



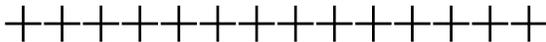
St. Michael's Church
CHARLESTON, SC

SUNDAY, AUGUST 27, 2017
JEREMIAH 15:15-18
MATTHEW 6:19-24
JUBILEE SUNDAY

PREACHER: THE REV. AL ZADIG, JR.

HELP US LORD TO BE SO CONNECTED TO YOU THAT WE MIGHT BECOME THE SERVANTS OF OTHERS.

TAKE OUR LIPS AND SPEAK THROUGH THEM,
OUR MINDS AND THINK THROUGH THEM,
AND TAKE OUR HEARTS, AND SET THEM ON FIRE.



It was simply one of the most incredible experiences one could have on earth.

One of those rare moments in life when all the hype matched the power and splendor of what was hyped!

You will probably always remember where you were and who you were with during Monday's solar eclipse:

- When in 90 minutes
- and at a speed of 2 thousand, 237 miles per hour
- the moon's shadow flew the nearly 3 thousand miles from Oregon to Charleston.

3 thousand miles in 90 minutes!

We were watching it from the harbor with friends ...

And it was high drama! Through those amazing glasses, watching the moon take over the sun was electric...but nothing compared to that magnificent moment...

That has led to everyone's favorite word...

TOTALITY!

TOTALITY:

That moment in time when the moon moved into that perfect place between the sun and earth creating a supernatural halo.

Where we were-
and when that happened-

There was a collective and euphoric cheer!
In other places...

- Guitars broke out
- Birds stopped chirping
- Bugs stopped making noise
- And Weddings were performed!

It was the moment when earth met heaven
and heaven met earth.

As one theologian has said...

“The whole world is a theatre for the display of God!”

If you are a believer, you just fall in love with Jesus all over again, Lord you are so amazing, thank you for giving us a touch of your majesty.

The challenge is for the non-believer...who do you thank for such awestruck wonder?

It's not a rhetorical question, really...who do you thank? Could that be the straw that breaks the camels back of unbelief?

TOTALITY, it's my new favorite word.

That moment in time when you are:

- Totally absorbed
- Totally saturated
- Totally marinated-

In the power AND AWESOMENESS of God-

Shedding the shackles of earthly boundaries to experience that which is beyond us.

My son Christian said yes dad, but it was only 2 minutes.

Yet heaven might be just like that.

Where all time goes out the window, so absorbed in the beauty of Christ that 2 minutes could be like 200 years! It's a glimpse of the afterlife!

And I believe every single one of us, every human on the face of the earth not only longs for such glimpses, but we will do most anything to experience it.

I'm told that because so many people took Monday off,

- The US economy lost nearly 700 million dollars in productivity.
- 7.7% fewer activities last Monday than typical Mondays.

People willing to put everything else on hold to experience TOTALITY.

And I remember thinking at the height of the TOTALITY:

“Lord don’t let this end! I want to see more deeply into this canvas you’re painting.

Stop time, I want to live in this place of TOTALITY.”

Since Monday I have had this irresistible desire to live in this place of TOTALITY, total absorption; in every area of my life...

Yes, I want a:

- faith life full of Godly TOTALITY....
- A marriage with that kind of TOTALITY
- Fatherhood with that kind of TOTALITY
- Ministry and church life with such totality.

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Here’s the good news. The Bible has a name for this kind of TOTALITY, and that word is:

JUBILEE!

Like TOTALITY, JUBILEE describes a moment of total freedom: A trumpet blast of liberty!

Leviticus 25 is the prime Scripture defining JUBILEE: it’s here we find that:

“Every ‘7’ years, God commanded Israel to take an entire Sabbath year to rest. Letting the crops chill and enjoy the presence of God.

But every 7th

cycle of 7 years,

that is, every 49 years, would lead to the **JUBILEE** where on the 50th year...

Israel was to throw an incredible party with Biblical perks!

