

Eyes on Jesus: Worldly Eyes

As We Gather

This Lent, we will use the metaphor of eyesight to examine how the various people in Mark's Gospel viewed Jesus during His Passion. In most cases, they misunderstood who He was and what He was doing; then again, sometimes by faith people did recognize Him correctly.

We have these forty days of Lent in which we may look within ourselves as people of faith in our day. How are we like or unlike the people who saw Jesus in the flesh? Most important, as we gather for worship, we will see what Jesus has done to save us from our sins by His holy, precious blood and innocent sufferings and death.

Today, we learn of Pilate's worldly view and how, to keep his position and placate the Jewish leaders and crowd, he handed Jesus over for crucifixion. The soldiers saw the opposite of a worldly king, but their ironic hailing of Him as "King of the Jews" proclaims who He really is. The world looks for power and glory; God's way is suffering and the cross. Which way do we look in the daily decisions we make?

Opening Sentences

Psalm 121:1–2; 145:15–16; 17:8; 25:15; Job 19:15–17

P I lift up my eyes to the hills.

From where does my help come?

C **My help comes from the LORD,
who made heaven and earth. Psalm 121:1–2**

P The eyes of all look to You,

and You give them their food in due season.

C **You open Your hand;
You satisfy the desire of every living thing. Psalm 145:15–16**

P Keep me as the apple of Your eye;

C **hide me in the shadow of Your wings. Psalm 17:8**

P My eyes are ever toward the LORD,

C **for He will pluck my feet out of the net. Psalm 25:15**

P For I know that my Redeemer lives,

C **and at the last He will stand upon the earth.**

P And after my skin has been thus destroyed,

C **yet in my flesh I shall see God,**

P whom I shall see for myself,

C **and my eyes shall behold, and not another.**

My heart faints within me! Job 19:25–27

Confession

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

C **But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and
cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

P Let us confess our sins to God our Father,

C Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

Forgiveness

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you, and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Psalmody

Psalm 2; antiphon: v.4

L *The psalmist writes of the folly of those who oppose the Lord and His Anointed.*

He who sits in the heavens laughs; the LORD holds them in derision.

Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?

C **The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together,**

L against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying,

C **Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.”**

He who sits in the heavens laughs; the LORD holds them in derision.

L Then He will speak to them in His wrath,
and terrify them in His fury, saying,

C **“As for Me, I have set My King on Zion, My holy hill.”**

L I will tell of the decree:
The Lord said to Me, “You are My Son;

C **today I have begotten You.**

L Ask of Me, and I will make the nations Your heritage,

C **and the ends of the earth Your possession.**

L You shall break them with a rod of iron

C **and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.”**

L Now therefore, O kings, be wise;

C **be warned, O rulers of the earth.**

L Serve the LORD with fear,

C **and rejoice with trembling**

L Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish in the way,
for His wrath is quickly kindled.

C **Blessed are all who take refuge in Him.**

He who sits in the heavens laughs; the LORD holds them in derision.

First Reading

Isaiah 13:9–11

L Isaiah foretells punishment for the world's wickedness.

A reading from the 13th chapter of Isaiah.

⁹Behold, the day of the LORD comes,
cruel, with wrath and fierce anger,
to make the land a desolation
and to destroy its sinners from it.

¹⁰For the stars of the heavens and their constellations
will not give their light;
the sun will be dark at its rising,
and the moon will not shed its light.

¹¹I will punish the world for its evil,
and the wicked for their iniquity;
I will put an end to the pomp of the arrogant,
and lay low the pompous pride of the ruthless.

L O Lord, have mercy on us.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Responsory

1 Tim. 6:14b, 15b, 12a; 1 Peter 1:8, adapted

L Jesus Christ . . . is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

C **Though we have not seen Him, we love Him.
Though we do not now see Him, we believe in Him and rejoice with joy.**

L Fight the good fight of the faith.

