter more than systems; that systems exist to serve people, not people, systems.

Today, we continue this theme, the theme of Sabbath; but this time through the lens of the Hebrew reading, where the prophet Samuel warns the Hebrew people from wanting to establish a society structured around kings and royal courts, hierarchy and privilege. The Gospel, also follows the theme in a different way, addressing the question of “madness”: where Jesus is considered to be mad, even though, it is in fact the other way around. We fail to see that we live in ‘an upside down’ world, because we have become so accustomed to it.

GATHERING

Announcements

Greeting

In the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit
Amen

The Lord be with you
And also with you

Approaching God through Today's Psalm (*Psalm 138*)

We human beings are inveterate snobs: we constantly construct our world according to 'pecking orders', hierarchies. Central to the biblical world view, the social charter, is the perception that Yahweh is the opposite. Rather than being upwardly-mobile, Yahweh's social project grounded in the idea of Sabbath, is toward those 'at the bottom of the heap': "*Even though you are so high above, you care for the lowly, and the proud cannot hide from you*". What is remarkable in this psalm is that it is a royal psalm, a psalm of the royal courts. It is most unusual and counter-intuitive to have royalty praising a God of the poor, especially in the ancient east, where kings enjoyed absolute and tyrannical power.

138 I thank you, LORD, with all my heart;

I sing praise to you before the gods.

² I face your holy Temple,

bow down, and praise your name

because of your constant love and faithfulness,

because you have shown that your name and your commands are supreme.^[b]

³ You answered me when I called to you;

with your strength you strengthened me.

⁴ All the kings in the world will praise you, LORD,

because they have heard your promises.

⁵ ***They will sing about what you have done and about your great glory.***

⁶ Even though you are so high above,

you care for the lowly,

and the proud cannot hide from you.

⁷ When I am surrounded by troubles,

you keep me safe.

You oppose my angry enemies

and save me by your power.

**⁸ You will do everything you have promised;
LORD, your love is eternal.
Complete the work that you have begun.**

Hymn: I danced in the morning (TiS 242, Lord of the Dance, Sydney Carter)

Introduction to the theme: Putting the Sabbath in Place: A Kind of Madness.

A Prayer from Today's Gospel: "He has a Demon" where everyone appears to be mad in an 'Upside-Down World'

Too busy to eat!
The crowd insist, make demands;
they press upon him.

His foes malign him.
They say he has a demon,
he is mad.

His family, too,
are worried. They come to him,
try to take him home.

He gathers his friends,
and laughs: *a kingdom divided
surely cannot stand!*

Who is the mad one?

His mother arrives
with his brothers, calls him out.
He doesn't respond.

Looking at the crowd
he asks, 'Who is my mother,
who are my brothers?'

***You are my mother
and my brothers, when you do
what God is asking!***

The Peace

A Story: “The Tears of Lady Meng”. This is one of the four great tales of Chinese history. It has had many variations over the centuries with a range of different meanings. This latest version, is a story of protest against a world where social systems crush people. In it, in the time of the Liu Xiang Han dynasty, Qi Liang, weeps over her husband, killed by forced-labour, as he helps to build the Great Wall of China. It is a subversive story about injustice, a story of protest against unfair state-power; something that Confucian officials could not see because they were oblivious to the common people. It is a story that, on the other hand, sits well with the biblical world view, that insists that God is one who resists powerful cliques.

The children leave for Sunday Morning Group (SMG)

BREAKING OPEN THE WORD

Some Insights into the Hebrew and Christian Idea of Upturning the World’s Madness through what is considered “God’s Madness”

The accusation that Jesus drives out demons by means of demons is a cosmic explanation of the idea of the procedure of driving out violence by means of violence. This does not succeed in getting rid of violence, because Satan cannot expel himself and would never willingly allow his domain to be split. Only when he has been bound, as in the presence of the kingdom of God, can his realm be plundered. The exorcisms of Jesus, are therefore, genuine expulsions of violence by divine power and not just another turn of the screw inside a violent system.

René Girard

A just God is “reasonable;” a just God makes “sense;” but a God who is always eager to supply more “forgiveness,” more “grace” than we ever imagined possible, is a kind of “madness.” But it is a “madness” that allows the world to get back up, start over, find hope, move on, begin something new. The accusation against Jesus was that he was

either “crazy” or in league with “Satan.” The cause for this reaction was his audacity to announce— sins are being forgiven! And to warn that to reject such grace would be “unpardonable!”

At the heart of the Biblical witness is an irruption, an upsurge a certain “madness/craziness;” Jesus affirms boldly that God forgives freely, eagerly and always excessively. This is what keeps the world “unsettled” and open to “what exceeds it.”

Sacra Conversazione

1 Samuel 8:4-20 (Good News Translation)

Pam Mayrick

At the end of Samuel’s life, Israel stands in a precarious position. On the one hand, his two sons, whom he had appointed judges, were corrupt and did not share their father’s good reputation (1 Sam 8:1-3). On the other hand, the Philistines still posed a military threat to Israel and Israel’s success at withstanding that threat depended on the faithfulness of those leading the people (1 Sam 7: 5-14). All this meant that Israel’s prospects after Samuel departed would not be good. It is little wonder then that the elders come to Samuel requesting that he appoint a king ‘like other nations’ over them. Samuel’s response however is reserved. Their desire for a king, for royalty, betrays everything that the memory of the Exodus – freedom from kings – means. The drive for social equality would in all likelihood be terminated. We hear that nevertheless the people get their way. They pay a high price.

