

Ascension Lutheran Church

Pastor Godkin's Sermon for the week of January 31, 2010

Who is Your Authority? (Luke 4:31-44)

Grace, mercy and peace to you from God our Father and Jesus Christ. Amen. The text for today's homily is according to St. Luke. Our Lord says to us:

⁴⁰ Now when the sun was setting, all those who had any diseases brought them to him, and he laid his hands on everyone of them and healed them. ⁴¹ And demons also came out of many, crying, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.

This is the Word of God.

Friends in Jesus Christ, sometimes nursery rhymes make you think. Take the story, *Humpty Dumpty*. "Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall; Humpty Dumpty had a great fall. All the king's horses and all the king's men couldn't put Humpty Dumpty together again."

This is quite a famous nursery rhyme but I've often wondered, what is the moral of the story; if you're an egg don't sit on a wall? Is that the lesson? And why did the king send horse stewards to put the egg back together? Horses don't even have thumbs. They don't exactly have the dexterity. And why did the king send all his horses and all his men? What if there was an invasion? Where's the army? Oh, they're putting an egg back together.

It's a cute nursery rhyme but a little silly. But here is a good lesson in this cute little story. It's a story about brokenness and man's inability to fix things. It actually touches on an important Biblical theme.

In the Gospel reading we see the world's brokenness come to the surface. How broken is the world when pious people come to worship God and in their midst is a demon? Or how broken is the world when disease and ailments are rampant, when suffering afflicts virtually every living thing physically, emotionally, and spiritually? The people of Haiti are far away but their anguish and brokenness is brought to our living rooms through the graphic images on TV. Their brokenness is a stark reminder that this world is not a permanent place and that life is frail and fleeting in this fallen world.

This brokenness began back in the Garden with the first sin. And when man sinned, the world was never the same again. Disease, misery and suffering and death came along with it. This is not to say that we suffer things as a punishment for particular things we may have done; but we suffer because of the world in which we live. It is a broken place.

But in our society, it can be easy to become complacent. Life can seem pretty smooth when our health is good, when we have all the food we need, when we have a stable income and when movies, TV shows, games, sports and all the entertainment in this world offers such an attractive escape from reality.