- Large scale debts cancelled
- Slaves set free
- A new beginning

JUBILEE is the spiritual version of TOTALITY revealing the grace and power of God beyond our world!

Moses quoting God saying:

- Make the 50th year holy and proclaim liberty throughout the land to everyone!

- A year of freedom.
- Each of you shall forgive debts and debtors!--

Why? To experience the TOTALITY, the love of God.

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If that's the good news, here is the even better "good news..."

Matthew chapter 1 contains a list of the ancestors of Jesus, 6 groups of 7 names...from Abraham to Mary.

Stick with me here....

Because there are 6 groups of 7 names,

Then the very next name would be the beginning of the 7th group of 7 names...

To anyone paying attention Biblically... this should take us right back to the Old Testament Jubilee!

The beginning of the 7th group of 7 names begins with Jesus:

Which tells us that Jesus is the ultimate fulfillment of the Old Testament Jubilee...

JESUS IS JUBILEE!

- Jesus beginning the 7th group of 7 is ushering in the new Jubilee!

Jefferson Bethke writes that:

"God has dropped a grenade of eternal proportions in the Person and Work of Jesus!"

- Through Jesus, our spiritual debts are cancelled...
- Through Jesus we **AS** slaves to sin are set free..

It's why in Luke 4, Jesus takes the scroll and reads from Isaiah 61:

"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is on me; because the LORD anointed me:

- **to bind up the brokenhearted**
- **to proclaim liberty to the captives**
- **and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;**
- **To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD,**

After reading it, Jesus looks at the crowd and says:

"Today this scripture **IS** fulfilled in your ears."

Jesus is saying I am that long-awaited Messiah, - The Jubilee.

Which means unlike Leviticus 25, where a Jubilee year occurs every fifty years,

Christ's Jubilee, the power of totality is celebrated every-time we call on him.

Every time Jesus grants forgiveness and a freedom from Sin, it's like he brings earth to heaven and heaven to earth!

Case in point,

One of the most powerful moments of Communion comes in the prayer book where the celebrant prays:

"Holy and gracious Father, when we had fallen into sin you in your mercy sent Jesus Christ, your son, to live and die as one of us:

TO RECONCILE US

TO YOU

THE GOD AND FATHER OF ALL!"

2 Corinthians 5:18.

- Jesus reversed the sin and death brought on by Adam.
- MAKING HIM THE TOTALITY of JUBILEE.

Which helps us make sense of Matthew chapter 6.

"Jesus says don't store up for yourselves treasure on earth where moth and rust destroy, but store up for yourself treasure in heaven, for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

This is more than about money!

Because Jesus has taken away sin, HE HIMSELF is our highest treasure:

- Our greatest hope
- Our source of worth and significance!

And if Jesus is our highest treasure,

Then the highest treasure Jesus gives is a relationship with Him through the forgiveness of sin by His death on the cross.

WHICH EXPLAINS WHY WE READ THESE WORDS EVERY WEEK FROM OUR COMMUNION PRAYER:

“After supper, Jesus took the cup of wine and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them and said: Drink this all of you,

This is my Blood of the new covenant which is shed for you

for the:

Forgiveness of sins...

Matthew 26:28.

Jesus, the forgiveness He died to give us:

IS THE TOTALITY OF our highest treasure-.

When we confess,

When we forgive

We EXPERIENCE THE TOTALITY.

- OF EARTH MEETING HEAVEN
- AND HEAVEN MEETING EARTH.

In 1988, and not long before she died, Marghan-ita Laski, one of the best-known secular humanists and novelists, said:

"What I envy most about you Christians is your forgiveness; I have nobody to forgive me."

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You know...

1918 marks the last eclipse, yet we see the sun and moon every day, just not in that way.

Perhaps you've been a Christian for decades, but you've never experienced

- The TOTALITY
- The Jubilee
- The intimacy
- The forgiveness of Jesus-in that way.

If so..

Today is our day.

Our second annual service of Jubilee.

Where in just a moment this church will turn into an Operating Room of the soul for you to experience heaven on earth.

