

Hidden From Your Eyes Luke 19:41-48

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

What makes for peace? Jesus comes to Jerusalem, and looking over the city, he weeps, saying, *"Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes."*

Jesus continues with a vividly descriptive prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem. That prophecy was fulfilled in the year 70 AD, Jerusalem was utterly and completely destroyed.

Why did this happen, because the time of their visitation was hidden from their eyes? It was hidden from their eyes because they did not desire to see it. The Jews of that day were caught up in the law, their keeping of it. That was how they believed they obtained righteousness with God. And when they were right with God, they believed that would be the end of their being ruled by the Romans. When they considered the coming of God's Christ, they thought He would be the one to usher in a new golden age of kingdom of Israel, bring them to dominance on the global stage.

Jesus did not come to bring that, He came to bring peace. He came to bring eternal peace between God and men. Jesus came, to do just as the angels proclaimed to the shepherds on the Judean hillside, "Peace on earth good will toward men." That is what Jesus brings, peace with God – peace *from* God *toward* men. This peace comes in the person of Jesus, God's Christ.

Those who do not know this peace, will never have any other kind of peace. If you do not know the things that make for your peace with God, you will not have peace in the things of the world. Do you know what things make for your peace? Or, are they hidden from your eyes?

If you have been watching the news, you may be wondering how things have gotten to such a state in our country that they gave rise to the carnage in Charlottesville, Virginia? We can sit here up in northern Wisconsin, we can pick either side (there are enough problems to go around on both sides of the issue) and comment, "How can people treat one another that way?"

Dear friends in Christ, I have an answer for you. They can treat one another that way because things are hidden from their eyes. They do not know what makes for their peace. Are you any different?

Your neighbors are all those who share with you, human flesh. There is only one race (I am not a white guy and I have never met a "black" person). The one race is the human race. How many have a problem with that statement? Jesus shed His blood upon the cross to die for all mankind, no matter their outward appearance.

So, do you know how to love your neighbor? Love is not just some feeling in your heart toward them. Love is an action verb – it is something you do – love your neighbor. How do you do that? When your neighbor is hungry, feed them.
When your neighbor is thirsty, give them something to drink.

When your neighbor is naked, clothe them.
When your neighbor is grieving, cry with them.
When your neighbor is happy, rejoice with them.

You know that you are to do all those things. The question is, do you do them? Of course, it loving your neighbor does not end there. Do you love your neighbor? Here are some more ways you are to truly love your neighbor.

When your neighbor treats you poorly, forgive them.
When your neighbor cheats you, forgive them.
When your neighbor ruins your reputation, forgive them.
When your neighbor beats you up, forgive them.
When your neighbor kills you, forgive them.

How do I know that is what you are supposed to do? Because God instructs us through Paul, “be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ has forgiven you.” (Eph. 4:32)

Remember what Jesus did upon the cross? There beneath the cross where those who treated Him poorly, cheated Him, ruined His reputation, beat Him up, and were at that moment, killing Him. Remember what He said as He looked down upon them? “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” Jesus is the love of God incarnate, the love of God enfleshed. We are to forgive in the same way that He does, for He so forgives us.

Do people think of their neighbor's well-being? How many truly love. People think of themselves first. You know the thoughts, maybe even in your own minds?

“Look out for number one, no one else will.”

“What can I get out of this situation?”

“If I do this, what will I gain from it?”

“Why should I treat them nicely, look at how they have treated me?”

How many of you come from a dysfunctional family? I would have to say I did. Most of you have met my brother, or at least know of him, and his being in a wheelchair. You would readily agree that I come from a dysfunctional family. I do not know if you know this or not, but my mother had multiple sclerosis and did not move out of her bed or her wheelchair unless someone moved her. Even more so, you'd say that we were a dysfunctional family.

My reply to you is this, “My family was no more dysfunctional than yours.” Dysfunctional is to function in a manner other than intended by created design.

