

Sermon Series: Growing Pains 8/6/2000----Lord of Life Lutheran Church

Title: "Growing through Misunderstanding"

Text: Psalm 140

Introduction: *Compounded Comedy of Misunderstanding*

Theme: God's word and his redeeming power through Christ come to give you perspective, power, and perseverance as God grows you up through this season of the pain of misunderstanding in your life.

Growing through the time of misunderstanding's escalation (vss.1-5)

- C Understanding why misunderstanding seems to get worse before it gets better
 - David writing in the midst of his conflict with Saul who suspiciously plotted David's demise as successor to throne
 - 1.Planning of evil thoughts in the heart out of fear of ignorance and personal rebellion (2)
 - 2.Lead to the poison words meant to hurt and destroy (3)
 - 3.Lead to acts of violence to cover up rebellion (4)
 - 4.Lead to a conspiracy to set traps to trip up (5) and self-justifying acts under the cover of public opinion
 - People confuse perspective and opinion with Divine mandate
 1. **Illus.: PERSPECTIVE**
 2. ***"If the only tool you have is a hammer, you tend to see every problem as a nail."***
 - People in ignorance perpetuate fear of what they don't understand
 1. They allow Satan to create imaginary phantom/demons
 2. **Illus.: MAXIM ABOUT MISUNDERSTANDING**
 - God allows the time of trial to train and grow me up for important divinely given responsibilities ahead
"But he knows the way that I take; when he has tested me, I will come forth as gold. My feet will closely follow his steps." Job 23: 10
- C What God promises to do for us in the middle of the sea of misunderstanding
 - Rescue (2) me from the helpless situation
 1. Word has meaning of pluck me out of plunderer's reach—help me when I try
 - Keep (2) me hidden in the protective life of Christ
 - 1.**Illus.: Little child's "Now I lay me prayer....take/keep confused"**
 - 2."***Set your sites on things above...for you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.***"Col 3: 3-4
 3. ***"Hide me from the conspiracy of the wicked, from that noisy crowd of evildoers." Psalm 64: 2***
 - Guard (4) me so that nothing can take me away from God or His love
 - 1."***Not any created thing shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.***"Romans 8:39

Understanding what you can and should be doing during the misunderstanding (vss. 6-13)

- C Growing in your role of as intercessor rather than gossip
 - Pray for God's mercy not his sympathy (6)
 - It is alright for us to bring our complaint to God, but we need to get out of the way of him doing something about it
 - 1.At first glance it appears as if David is maliciously praying "against" those who have misunderstood/harmed him
 - 2.Move from praying about (close to gossip) to praying for the "wicked"
 - Be willing to be humble as God is bringing about a humbling in your adversary
 - 1."***God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.***" Psalm 138: 6
 2. **Read and print Romans 12: 17-21**—similar to verse 10 of Psalm 140—purpose is to bring back to God not prove your point
- C Growing in your relationship with the Father through Jesus
 - In trusting that your situation was in his care and control all along (12)
 - In learning to give thanks to God for the solution and his plan long before you see it (13)
 1. ***"Be worried for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."*** Philippians 4: 7
 2. **ILLUS.: YET I SHALL PRAISE HIM**

COMPOUNDED COMEDY OF MISUNDERSTANDING

Monday: "The Rev. A.J. Jones has one color TV set for sale. Telephone 626-1313 after 7 p.m. and ask for Mrs. Donnelley who lives with him, cheap."

Tuesday: "We regret any embarrassment caused to Rev. Jones by a typographical error in yesterday's paper. The ad should have read: 'The Rev. A.J. Jones has one color TV set for sale, cheap...Telephone 626-1313 and ask for Mrs. Donnelley, who lives with him after 7 p.m.'"

Wednesday: "The Rev. A.J. Jones informs us that he has received several annoying telephone calls because of an incorrect ad in yesterday's paper. It should have read: 'The Rev. A.J. Jones has one color TV set for sale, cheap. Telephone 626-1313 after 7 p.m. and ask for Mrs. Donnelley who loves with him.'"

