

Toetrede

Liturgie van die Lig

Aanstreek van die kerse

Woorddiens

Tema: "Om iets te deurdink!"

Skriflesing: Lukas 4:1-13

Lied 163

Soos 'n wildsbok wat smag na water,
smag my siel na U, o Heer.

U alleen is my hartsverlange
en ek bring aan U die eer.

U alleen is my bron van krag;
in U teenwoordigheid wil ek wag,

U alleen is my hartsverlange
en ek bring aan U die eer.



Where there is devotional music, God is always at hand with His gracious presence. (Johann Sebastian Bach)

Broodjies vir die pad

Lent is a time to renew wherever we are in that process that I call the divine therapy. It's a time to look what our instinctual needs are, look at what the dynamics of our unconscious are. (Thomas Keating)

In Christ we see a maturity of love that flowers in self-sacrifice and forgiveness; a maturity of power that never swerves from the ideal of service; a maturity of goodness that overcomes every temptation, and, of course, we see the ultimate victory of life over death itself. (Vincent Nichols)

There are several good protections against temptation, but the surest is cowardice. (Mark Twain)

We usually know what we can do, but temptation shows us who we are. (Thomas a Kempis)

Many people genuinely do not want to be saints, and it is probable that some who achieve or aspire to sainthood have never felt much temptation to be human beings. (George Orwell)



Incarnation instead of Atonement

Franciscans never believed that "blood atonement" was required for God to love us. Our teacher, John Duns Scotus (1266-1308), said Christ was Plan A from the very beginning (Colossians 1:15-20, Ephesians 1:3-14). Christ wasn't a mere Plan B after the first humans sinned, which is the way most people seem to understand the significance of the death and resurrection of Jesus. The Great Mystery of Incarnation could not be a mere mop-up exercise, a problem solving technique, or dependent on human beings messing up.

Scotus taught that the Enfleshment of God had to proceed from God's perfect love and God's perfect and absolute freedom (John 1:1-18), rather than from any mistake of ours. Did God intend no meaning or purpose for creation during the first 14.8 billion years? Was it all just empty, waiting for sinful humans to set the only real drama into motion? Did the sun, moon, and galaxies have no divine significance? The fish, the birds, the animals were just waiting for humans to appear? Was there no Divine Blueprint ("Logos") from the beginning? Surely this is the extreme hubris and anthropomorphism of the human species!

The substitutionary atonement "theory" (and that's all it is) seems to imply that the Eternal Christ's epiphany in Jesus is a mere afterthought when the first plan did not work out. I know there are many temple metaphors of atonement, satisfaction, ransom, "paying the price," and "opening the gates"; but do know they are just that--metaphors of transformation and transition. Too many Christians understood these in a transactional way instead of a transformational way.

How and why would God need a "blood sacrifice" before God could love what God had created? Is God that needy, unfree, unloving, rule-bound, and unable to forgive? Once you say it, you see it creates a nonsensical theological notion that is very hard to defend. Many rightly or wrongly wondered, "What will God ask of me if God demands violent blood sacrifice from his only Son?" Particularly if they had a rageaholic or abusive parent, they were already programmed to believe in punishment as the shape of the universe. A violent theory of redemption legitimated punitive and violent problem solving all the way down--from papacy to parenting. There eventually emerged a disconnect between the founding story of necessary punishment and Jesus' message. If God uses and needs violence to attain God's purposes, maybe Jesus did not really mean what he said in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5), and violent means are really good and necessary. Thus our history.

In Franciscan parlance, Jesus did not come to change the mind of God about humanity; Jesus came to change the mind of

humanity about God. This grounds Christianity in pure love and perfect freedom from the very beginning. It creates a very coherent and utterly positive spirituality, which draws people toward lives of inner depth, prayer, reconciliation, healing, and even universal "at-one-ment," instead of mere sacrificial atonement. Nothing changed on Calvary, but everything was revealed as God's suffering love--so that we could change! (Please read that again.)

Jesus was precisely the "once and for all" (Hebrews 7:27) sacrifice given to reveal the lie and absurdity of the very notion and necessity of "sacrificial" religion itself. Heroic sacrifices to earn God's love are over! That's much of the point of Hebrews 10 if you are willing to read it with new eyes. But we perpetuated such regressive and sacrificial patterns by making God the Father into the Chief Sacrificer, and Jesus into the necessary victim. Is that the only reason to love Jesus?

