

Commentary on the Gospel for Sat, Mar 21st 2015

Who can we trust? In the first reading Jeremiah is trusting of others until the Lord shows him the truth, and then he realizes that they were plotting against him – ready to kill him, and he was unaware of the deception. He would have gone on innocently, not knowing the danger, except that the Lord was looking out for him and showed him the way.

Who can we trust except the Lord? We may think others are trustworthy, but they're at best human and at worst dangerous. Jeremiah was trusting of others, and they would have killed him. But he can trust in the Lord. Throughout the book of Jeremiah, the Lord says that those who follow the ways and words of the Lord will succeed and prosper, and those who go against the Lord will fail. Jeremiah follows the Lord and encourages others to do the same. The people who would silence the prophet of the Lord will fail. In the Psalm we are begging God to save us from those who would do us evil. We are like Jeremiah, innocent and trusting, and like Jeremiah could be in danger from wicked people who are not worthy of our trust. But we can trust in God. We can take refuge in the Lord who will protect his good people from harm.

The Gospel is a bit of a twist. The people hear Jesus and are amazed. They are sure he is at least a prophet, perhaps the Christ. But some think he can't be anything special because he comes from Galilee. They go to the Pharisees but the people are told that they don't understand the law and they don't understand what they are hearing. They are told not to trust in the Lord but to trust in the law. But of course they are right to trust what they hear. They are right to believe in Jesus. The Pharisees are ready to condemn him outright – without listening to what he says. And the people are appalled at this. Nicodemus asks, "Does our law condemn a man before it first hears him and finds out what he is doing?" The people trust Jesus because they hear him, and don't trust the Pharisees because they are not even willing to hear him but are ready to condemn him without cause. Even Jesus cannot trust others. Like the wicked in Jeremiah and in the Psalm, the Pharisees are determined to condemn Jesus by deceit if necessary. They do not trust the Lord, and he cannot trust them.

Trust is a tricky thing. We want to be trusting, but we can't always trust others. But we can always trust God. And when we follow God and put our trust in God, we will prosper. Jeremiah did. Like the people in the Gospel, we should trust in God, not in man. We can take refuge in God and come to him for protection. We need to trust our gut, and trust our heart, and trust our God.

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