

July 6, 2014 -- Communion Sunday -- Window #2

“Teaching about the Lord, Turning to God, Temptation to the World” - Rev. Seth D. Jones

Scripture: Proverbs 8:1-6, 14-17; Luke 3:15-22; Matthew 4:1-11

- ❖ Window is dedicated to the memory of Faith G. Berry - 1913-1955. All we know is that she was the church organist before her untimely death at 42 years old.
- ❖ This window tells the story of how we develop our faith and maintain it in the face of the difficulties of the world
 - In ancient world, before everyone could read as in our day and age - images, music and ritual told the story of the faith.
 - Knowledge of the faith came through “catechism” - teaching
 - Today, we will have a very traditional sermon, organized to reflect the story in the windows.
 - 3 primary points
 - Teaching about God
 - Turning to God, or repentance
 - Temptation to give into the world, and how to resist
 - with 3 clarifying points under each - all within about 20 minutes!
- ❖ **TEACHING**
 - is what happens when we gather together to learn
 - Proverbs 8:5
 - *Syn = WITH; -gogue = TOGETHER*
 - *Con = WITH; -gregate/ion = TOGETHER*
 - ◆ *Gathering together*
 - **TEMPLE** = a place of learning/ CHURCH = same thing
 - 1st Frame - *image - Jesus standing on/in Temple of Jerusalem*
 - ◆ *Teaching in the Jewish sense*
 - Luke 2:46-47 - **listening and asking questions!**
 - 3rd Frame - *image - Kingdom of God/Temple coming down from heaven*
 - ◆ Once we have begun to be taught we need to rely on the truth of the teachings
 - Do they work or not when confronted with the things of the world?
 - This itself - allowing our teaching to be confronted by the world - is a teaching and learning process
 - 2nd Frame - *image - Dove descending onto Jesus*
 - ◆ If teaching in Jesus’ day happened *in the Temple*, in our day, Jesus himself *is the Temple*
 - Woman at the well -
 - John 4:19-24

> ever-present with us - per Exodus 40:34

■ Now Jesus is this for us

❖ TURNING TO GOD

> Word for this is *repentance*.

> Repentance is the act of remembering WHO we are and WHOSE we are and then returning to the source of that remembrance

■ Luke 3:15-16 - JtheB points away from himself to God and Christ

● Tells disciples to *turn to Christ*

■ **TORAH** = The Law (*image theme repeats in each frame*)

◆ *The Law is a constant reminder to us to return to God*

● 1st Frame - *image - Rabbi holding the Scroll of the Law*

◆ Turning to God through Learning and Teaching

● 3rd Frame - *image - repeats from Torah scroll in shape of mountains that Jesus stands upon during Temptation*

◆ turning to God by relying on the Teaching

◆ Jesus relies on the Law when challenged by Satan

> 1st temptation is answered with Deut 8:3

> 2nd temptation is answered with Deut 6:16

> 3rd temptation is answered with Deut 6:13 & 2nd commandment

● 2nd Frame - *image - shape of the water of Baptism (“these are the waters of baptism, the same waters which fell upon the head of our Lord Jesus Christ...” Baptism rite words)*

◆ Turning to God in act and affirmation

◆ In Jesus’ baptism, mantle of the Law and of the Prophets, which has been given over to JtheB, is now passed onto Jesus.

> **Jesus is now the Law!**

◆ In baptism, we receive by way of Word, water and Spirit, the mantle which was carried by Jesus

> Jeremiah 31:33-34

● Turning to God/Repentance = remembering Who you are and Whose you are *in your Baptism*

◆ Martin Luther - “Remember your Baptism”

❖ TEMPTATION to the World

> Jesus faces what we face and he relies on what he has learned (Teaching) and the Word of God (Torah/Law) to deal with the temptations of the world

■ ***So also should we! Good enough for J it is good enough for us***

> Temptation is the stage at which we can resist the influence of the forces of evil and the world.

■ Once we give in to temptation, however, is when we fall into sin

- Satan tries to do this with Jesus, and with us, by making us believe the sin to actually be a good, a virtue -
 - ◆ per 3rd Temptation
- **BLESSING** = *The way we resist and confront temptation in the world*
 - Psalm 91:2-4
 - 1st Frame = *image - the gathered people in the Temple*
 - **recognize** the *Blessing of Community* in gathering, worshipping and learning together
 - Transition image = *Simeon blessing baby Jesus*
 - we need to **acknowledge** the blessing which has been given
 - ◆ Luke 2:33
 - 2nd Frame = *image - JtheB passing on the Cross (horizontal) and the Dove descending (vertical)*
 - We must **receive** the blessing that is given us
 - This is what Baptism is - the *recognition* of the gathered community who *acknowledges* the blessing which the person is about to *receive*
 - Transition image = *Jesus as a carpenter*
 - Once we have received our blessing in Baptism (since Jesus' baptism is as much example for us as anything else) we must **work** to seek the blessings God has given us *in the world*
 - This is hard work - the physical quality of carpentry reflects the spiritual quality of the work required to live into our baptismal promises and blessings
 - 3rd Frame = *image - Jesus' hands - resistance or blessing? Both?*
 - When we **rely** on God's blessings to us in the face of Temptation to give into the things of this world, we can resist just as Jesus resisted.
 - ◆ The teachings of our experience with the Lord Jesus Christ are the foundation for our trust in him, the Temple in which we stand with Christ.
 - ◆ The law of Jesus Christ - the Law he has inherited and the law he has written onto us (Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength and Love your neighbor as yourself) - is the way we turn to God in the face of adversity
 - ◆ The temptations of the world are resisted when we rely on the Blessings of God which we have received, with Jesus, in our baptism.

- ❖ In faith, gather together so you might discuss, question, listen and learn the teachings of the faith, just as Jesus did in the Temple, recognizing that Jesus himself is the Temple in which we now worship.
- ❖ Turn to God by remembering WHO you are and WHOSE you are. This is the goal of the Law, the Torah. The Christian word for it is Repentance. The Law, which Jesus fulfills, drives us to the need for Jesus Christ. Accept the mantle of the Law and the Prophets which Jesus passes on to you in your baptism.
- ❖ The blessings Jesus receives in his baptism are also the blessings you receive in your baptism. It is those blessings which give you the power to resist the evils of the world and of the spiritual realms. Recognize, acknowledge, receive, work and rely on those blessings and do the hard work of faith God requires of us.
- ❖ AMEN