Remember Adam and Eve? How did God create them? Yes, in His own image. They were without sin. That is how they were created to function. What happened? It began with questioning of God's Word, “Did God really say?” Then came that tempting piece of fruit – one bite and guess what – Adam and Eve were now dysfunctional. They no longer functioned as they were originally created to function. Sinfulness crept in, it ruined their relationship with God and their relationships with others. All mankind inherits sinfulness, and is dysfunctional in all their relationships.

Do you see how sinfulness is still the problem! There is not a single individual who is not born a sinner, so individually, we are all dysfunctional. We are all sinners. What is the cure for sin? Jesus Christ and Him crucified for the forgiveness of sins. Those families, those people, who live in Christ's forgiveness for them – and then forgive one another – are those that live in love for one another. Forgiveness makes that which is dysfunctional, functional.

My family was so dysfunctional we had to forgive one another every single day – oftentimes my mom had to forgive me more than once a day. I cannot imagine what life would have been like if we did not have the love of God in Christ crucified in our home, and the endless pouring out of forgiveness – forgiveness from Christ to us, and from us to one another. And the same is true in Jerabek family living in the parsonage.

Jesus wept over Jerusalem because He knew that the people there did not understand His presence. He knew that He would go to the cross to purchase their peace with God, for He was God's good will toward men enfleshed. He would purchase their forgiveness, but that was hidden from their eyes.

He had just arrived in Jerusalem for the last time. The crowds had rejoiced in His coming. They had strewn the road with their cloaks and palm branches, and praised God with loud voices. It should have been a joyous occasion, but Jesus wept as he approached the city, "Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes."

We know the difficulties between people today. Back in the day, there was a bitterness in many Jews toward their neighbors. They knew who the undesirables were; the Roman interlopers, the immoral, and the tax collectors. Of course, they were very prejudiced – they hated the Samaritans and the Gentiles. They even had problems getting along with members of their own congregation, the Pharisee that he was too good to even associate with the Publican. They thought they were better than others.

You see, it was hidden from their eyes. They did not see a need for what Jesus came to offer. As they shouted for Him to be crucified, it was hidden from their eyes that He would go to the cross to purchase their forgiveness. When they mocked Him as He hung upon the cross, it was hidden from their eyes, for they ignored His plea to His Father for their forgiveness. When He died and the temple curtain was torn in two, it was hidden from their eyes that His death now opened direct access to God, that there was now peace between God and man. The love of God in Christ Jesus raised Him from the dead to proclaim victory over sin accomplished, but that too is hidden from their eyes, for they deny that He rose from the dead.

Is it hidden from your eyes? Do you see your need for the love of God in Christ Jesus? Do you need to be loved by God – forgiven for your sinfulness? Do you need to be forgiven for your failures to love your neighbors as God has loved you?

Too often our eyes are closed, till the Holy Spirit opens them and leads you to repentance. With eyes opened by the Spirit, we see clearly the things that make for our peace. The Spirit opens our

eyes to see clearly the peace of God come to us in Christ Jesus.

It is not hidden from your eyes! You hear the peace of God proclaimed in the absolution, your lovelessness covered by the blood of Christ, the love of God toward you.

It is not hidden from your eyes! Your ears are open, you know that even now you are being loved by God in Christ Jesus. You know that Christ actually bestows peace to you in the sermon, you are forgiven for those time you have kept your eyes closed to the needs around you. That is why the pastor proclaims, “The *peace* of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.”

Is it hidden from your eyes? Is it bread and wine that sit on the table before you? No, by faith your eyes are open. You see there the flesh of the Son of God, pierced for you. There is the blood of the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, who takes away *YOUR* sin. It is how the Lord God comes to you in a very real and physical way so that you know the love of God, and walk out these doors today in joy and confidence, the love of Christ compelling you, “Depart in peace!”

It is not hidden from your eyes, for you respond to this holy meal in faith, “Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation; which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a Light to lighten the Gentiles and the Glory of Thy people Israel.”

Today is the day of your visitation. Nothing is hidden from your eyes. Christ comes to you, bestowing His love, His mercy, His grace, and His peace. Amen