



Lutheran Church of the Master, 4800 Ramsey Road, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho  
Pastor Neal Buckaloo  
Sunday, November 14, 2010, The 25<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
Permanence

Forces were at work as Jesus and the disciples were in Jerusalem that Holy Week the Gospel of Luke describes for us. As they were in Herod's temple, people were bedazzled by the splendor of the temple. Ah, here was a magnificent building, bejeweled, dedicated to God; held to be the very earthly seat, God's earthly throne. No where else was the earthly throne of God. It had the aura of permanence.

Human beings have been building their temples to their core understandings for thousands and thousands of years. Are these temples to their own gods or temples to human achievement? The temple in Jerusalem had been destroyed before, following the Babylonian conquest. Now, Jesus is telling his listeners that this temple, with all its beauty, will not last, will not stand. Some 35 to 40 years later, the Romans did that as they destroyed the city, including the temple, and the people of Jerusalem were refugees fleeing to other cities.

We seek permanence. We seek signs of permanence. At one time, the center of any Western city and its tallest building was the church or synagogue. Over time this was replaced in size by the factory, and then the bank was the most imposing edifice, with grand pillar columns, all signs of permanence. Skyscrapers then became the symbol of achievement and wonder at what humankind could do.

It is interesting that a people, any people, build monuments to themselves, to their security, their permanence. Perhaps strange, but then not so strange that they – we – do not build peace among peoples, races, human empires, differing belief systems. We do not build understanding and cooperation and mutual up-building.

But God, at times the contrarian, brings the Prince of Peace, God's Son, Jesus Christ, to stand in the midst of human achievement, and be rejected for fear he will turn our imagined security upside down. God does not bow down to human achievement. God persists in being God and the only source of hope, peace and security.

We are invited to place our confidence, trust and hope in God. But we are hesitant and cling to what we have created and what we know. Letting go and letting God is a difficult task for us human beings. From Adam and Eve to us, it has been so.

The Apostle Paul invites us to be composed, secure, hopeful, ready to burst with thanks to God

Philippians 4: 4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. 5 Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. 6 Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

Finally in Christ Jesus we are not left to the wiles (tricks, guile, deceit, cons and scams) of human nature. We are God's and in God's watchful care. And we are God's and in God's watchful care even when we are not aware. We have a wireless router at home for the new three computers. It is wonderful – when it works! When it doesn't work, it brings consternation. God's care does not break down. God's care is not based in our mindfulness...or faithfulness...or virtue...but is based in God's love for us and for all creation in Jesus Christ. And so, in light of this, we need to carefully hear the counsel of Paul the Apostle to the churches at Philippi and Coeur d'Alene. He writes, Philippians 4: 12 I know what it is to have little, and I know what it is to have plenty. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need. 13 I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

Our permanence is not found finally in human achievement, not a magnificent building or and exploration into deep space, no matter how wondrous, but in the God who created us and the world, and in the promise and gift of Jesus Christ, God's Son.