For you to say Lord, rebuild my heart in your image because Life has a way of chipping away at our heart...

Today is about restoring the TOTALITY of Christ through the forgiveness, healing and blessing that Jesus died to give us.

It's also a day to analyze the relationships in your life and pray the Lord to show you where there is any hurt with another,

and to make plans to heal that relationship.

Jesus cares about this so much, He says in Matthew 5...Don't take communion until you have reconciled.

Jesus says this not to punish us, but to keep our hearts healthy and in need of Him to help us forgive!

Jesus says this to keep us in the path of TOTALITY!

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I find in my life, There are '2' moments I experience Jesus centered TOTALITY and Jubilee..

- The first comes when I'm reading Scripture, the Bible in One Year in the Morning.

It's in that moment of reading that I am transported to the heavenly language,

It's why Jeremiah that Jubilee seeking prophet writes in our Old Testament reading..

"When your word came I ate it, for it has been my joy and my delight."

Beginning my day in that place of eating his Word leads to a place of TOTALITY.

So if one way of entering TOTALITY and Jubilee is through the reading of Scripture,

- The second is this: When I seek the deepest treasure of the Lord's forgiveness, and the forgiveness of others.

The moment I confess and forgive any sin, or hurt, is the moment of TOTALITY.

If I keep it in, I'm losing out, and even worse, I'm inviting a cancer to take over my soul.

Which is why Today is **the Jubilee** call to:

- Erase all relational debts and debtors,
- To pray forgive me Lord and help me be a forgiver!

Let me be transparent with you..

One of the things I've learned in my 20 years of ordained ministry, is that ministry can be messy.

As clergy we minister in every area from:

- Pregnancy
- To Birth
- To baptism
- To confirmation
- To marriage
- To sickness
- And yes even to death.

This cycle of life can at times become very intense, complete with very high expectations and sometimes disappointment.

Which is why I declare the last Sunday in August as A Jubilee Sunday!

To say God:

- In the joys and sorrows,
- In the majesty and messiness of ministry

We press the reset button through confession and forgiveness.

As your shepherd, I need to lead that charge, which is why:

- If I have done anything to hurt you through the sin of commission or omission please tell me.

As your shepherd, if I have hurt you in any way tell me!

Maybe through an:

- Unreturned phone call, or email
- Somehow getting wires crossed and you or a loved one weren't visited in the hospital
- You felt let down because a ministry didn't take off..

I am so sorry, it was never intentional,

I ask you to forgive me of any of my shortcomings.

Even more specifically,

Since my sabbatical it's been a challenging year!

From staff turnover to the Supreme Court's reversal in our case with the National Episcopal Church.

I want to ask your forgiveness for the ways in which I handled that turnover..

I also want to ask your forgiveness regarding the national court case. We are appealing it, but today..

I confess my own overconfidence that we would win this case!

- Perhaps I didn't prepare you about it enough
- or have enough discussions about it.

I ask your forgiveness and the forgiveness of our savior.

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I deeply love our family of St. Michael's.

And I want to remove:

- Anything that would threaten our deepest unity and strength
- Anything that would threaten our unity as we go through the storm of the national church situation.
- Anything that would threaten the transformational impact we need to make as a church.
- Like any ship preparing for deep water, we need to make sure we are the strongest we can be.

You see, **If I-**

or-

we are holding out any Unforgiveness..

- **If I or you,**
- **If WE are holding back from confessing something and instead allowing it to smolder in here**
-
- **It can serve as that cloud cover preventing totality**
- **Which can prevent us from making the highest transformational impact on the world!**
- **We must live out of the overflow of totality so we can tell a dark world there is another way!**

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So, with unity...

Confessionally come clean before the Lord, and together:

Witness earth meeting heaven

and

heaven meeting earth.

To prepare us, please close your eyes and hear the invitational promises of Totality from Jesus:

Luke 18:

Jesus said, "Things that are impossible with people are possible with me."

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1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, Jesus is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

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Isaiah 41:

Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength.

- **They will soar on wings like eagles;**
- **They will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.**