

Beloved, I bring you Grace, Peace, & Blessings from our Lord & Savior, Jesus the Christ.

For those taking notes, the title of the message is:

Here Comes The Son (The Way Of Love)

(1) I grew up in a home where back-handed compliments were frequently utilized. If it was being used as a tool to motivate... it did not work. (2) It might kind of work once or twice; but, fool me once, shame on you... fool me twice... shame on me.

(3) A back-handed compliment contains an insult even though it is an attempt at encouragement. The lesson learned is that you de-motivate the person or persons that you are giving these to.

I am making up a word for this: compli-insult (Com-Plin-Sult). We become conditioned to the compli-insult (Com-Plin-Sult) & are willing to embrace, a mistruth or insult, simply to avoid a confrontation. Psychologists refer to this as 'Fogging'. You try & only acknowledge the portion that is

true for you, in someone else's statement, avoiding the untrue portions. Maybe this used to work..., now, absolutely not.

The original speaker just feels that you have missed the point of their compli-insult (Com-Plin-Sult). They have now concluded that you are even less bright than they originally gave you credit for. An additional compli-insult (Com-Plin-Sult) given to you.

You are parallel playing when you do this. A dual game of the Emperor has no clothes played alongside each other. If we to both choose to ignore each other's falsehoods even better. I'll ignore your lies, you ignore mine, quid pro quo.

I see this occurring more & more often in our ability to ignore the obvious & then to not talk about it. To talk around topics & issues. To not state a True Truth.... We talk, & talk, & then talk, some more..., going in circles to avoid stating the obvious for fear of hurting someone's feelings. In the process, only to end up hurting someone's feelings, or more than just someone; perhaps many people.

(4) Hurting someone's feelings... & I am not saying this is something that we should do. Speaking the Truth in love can be beneficial if it is done with love & with tact. A reminder – you & I are not Jesus.

As Paul reminds us in our reading from 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians. We should not be obnoxious, especially... well, just to be obnoxious. We should not be loud noisy gongs or clanging cymbals simply to bring attention to ourselves or to prove a point.

Victory, true victory, comes from an opponent who thanks you for being gracious to them. Someone who might actually join with you in the future, because they were shown mercy; perhaps even when they did not deserve it. Commentators, politicians..., perhaps even some family members should look into this unusual method of discourse. 😊

In our Gospel reading, what Jesus delivered was the best news ever. Except the Nazarites choose to only hear it as a general announcement. Such as, next week, it might rain. How so?

Jesus just gave them the greatest news ever. He just told them that He is the Messiah. The long-awaited Deliverer & Redeemer from Genesis 3. He is God in their presence. In a fairy tale it would then say: They all went home & lived happily ever after.

Or, in saying this Jesus has just blasphemed, lied, & He should be put to death. The reaction to this: (5) “And all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. And they said, “Is not this Joseph’s son?” “(Luke 4:22 *ESV*)

You might not notice the initial, as in first, back-handed compliment. That would be from last week’s reading where Jesus made these claims. This is one of those sections where breaking this up in the lectionary doesn’t tell the whole story for us at one time.

(6) The short version from last week. Jesus is The Messiah, He is here... right now! Not some coming soon to a synagogue or temple near you. He is right here! Right now! Today!

The reaction. Say, isn't that Joseph's son? (Really, I think Luke is being kind to the people in saying that this was stated graciously).

That Jesus, he sure does speak well. My what interesting things the carpenter's son is saying. Nice of you stop by & let us know. Next time you're in town maybe we can grab lunch. Have a nice day...

That's it? That's the reaction to the big promise that you have waited 1,500+ years for? The great I am, is here!

There is a reason for their reaction... if I have to acknowledge that He may have blasphemed... I also acknowledge my family's generational failures... I'll just ignore this.

So goes the entrapment of Sin in one's life. To avoid True Truth, we embrace lies. Going along to get along. My what gracious words from Joseph's son. Said with teeth clenched. Completely missing that God just showed up in their Church on the Sabbath to proclaim The Good News!

Rather than just letting it lie, pun intended, Jesus doubles down. He could have walked out... He could have walked away. And who knows eventually someone might have realized what was said & taken offense once He was long gone.

Think of liquid courage coming into play... 'why if that young whipper-snapper was here I'd surely give him a piece of my mind!' 'Remember how his mother got pregnant & they ran out of town?' You & I both know... someone in that town had been waiting 30 years to point out Jesus's heritage!

As I said, Jesus is not content to just let it lie..., so He doubles down. He is not going to allow them to just live a lie, to pretend nothing happened, to ignore God. But it goes deeper, God is in their midst. He is going to force them to face their hardness towards God. To His face... like it or not.

