

Trinity XXI

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Preacher: Fr. Wade Miller

[0 : 00] We are a people who are mesmerized by the supernatural. We love to watch movies portraying paranormal activity.

There's a rise in mom-and-pop shops that have crystals and oils that promise healing energy. A longing for contact with extraterrestrials is the constant crave as speculation continues about possible life on other planets.

We were created with a sense of curiosity. And we were created to have imagination. And that is not a bad thing.

It's actually a very good thing. And this curiosity is nothing new to our culture. An exploration of ancient cultures and ancient civilizations reveals that such longing for the divine or supernatural is nothing new.

Here in our gospel text of John chapter 4, we heard about a nobleman. This man was most likely a Gentile who held a prominent position in Herod's court.

[1 : 20] And this nobleman seeks after Jesus in Galilee, a place where many Gentiles lived. And the reason for seeking out our Lord is that this prominent man's son was very ill, was close to death.

No doubt that this important man had heard of our Lord's miracles, like turning water into wine or healing the sick and the diseased.

So this prominent man implores Jesus to come and to visit his home, to visit his sick and dying son. And our Lord says something that is repeated throughout his ministry.

He says, unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe. The longing for the miraculous or the supernatural is not a bad thing.

What our Lord is denouncing is a failure to see the one behind these miraculous actions. It is not the rocks.

[2 : 34] It's not the trees. It's not the rivers like the Ganges River in India that brings about healing. It is our Lord who does these actions for one purpose and one purpose only.

To demonstrate that he has come bringing life from death. Healing to the sick and diseased, which points us to the fact that the kingdom of God has come to this earth.

These healings are a foretaste, a sign of God's reign over sin, death, and the devil. These healings point us forward to what eternity will be and what is already ours in Christ Jesus.

So our Lord tells this nobleman to go home because his son now lives. It is the action of this man that speaks to the heart of our gospel reading here in John chapter 4 this morning.

Because we read in verse 50 the following words. So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and he went his way.

[3 : 52] The man did not try to pull rank, being a nobleman, on our Lord.

He did not talk about how important he was. He did not demand to be given evidence for such a claim of healing his son. He didn't say prove it.

The text simply says the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and he made his way back home.

Our fascination with the divine, again, it's not a bad thing. We were created for that. As long as we do not make the objects of such healing our gods.

The Lord uses plants. He uses natural means to provide healing. But worship cannot be in the things themselves. Our faith is to be in the one, the creator, who is the great healer of both body and soul.

[5 : 04] We are called to put our faith in God. The God who has come to this world to impart life.

And that God has become flesh in the person of Jesus. He is the source of all healing because Jesus is life. And there is no life outside of him.

Getting back to this nobleman here in our gospel text. We read that as he was making his way home, his servants met him on the way.

And they told him that his son was now well. His son had been healed. And when he inquired of when this healing actually took place, They told him and he realized that it was at the same time, the same hour, That Jesus said, your son now lives.

So this man came to realize something very profound. And that is the word of Jesus was the very power that made his son whole.

[6 : 24] This man had encountered the word of God that had now come in human flesh. This Jesus is the same God who spoke and the world came to be.

This Jesus is the creator who speaks light from darkness and brings life out of death. And this was a sign of what he would do on the third day, conquering death once and for all.

And this same God is the one who makes the sick well and brings life from death by the power of his word. And therefore this man and his entire household, the text says, became believers and followers of Christ.

What a marvelous thing enjoyed not only by this nobleman and his son, but for all of us. As we bask in the life and in the light of Christ as baptized Christians.

You see, we have been healed from the disease of sin that leads to eternal death. We have been given life in Christ.

[7 : 40] And therefore our life is filled with hope, not despair. And that's why we are to spend our days here on earth, believing in the one who is the life and light of the world.

The one who has healed us by the power of the word. And that word made flesh, Jesus the Christ. I don't think I could put it any better than what we just sang in that great hymn, Thy Strong Word. Listen as I read here as we close. Thy strong word did cleave the darkness. At thy speaking it was done. For created light we thank thee.

While thine ordered seasons run. Though on those who dwelt in darkness. Dark as night and deep as death. Broke the light of thy salvation.

Breathe thine own life. Breathing breath. Thy strong word bespeaks us righteous. Bright with thine own holiness.

[8 : 51] Glorious now we press toward glory. And our lives our hopes confess. From the cross thy wisdom shining. Breaketh forth in conquering might.

From the cross forever beameth. All thy bright redeeming light. Amen. Amen. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

Amen.