C **Though we have not seen Him, we love Him.
Though we do not now see Him, we believe in Him and rejoice with joy.**

L Jesus Christ . . . is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

C **Though we have not seen Him, we love Him.
Though we do not now see Him, we believe in Him and rejoice with joy.**

Passion

Mark 15:1–20

Very early in the morning, the chief priests, with the elders, the teachers of the law and the whole Sanhedrin, made their plans. So they bound Jesus, led him away and handed him over to Pilate.

²“Are you the king of the Jews?” asked Pilate.

“You have said so,” Jesus replied.

³The chief priests accused him of many things. ⁴So again Pilate asked him, “Aren't you going to answer? See how many things they are accusing you of.”

⁵But Jesus still made no reply, and Pilate was amazed.

⁶Now it was the custom at the festival to release a prisoner whom the people requested. ⁷A man called Barabbas was in prison with the insurrectionists who had committed murder in the uprising. ⁸The crowd came up and asked Pilate to do for them what he usually did.

⁹“Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?” asked Pilate, ¹⁰knowing it was out of self-interest that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him. ¹¹But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have Pilate release Barabbas instead.

¹²“What shall I do, then, with the one you call the king of the Jews?” Pilate asked them.

¹³“Crucify him!” they shouted.

¹⁴“Why? What crime has he committed?” asked Pilate.

But they shouted all the louder, “Crucify him!”

¹⁵ Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

The Soldiers Mock Jesus

¹⁶ The soldiers led Jesus away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium) and called together the whole company of soldiers. ¹⁷ They put a purple robe on him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him. ¹⁸ And they began to call out to him, “Hail, king of the Jews!” ¹⁹ Again and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him. Falling on their knees, they paid homage to him. ²⁰ And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

Sermon

Rev. Kevin Barron

Prayer of the Church

P Let us pray for the Church around the world, ourselves, and all people in their various needs.

For farmers and ranchers and those who bring food to market, that God would provide favorable weather, bountiful harvests, and relief from both drought and flood, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Look on them all in Your mercy, heavenly Father.**

For all who struggle with unemployment or underemployment, with poor living conditions or displacement from home, with personal demons or ill health, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Behold their turmoil, Lord Jesus, and grant them relief and hope.**

For all people in authority over communities and countries, all whose decisions affect the climate of the planet and the health of its inhabitants, and all who are charged to maintain justice within their borders and peace among nations, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Gaze upon Your servants, O Lord; protect and guide them that they may serve with wisdom, compassion, and courage.**

For all who serve the Lord as they care for others—medical personnel and first responders, counselors and advisers, friends and neighbors, professionals and volunteers—let us pray to the Lord.

C **Observe how they use the gifts You have given them, O Holy Spirit, and open doors of opportunity for them so that many may rejoice together.**

For the Church around the world, as clergy and lay leaders seek to proclaim the Gospel and faithfully endeavor to share their faith, especially in the face of persecution, let us pray to the Lord.

C **See their struggle, O Holy Spirit, and give them strength to persevere and grow.**

For the Church, wherever it gathers around Word and Sacrament, relying on God’s steadfast love and faithfulness, and looking forward to the fulfillment of all His gracious promises, let us pray to the Lord.

C **Watch over Your Church, Lord Jesus; protect and defend us until that day we see You face to face.**

P Into Your hands, heavenly Father, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C **Amen.**

Prayer for Peace

P Let us pray. O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works,

C **give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness;**

P through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

C Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
**For Thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.**

Nunc Dimittis

P Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping, that awake we may watch with Christ and asleep we may rest in peace.

Benediction

P The blessing of almighty God—the Father, who saw mankind's hopeless condition, the + Son, who showed the depth of God's love, and the Holy Spirit, who has opened our eyes of faith in Christ—be upon you now and forever.

C Amen.

P Although we see Jesus as our King, we need His help so that others may see “our lives express the image” of Jesus' love.

Dismissal

P Go in peace as you serve the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

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