So, He challenges them. In Verses 23-27, & He quotes Scripture to prove His point. He quotes History (which is also Scripture). He then reminds them of the generational failures, 1,500+ years of generational failings, selfishness, & unbelief. And what was this generational failure?

Every 7 years they were to forgive each other & be fully restored. All debts wiped out – financial restoration. Debts & loans wiped – forgiven. All lost land restored. Bartered possessions restored. All slaves set free.

Please bear in mind – all of this was originally given to them by God. They did nothing to build it. They did nothing to earn it. They did nothing but receive... as a gift. Out of an abundance of God's love. In 1,500 years you could not honor the 7 year reset once?!? The bare minimum of one time?!?

(8) The capper to this, an insult based on Elisha healing a Gentile. A gift of healing given by God's prophet. The Hebrews chose indifference to God's prophet in their midst. Healing & restoration, naw, we're fine; I like my leprosy & blindness. Rather than accepting God's gracious gift of healing they chose the opposite.

The feelings of the Nazarites? You can insult me, & I'll ignore it, I am comfortable with my family's Sins. Generational failures, we choose to ignore this too..., rather than deal with Your Truth. You bring up a Gentile receiving God's gifts because we rejected the gift... this is an outrage!

Now, Jesus has pushed them far enough that He finally gets a reaction. The Messiah is rejected by His people in His own town & in His own synagogue. The Lord of the Sabbath rejected in His house on the Sabbath by His people in His town. The start of Jesus's ministry is rejection leading to the people wanting to kill Him. Foreshadowing that which is to come...

The Nazarites were filled with wrath. They drove Jesus to the edge of town. So incensed that they went from complimenting him, albeit in a back-handed way. From speaking well of Him with gritted teeth; to a mob. In a mob, who would cast the first stone Jesus's way, so to speak, or give the first push over the edge? After all, He pushed first, & second.

(9) As a mob it is easier to soothe the guilt of your actions. As a mob it is easier as a group to hurt or kill someone. To mar, vandalize, bend, fold, spindle, mutilate, & destroy someone made in God's own image to make God's True Truth stop. True Truth hurts! Have we progressed a fraction of one inch from this same behavior? I think not.



(10) Jesus will confront you as you choose to live in a lie. In your Sin apart from True Truth. Jesus challenges the people with His promises. I gave you promises, then I gave you prophets to repeat the promises. (As a reminder, they killed all of the prophets). I now reiterate the promises & the fulfillment to & for you... yet you still reject it. Now you are doing it to my face!

Each us are no better than the people in the synagogue. No better than the Pharisee's. No better than the Romans. No better than Judas betraying Jesus in the garden at Gethsemane...

Were it not for Jesus everything would end there... not happily ever after. Were it not for Jesus. The True Truth who loves you & still comes back day after day to forgive & restore you. For Grace you have been saved through Faith. Faith given to you by Jesus.

Simul Justus, et Peccator. You are 100% Sinner & 100% a Justified Saint at your Baptism. This is the Lutheran distinction. You still Sin, but now you comprehend what Jesus's atoning work, death, & resurrection accomplished & accomplishes for you on a daily basis.

## But. You. Still. Sin.

(11) Every day Jesus wakes you up to a new day. Forgiving your previous day's Sins & knowing that you will make mistakes today & tomorrow. He died for & forgives you all of those Sins. Every day He willingly enters into the synagogue of your life & along with The Holy Spirit & Angels watches over & ministers to you. Announcing the Good News! Chipping away at the hardness of your heart built up the previous day.

Every day He treats you as the Prodigal Son. Anxiously waiting to see you. Spotting you He runs to you. Crying out words & tears of joy. To save you... day after day. Every day He re-drowns the old Adam in the waters of your Baptism. Re-tasting His own death; so that you do not have to. Because you are His & He loves you. He redeems you.

(12) Jesus & The Bible promises us that the rumors of Grace, Forgiveness, & the Redemption of all things are True.

Everything, is going to be okay! 😊

Softly & tenderly, Jesus is calling... calling O' Sinner come home.

For in His house He has prepared many rooms. Every day He prepares a banquet for you to enjoy. Every day He longs to lavish You with His perfect Love. Each week we come here to be reminded of His True Truths. To give you His perfect Peace that passes all understanding. As a reminder of a foretaste of the feast to come. To say to you, & you, & you, to all of you; you are my beloved child, whom I love, & I redeemed you. Receive The Good News! I am with you all of the days until the end of the age.

Jesus ministers to you; today, tomorrow, & for eternity. Child of God – you are forgiven! Amen & Amen.