⁴ Then all the leaders of Israel met together, went to Samuel in Ramah, ⁵ and said to him, “Look, you are getting old and your sons don't follow your example. So then, appoint a king to rule over us, so that we will have a king, as other countries have.” ⁶ Samuel was displeased with their request for a king; so he prayed to the LORD, ⁷ and the LORD said, “Listen to everything the people say to you. You are not the one they have rejected; I am the one they have rejected as their king. ⁸ Ever since I brought them out of Egypt, they have turned away from me and worshiped other gods; and now they are doing to you what they have always done to me. ⁹ So then, listen to them, but give them strict warnings and explain how their kings will treat them.”

¹⁰ Samuel told the people who were asking him for a king everything that the LORD had said to him. ¹¹ “This is how your king will treat you,” Samuel explained. “He will make soldiers of your sons; some of them will serve in his war chariots, others in his cavalry, and others will run before his chariots. ¹² He will make some of them officers in charge of a thousand men, and others in charge of fifty men. Your sons will have

to plough his fields, harvest his crops, and make his weapons and the equipment for his chariots. ¹³ Your daughters will have to make perfumes for him and work as his cooks and his bakers. ¹⁴ He will take your best fields, vineyards, and olive groves, and give them to his officials. ¹⁵ He will take a tenth of your grain and of your grapes for his court officers and other officials. ¹⁶ He will take your servants and your best cattle^[a] and donkeys, and make them work for him. ¹⁷ He will take a tenth of your flocks. And you yourselves will become his slaves. ¹⁸ When that time comes, you will complain bitterly because of your king, whom you yourselves chose, but the LORD will not listen to your complaints.”

¹⁹ The people paid no attention to Samuel, but said, “No! We want a king, ²⁰ so that we will be like other nations, with our own king to rule us and to lead us out to war and to fight our battles.”

11:14-15

¹⁴ And Samuel said to them, “Let us all go to Gilgal and once more proclaim Saul as our king.” ¹⁵ So they all went to Gilgal, and there at the holy place they proclaimed Saul king. They offered fellowship sacrifices, and Saul and all the people of Israel celebrated the event.

The word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Mark 3:20-35 (Good News Translation)

Rob Mayrick

This is a story about madness: but who is it who is really mad? On the one hand, Jesus' family consider Jesus to be out of his mind, as do the religious leaders. But Jesus suggests that it is the religious leaders who are mad, as they seriously misread the significance of what he is doing.

²⁰ Then Jesus went home. Again, such a large crowd gathered that Jesus and his disciples had no time to eat. ²¹ When his family heard about it, they set out to take charge of him, because people were saying, “He's gone mad!”

²² Some teachers of the Law who had come from Jerusalem were saying, “He has Beelzebul in him! It is the chief of the demons who gives him the power to drive them out.”

²³ So Jesus called them to him and spoke to them in parables: “How can Satan drive out Satan? ²⁴ If a country divides itself into groups

which fight each other, that country will fall apart. ²⁵ If a family divides itself into groups which fight each other, that family will fall apart. ²⁶ So if Satan's kingdom divides into groups, it cannot last, but will fall apart and come to an end.

²⁷ “No one can break into a strong man's house and take away his belongings unless he first ties up the strong man; then he can plunder his house.

²⁸ “I assure you that people can be forgiven all their sins and all the evil things they may say.^[a] ²⁹ But whoever says evil things against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven, because he has committed an eternal sin.” (³⁰ Jesus said this because some people were saying, “He has an evil spirit in him.”)

³¹ Then Jesus' mother and brothers arrived. They stood outside the house and sent in a message, asking for him. ³² A crowd was sitting around Jesus, and they said to him, “Look, your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, and they want you.”

³³ Jesus answered, “Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?” ³⁴ He looked at the people sitting around him and said, “Look! Here are my mother and my brothers! ³⁵ Whoever does what God wants is my brother, my sister, my mother.”

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you Lord Christ

Hymn: The Lord is my Shepherd (TiS 659, My Shepherd, Brian Boniwell)

Some thoughts...

Offering

Doxology

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
praise him, all creatures here below,
praise him above, ye heavenly host,
praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.***

Prayer of Dedication

Prayers of the People

Colin Bradford

The one who prays, after a series of petitions, says, "Raise us Lord" and the people respond, "To be a community that celebrates life".

Lord's Prayer

Let us say the Lord's Prayer

***Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.***

***Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.***

***For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.***

하늘에 계신 우리 아버지여
이름이 거룩히 여김을 받으시오며
나라이 임하옵시며
뜻이 하늘에서 이룬 것 같이
땅에서도 이루어지이다.
오늘날 우리에게 일용할 양식을 주옵시고
우리가 우리에게
죄 지은 자를 사하여 준 것 같이
우리 죄를 사하여 주옵시고
우리를 시험에 들게 하지 마옵시고
다만 악에서 구하옵소서

대개 나라와 권세와 영광이
아버지께 영원히 있사옵나이다. 아멘

Hymn: Christ be our Light – Bernadette Farrell

Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
Light for the world to see.

Chorus:

***Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light! Shine in your Church
Gathered today.***

Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power to save us
Make us your living voice.

Chorus

Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
Shared until all are fed.

Chorus

Longing for shelter people are homeless.
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering others,
Walls made of living stone.

Chorus

Many the gifts, many the people,
Many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
Making your kingdom come.

Chorus

Blessing and Sending Out

Christ is risen!

Let us celebrate life!

Our service has ended

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord

In the name of Christ

Amen

Sung Blessing: You shall go out with joy (TiS 755, Trees of the Field, Steffi Greiser Ruben)

***You shall go out with joy
and be led forth in peace
and the mountains and hills shall break forth in singing
There'll be shouts of joy
and the trees of the field, shall clap, shall clap their hands
and the trees of the field shall clap their hands
and the trees of the field shall clap their hands
and the trees of the field shall clap their hands
and you'll go out with joy.***

(twice)

Musical Postlude

Pianist:

Rosemary Osborne