UHPC WORSHIP/ HOLY COMMUNION—JUNE 02, 2019

SERMON TOPIC: “DIVINE DELIVERANCE”

Who or what has you locked up? What are the charges and what is the crime? Is the punishment justified? Is justice being perverted in your case? Is someone in jail for doing good or for doing wrong? I ask these questions because there is a King who is a Righteous Judge sitting on a throne and its foundation is righteousness and justice. According to Psalm 97--***Fire is His vanguard burning his foes on every side. His lightening lights up the world and causes the earth to convulse at the sight. The mountains melt like wax at the presence of the LORD. The heavens proclaim His righteousness and the peoples see His glory. …All divine beings bow down to this King who is Judge. At the presence of the Almighty God, Zion rejoices and Judah exults!***

In the first lesson read from Acts 16: 16-34, we are presented with two examples of DIVINE DELIVERANCE. First, we hear of a young girl possessed by a spirit of divination. She kept following Paul and Silas around as they were preaching, teaching, and performing miracles. She kept shouting out saying: “These men are servants of the Most- High God who proclaim to you the way of Salvation!” Certainly, what she was saying was true. However, she was making herself a nuisance by constantly interrupting the message and the flow of the Spirit. So, Paul took action and sternly commanded the spirit of divination to come out of her. In a spiritual sense, this girl was in a type of prison. Her master made lots of money by using her for this purpose. Now they lost their means of income, which made them very angry at Paul and Silas. So, they made a complaint to the authorities about this false teaching in the community and insisted that Paul and Silas be stopped, beaten, and thrown in maximum security prison with their feet fastened in stocks.

Well, at about midnight, the apostles decided they would pray and sing hymns of praise to Jehovah God. Suddenly the presence of the Almighty God of righteousness and justice, came down over that place and there was a great earthquake. It shook the foundation of the prison. The chains and shackles on Paul and Silas fell off. The jailer fell asleep. When he awoke he saw that the doors of the prison were wide open. He began to pull his sword to hurt himself. But Paul and Silas were “COOL.” (-as the kids would say) They told him “…No, No! don’t harm yourself. We are here.” Recognizing that something divine and supernatural had happened, the jailer fell at the feet of the apostles and asked: “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” They told him: “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, you and your household, and you shall be saved. The Jailer and his household were then baptized. He cleaned the wounds he had inflicted on Paul and Silas and gave them a meal. Then everyone rejoiced! Paul and Silas were divinely delivered, but there was still another one that we could easily over-look and it is this: - Through the ordeal and the injustice done against Paul and Silas for the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, this jailer and his family received Salvation unto eternal life as well. This may even be the greater miracle of Salvation for an entire family.

Another example of divine deliverance is reported in Acts Chapter 5. Peter and the other apostles were ministering at the place called “Solomon’s Portico.” Great grace was upon them to do miracles, signs, and wonders. People were bringing the sick from everywhere on cots to be healed. They tried even to have Peter’s shadow cast upon them. But again, the religious and civil leaders were upset about all this. So, they had them locked up in jail. During the night an angel of God came and released the apostles from prison. He led them back to the temple and instructed them to continue to teach and to preach the full message of life. On the next day, the council and high priest sent messengers to bring the apostles to them for processing and to file charges against them. But when the officers got there, the guard was alert and on duty, the prison doors were fully secured, however, when they went in the prisoners were no where to be found. As it turned out they found them back at the temple continuing to preach, teach, and doing miracles. Needless to say, the high priest and the council were flabbergasted, shocked, and confused. THIS WAS A DIVINE JAIL BREAK ARRANGED BY THE LORD WHO SENT THE ANGEL TO RELEASE HIS PEOPLE. They were given GREAT GRACE to demonstrate the power of the Holy Spirit.

These apostles were sanctified by the Christ who sanctified Himself in order that all who believe in Him may be sanctified or made holy. This is why they had the power to do what they were doing. Preaching, teaching, and performing signs, wonders, and miracles cannot be done without the sanctification of the Spirit of Christ empowering His people. In his prayer in John 17 Jesus prayed that all His believing and sanctified ones would unite and become one. He also prayed that those the Father has given to Him would one day be with Him in His Glory. He Jesus, makes the Father known to His followers so that the same love that is in him will be in them/us. IT HAD TO BE THE DIVINE LOVE OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS INDWELLING THESE DISCIPLES THAT caused them to not flee from the jail when their chains fell off and the prison doors swung open. It had to be a divine kind of love from a sanctified heart that caused Paul and Silas to tell that jailer who had just beaten them and put them in maximum security prison not to commit suicide for they had not escaped. THE LORD, JEHOVAH GOD, HAD A PLAN TO TURN WHAT THE ENEMY INTENDED FOR EVIL INTO GOOD. The Mighty Creator God of the universe manifested His divine power and caused the earth to move so that the foundations of the prison shook and the prisoners were set free. OUR GOD IS A DIVINE DELIVERER WHO MAKES THE THUNDER ROLL. OUR CREATOR IS THE ONE WHOM MAKES THE LIGHTENING FLASH, AND THE MOUNTAINS QUAKE. Human power is nothing compared to the power of the Almighty God.  ***Yet, like Paul and Silas, like Peter and the other apostles, God’s church and God’s people everywhere need to pray with faith so God’s hand will move to change things in the earth.***  Jehovah God requires His people who are called by His name to humble themselves and to pray and turn from our evil ways, then would God hear from heaven and the land will be healed. God’s people cannot just sit idly by and expect God to act against the evil that is existing in the world, in our lives, and in the nations and expect change to come. These apostles were actively engaged doing what God called them to do. In 2nd Chronicles 20, we see Jehosaphat and the little army of Judah taking down thousands of their enemy’s armies by divine deliverance; for after they fasted and prayed, they got up and praised and worshipped the LORD. Then God set up an ambush against their foes and they destroyed one another. IT WAS A DIVINE DELIVERANCE FROM GOD SELF. But he and his army had to engage in spiritual warfare of prayer, fasting, worship, and praise.

