

Sermon Luke 13 31 35 2nd Sunday in Lent series C

Sermon: 2nd Sunday in Lent

Text: Luke 13:31-35 – Jesus’ sorrow for Jerusalem.

Theme: Jesus wants to gather His children.

Goal: To be aware of God’s good plans for us and not to resist them.

Dear Friends,

Introduction: The image Jesus uses is a well-known one to those who grew up in a rural area: The hen with her chicks. Last time when I was in Mozambique I enjoyed a lot to observe the numerous hens with chicks I saw there. She walks all around with the little ones, looking for food to share with them. She is continuously producing a characteristic sound, changing the tone when she finds some food or when she realizes some danger. When she calls them, immediately all the chicks run under her wings, looking for protection. Sometimes a chick wanders too far from the hen, and when a falcon or other predator comes, it’s too late for it to run to the refuge of the hen’s wings.

Jesus uses images of the daily life to illustrate His relationship with humankind. This is a very nice image, which helps us to understand His love for us and that He is the one who calls us and the only one who can give us protection. And, on the other hand, people are able to resist His gracious call; this causes damnation to those who resist, unfortunately.

I – Jesus calls

The Bible is a book that reports God calling back His people to save them. God called Adam and Eve after they sinned: “Where are you?” (Genesis 3:9), and promised them a Saviour to restore the damage they had done with their disobedience and to restore the broken relationship between humankind and God. – God called Noah out of a corrupted

generation to save him and his family from the flood (Genesis 6:13). – God called Abraham (Genesis 12:1) to make from him God’s own people. – Prophets, kings and apostles were called, and they all obeyed God’s call to come under His gracious wings, listening to His voice, obeying His will and walking with God.

Jesus didn’t stop calling people to His kingdom and He didn’t stop performing His work even though some wanted to kill Him and many didn’t accept His preaching. He says in our text: “I will drive out demons and heal people today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach my goal. In any case, I must keep going today and tomorrow and the next day...” Jesus doesn’t give up calling people under His gracious wings of salvation. We are still living in the time of grace, where Jesus calls people to enter His kingdom by faith in Him. Jesus says: “How often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings...!” He still longs to gather us!

II – Some resist

Some are not willing to obey Jesus’ call. Like some chicks that go away and at once they are lost from the hen, many are going astray from the protective wings of our Saviour. Not just that, but some resist to God’s call and become declared enemies of Jesus.

Our text presents King Herod, who wanted to kill Jesus. Kings and human powers tried and still are trying to eliminate Christ and His church by the sword. From the persecution of the first Christians in Rome to the persecution of the Christian Church in the 21st Century in many non-Christian countries, enemies try to silence the voice of Jesus and His messengers. They can kill hundreds or thousands, as they did with Jesus and with so many martyrs; but Jesus will not stop calling people to come under His gracious wings and to give forgiveness to all who repent and believe in Him. .

Jeremiah, the prophet, was threatened with death by the government official's and by the leaders of the church, as we heard in the OT reading for today (Jeremiah 26:8-15). But he answered to his enemies: "The LORD has sent me to you to speak all these words in your hearing... Now reform your ways and your actions and obey the LORD your God. Then the LORD will relent and not bring the disaster he has pronounced against you." But people didn't repent and the city and the temple were destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar.

Violence against the Christians and the Christian Church is not a matter that is at our door. The big problem we are facing in the country and in the church is indifference to God's gracious call. Jesus calls, but people don't listen to Him. People don't say that they are against, and they don't resist with violence. But their indifference speaks for itself. Jesus warns in Revelation: "I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm – neither hot nor cold – I am about to spit you out of my mouth." (Revelation 3:15-16).

Jesus says: "How often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!"

III – Jesus is coming again

In spite of Herod's threat, and knowing that the leaders of His own church would take Him to the cross, Jesus shows His concerns and sorrow for Jerusalem and promises to come again in grace. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you...you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

Jesus laments not over Jerusalem only, but also over Cape Town and so many other cities who are going astray from God's will. It's a lament of sorrow because of what can happen in the future. But it's at

the same time a lament and a call to repentance, because it is still time to reverse and to come under His protective wings.

Jesus returned to Jerusalem in grace on Palm Sunday, when people greeted Him, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord'. But in the same week they rejected Him and put Him on the cross. - On Pentecost Day, God showed His grace to the city once more. God sent the Holy Spirit upon the disciples while they were gathered in Jerusalem. Peter proclaimed the resurrected Christ and forgiveness in His name, and many believed: around 3000 came under Jesus' wings through the Holy Baptism in one single day! But forty years later the city was destroyed by the Romans because of its impenitence.

Jesus still comes by grace in His Word and in the Sacraments and invites people to come to Him by faith. Blessed is he/she who comes and enjoys the love and protection of Jesus, our Saviour. Once He will come again, as a judge; then it will be too late for those who did not accept His call. But it will be a blessed day to those who found refuge under His wings and are saved.

Conclusion: "O Cape Town, Cape Town, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings..." What is your answer? Are you willing or not? Amen.

Pastor Carlos Walter Winterle,
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