

The Rev. Tom Moore '07
Pastor, Emsworth United Presbyterian Church

Monday, November 29, 2010

Morning Psalms 122; 145
First Reading Isaiah 1:10-20
Second Reading 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10
Gospel Luke 20:1-8
Evening Psalms 40; 67

1 One day, as he was teaching the people in the temple and telling the good news, the chief priests and the scribes came with the elders 2 and said to him, 'Tell us, by what authority are you doing these things? Who is it who gave you this authority?' 3 He answered them, 'I will also ask you a question, and you tell me: 4 Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?' 5 They discussed it with one another, saying, 'If we say, "From heaven", he will say, "Why did you not believe him?" 6 But if we say, "Of human origin", all the people will stone us; for they are convinced that John was a prophet.' 7 So they answered that they did not know where it came from. 8 Then Jesus said to them, 'Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.'

- - -

As we come to the Gospel reading from Luke we quickly discover that it occurs toward the end of Jesus' ministry rather than the beginning. Why are we reading from those passages that lead up to Jesus' crucifixion? What is the significance to hearing these passages at a time when we are called to prepare ourselves for the coming of our Lord and Savior?

In the midst of our reading, we're reminded that Jesus is more than a teacher, more than a prophet, more than a performer of great and mighty deeds: Jesus is the Lord our God enfleshed, the one who rescues us from the power of darkness and transfers us into his kingdom. In our reading, Jesus proclaims the good news of salvation and does so with authority.

As we journey through Advent, it's important to remember that authority and the power of the Lord our God made known to us in and through Jesus Christ our Savior. It is upon his authority that we cast our lives, for in Advent, we not only celebrate the fact that Jesus was born, we also celebrate the greater reality that he will come again to call all things to himself for the glory of his name.

- - -

Prayer: O Lord Jesus Christ, Word and revelation of the Eternal Father, come, we pray Thee, take possession of our hearts, and reign where Thou hast right to reign. So fill our minds with the thought and our imaginations with the picture of Thy love, that there may be in us no room for any desire that is discordant with Thy holy will. Cleanse us, we pray Thee, from all that may

make us deaf to Thy call or slow to obey it, Who, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, art one God, blessed forever (William Temple, 1881-1944).