We are reminded who this God is in Rev. 22: 12-17 where He reveals Himself saying: … “I am the **Alpha and the Omega** who is coming soon with rewards to repay everyone according to his/her work. Those who are washed and ready will have the right to the Tree of Life and to enter the City Gates. … This One continued to self-identify saying: **“It is I Jesus, who sent my angel to you to testify to the churches. I am the ROOT and the descendant of David… The Bright Morning Star.”**  He is behind the scenes working through His people. He is the One sanctifying them/ us with Great Grace to do what He wants done. And Jesus, the Christ, the **Alpha and the Omega is earnestly calling people to have a divine encounter with Him.** He is calling all lost souls to ask: **“What must I do to be saved?”** The Spirit and the Bride is calling:- **“Come all who are thirsty for the water of life. Come and take freely.”** THE ONE WHO TESTIFIES OF THESE THINGS IS SURELY COMING SOON. WE CALL HIM: “COME, LORD JESUS!” COME AND DELIVER THOSE WHO ARE SPIRITUALLY SHACKELED BY DEMONIC SPIRITS, HATRED, SICKNESS, SUBSTANCE ABUSE, ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS, FINANCIAL DISTRESS OR NEED, ANGER, WRONGFUL IMPRISONMENT, INJUSTICE OF ANY KIND, FALSE ACCUSSATIONS, REJECTION, EMOTIONAL OR PSHYCHOLOGICAL DAMAGE ETC. **Come, Holy Spirit! Come Lord Jesus Christ! Come as Alpha and Omega! Come and break the bonds, shackles, and chains from both the JAILERS AND THE JAILED.** Come and pour out Your sanctifying Grace upon Your people to enable us to do Your will in the world. Set us all free to live freely in God’s Creation. BY YOUR DIVINE POWER AND WILL, ACCORDING TO YOUR DIVINE JUSTICE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS, BREAK THE POWERS OF THE EVIL OF PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS OF THE RULERS OF DARKNESS OF THIS WORLD. SHAKE THEIR FOUNDAITONS, DEAR GOD, AND SET YOUR PEOPLE FREE. DIVINELY POUR OUT YOUR LOVE INTO ALL OUR HEARTS AND GIVE US A DESIRE AND COMPASSION FOR ALL WHO ARE LOST AND DESTINED FOR ETERNAL DAMNATION APART FORM YOU AND YOUR GLORIOUS KINGDOM. COME LORD JESUS AS YOU DID WHEN YOU EMPOWERED YOUR APOSTLES AT PENTECOST. COME LORD JESUS CHIRST, AND USE YOUR SANCTIFIED ONES TO DO SIGNS, WONDERS, AND MIRACLES, ONCE MORE, SO THAT MANY WILL SEE AND BELIEVE AGAIN AS IN FORMER TIMES WHEN YOU DELIVERED YOUR PEOPLE BY DIVINE INTERVENTION.

Jehovah God in Trinity, we trust You will make it so, for we need Your divine deliverance now, and your world need it speedily. In faith we give thanks for we ask all things in the strong and powerful name of Christ Jesus. Abba, Father, the Kingdom, the power, and the glory, belong to You. WE ASK THAT YOU GIVE US DIVINE DELIVERANCE. ALL WHO ARE SHACKELED--- BE LOOSED NOW AND BE SET FREE TO LIVE LIFE IN CHRIST JESUS FOR EVER. BELIEVE IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AND BE SAVED. Like the Jailer and his household, RECEIVE BAPTISM AS IS INSTRUCTED BY CHRIST AND HAVE ETERNAL AND ABUNDANT LIFE NOW, ALWAYS, AND FOREVER. DIVINE DELIVERANCE! DIVINE DELIVERANCE! DIVINE DELIVERANCE NOW, FOR ALL WHO ARE BOUND IN ANY WAY, SHAPE, OR FORM. WHOM THE SON SETS FREE IS FREE INDEED! CHRIST JESUS, ALPHA AND OMEGA, ROOT AND DESCENDANT OF DAVID, DELIVER US! BRIGHT MORNING STAR, DELIVER US WE PRAY IN FAITH AND WITH THANKSGIVING!

AMEN.

Rev. B.R. Berry/ Pastor-Moderator

Univ. Hts. Presby. Chr.