Thursday: "Please take notice that I, the Rev. A.J. Jones, have no color TV set for sale; I have smashed it. Don't call 626-1313 anymore. I have not been carrying on with Mrs. Donnelley. She was, until yesterday, my housekeeper."

Friday: "Wanted: a housekeeper. Usual housekeeping duties. Good pay. Love in, Rev. A.J. Jones. Telephone 626-1313."

PERSPECTIVE

An airline pilot flying over the southeastern U.S. called the local tower and said, "We are passing over at 35,000--give us a time check." The tower said, "What airline are you?" "What difference does it make? I just want the time." replied the pilot. The tower responded, "Oh, it makes a lot of difference. If you are TransWorld Airline or Pan Am, it is 1600. If you are United or Delta, it is 4 o'clock. If you are Southern Airways, the little hand is on the 4 and the big hand is on the 12. If you are Skyway Airlines--it's Thursday." Peter Dieson, *The Priority of Knowing God*, p.91

MAXIM ABOUT MISUNDERSTANDING

Famous Trial Lawyer Clarence Darrow: "I have suffered from being misunderstood, but I would have suffered a lot more if I had been understood." Swindoll, *Three Steps*, pp. 25ff

YET I SHALL PRAISE HIM

Margaret Sangster Phippen wrote that in the mid 1950s her father, British minister W. E. Sangster, began to notice some uneasiness in his throat and a dragging in his leg. When he went to the doctor, he found that he had an incurable disease that caused progressive muscular atrophy. His muscles would gradually waste away, his voice would fail, his throat would soon become unable to swallow.

Sangster threw himself into his work in British home missions, figuring he could still write and he would have even more time for prayer. "Let me stay in the struggle Lord," he pleaded. "I don't mind if I can no longer be a general, but give me just a regiment to lead." He wrote articles and books, and helped organize prayer cells throughout England. "I'm only in the kindergarten of suffering," he told people who pitied him.

Gradually Sangster's legs became useless. His voice went completely. But he could still hold a pen, shakily. On Easter morning, just a few weeks before he died, he wrote a letter to his daughter. In it, he said, "It is terrible to wake up on Easter morning and have no voice to shout, 'He is risen!'--but it would be still more terrible to have a voice and not want to shout."

Psalm 140:1-13

For the choir leader; a psalm by David.

Rescue me from evil people, O LORD.

Keep me safe from violent people.

²They plan evil things in their hearts.

They start fights every day.

³They make their tongues as sharp as a snake's fang.

Their lips hide the venom of poisonous snakes.

⁴Protect me from the hands of wicked people, O LORD.

Keep me safe from violent people.

They try to trip me.

⁵Arrogant people have laid a trap for me.

They have spread out a net with ropes.

They have set traps for me along the road.

⁶I said to the LORD, "You are my God."

O LORD, open your ears to hear my plea for pity.

⁷O LORD Almighty, the strong one who saves me,
you have covered my head in the day of battle.

⁸O LORD, do not give wicked people what they want.

Do not let their evil plans succeed,
or they will become arrogant.

⁹Let the heads of those who surround me
be covered with their own threats.

¹⁰Let burning coals fall on them.

Let them be thrown into a pit, never to rise again.

¹¹Do not let slanderers prosper on earth.

Let evil hunt down violent people with one blow after another.

¹²I know that the LORD will defend the rights of those who are oppressed
and the cause of those who are needy.

¹³Indeed, righteous people will give thanks to your name.

Decent people will live in your presence.

[GW]

Romans 12:17-21

Don't pay people back with evil for the evil they do to you. Focus your thoughts on those things that are considered noble. ¹⁸As much as it is possible, live in peace with everyone. ¹⁹Don't take revenge, dear friends. Instead, let God's anger take care of it. After all, Scripture says, "I alone have the right to take revenge. I will pay back, says the Lord." ²⁰But, "If your enemy is hungry, feed him. If he is thirsty, give him a drink. If you do this, you will make him feel guilty and ashamed." ²¹Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil with good.

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