This perspective allowed us to ignore Jesus' lifestyle and preaching, because all we really needed Jesus for was the last three days or three hours of his life. This is no exaggeration. The irony is that Jesus undoes, undercuts, and defeats the sacrificial game. Stop counting, measuring, deserving, judging, and punishing, which many Christians are very well trained in--because they believe that was the way God operated too. This is no small thing. It makes the abundant world of grace largely inaccessible--which is, of course, the whole point.

It is and has always been about love from the very beginning.

Gateway to Silence

Love with your whole heart, soul, mind, and body.

Brood vir die pad

Waar om tog te begin in sulke donker tye?

Dirkie Smit

As Hannah Arendt die Lessing-prys kry, praat sy oor "Humanity in Dark Times". Dié titel kom uit Brecht se gedig aan komende geslagte. Self óók vlugteling leef sy dan al lank in die VSA as leidende openbare denker – gelees, gerespekteerd, invloedryk. Van haar bydraes oor ánder figure word as *Men in Dark Times* gebundel.

Tydens haar viering ná 100 jaar vorm dié woorde die kongres-tema. Die opstelle wat haar huldig, heet *Thinking in Dark Times*.

Dis onmoontlik om saam te vat waarmee sy worstel oor 'n lang loopbaan, dog dis nie sonder rede dat dié wat haar vereer, praat van "denke" in donker tye nie. Sy is geïnteresseerd in denke. Glo ons eerste taak is dink. Trouens, dat ons kwaad daarin lê dat ons nie dink nie. En sy wéét van kwaad.

Ook haar hoofwerk verskyn eers nadoods (en onvoltooid) as *The Life of the Mind*. Dié maak duidelik hoe denke ons help in donker tye. Denke is eintlik self-gesprek, sê sy. Wie regtig nadink, is gewikkel in self-gesprek, vra vrae en gee antwoorde, wonder oor wat ons reeds weet en dink en is en sê. Glo nie alles wat ons hoor en voor-gesê word nie, maar dink, vra, kritiseer, betwyfel, oorweeg, gee rekenskap. In dié self-gesprek, sê sy, gebeur twee dinge – ons luister na ons eie gewete én ons oordele word verruim. Dié woorde –

gewete en oordeel – vat die waarde van denke in donker dae vir haar saam. As ander na ons kyk, sien hulle net één persoon, maar wie werklik dink, is eintlik innerlik tweé, sê sy, in gesprek met onself, oor wat om te doen en wie om te wees. En omdat ons ons nie wil skaam vir onself nie, omdat ons in vrede en vriendskap met onself wil lewe, byvoorbeeld nie met korrupsie en rassisme wil saamlewe nie, help ons gewete ons om te weet wat om te doen en wat om te laat. Daarby verbrei ons denke ons perspektief, ons sien ánder se kant van sake, hoor en oorweeg húl argumente, sien onself in hul situasie, verbeel ons hul lot is óns lot – en só verruim dié denke, dié self-gesprek ons eie oordele, so ontwikkel ons 'n "verruimde mentaliteit," sê sy.

Die omgekeerde geld ook. As sy in *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, haar joernalis-verslag oor sy verhoor en haar mees opspraakwekkende werk, van "die banaliteit van die bose" praat, is dié wat sy bedoel. Sy boosheid was glad nie so uitsonderlik nie, sê sy. Boosheid is eintlik pateties, doodgewoon, alledaags, dis ons onvermoë en onwil om self te dink.

Dít was sy kwaad en skuld. Hy het nie gedink nie. Nooit gewonder, gevra, getwyfel aan wat en hoe almal om hom gedink, gedoen en gepraat het nie. Net maar saamgepraat, nagevolg, gehoorsaam, óók so geklink, óók so gepraat, sonder dink – oor wat dit aan ander doen, oor watter soort wêreld hy vir ons kinders help nalaat. Het ons al gedink?

<http://www.netwerk24.com/Stemme/Sielsgoed/djs-waar-om-tog-te-begin-in-sulke-donker-tye-20160123>



Lied 188:2,3

O God, so ryk en goed,
gee ons solank ons lewe
altyd 'n blye hart;
as dit u wil is: vrede.
Laat u genade ons
beveilig teen gevaar,
in donker ure ons
van struikeling bewaar.

Lof, eer sing ons voor God,
die bron van alle lewe –
die Vader, Seun en Gees,
almagtig en verhewe.
Drie-enig God, ons roem
u krag en majesteit.
O Heer, ons wil U noem:
ons God in ewigheid!