



LUNCH-FAST — BREAK FAST @ 18:30hrs

PENULTIMATE HONESTY

TODAY'S PASSAGE — PSALM 69:30-33 [ESV]

30 I will praise the name of God with a song;
I will magnify him with thanksgiving.

31 This will please the Lord more than an ox
or a bull with horns and hoofs.

32 When the humble see it they will be glad;
you who seek God, let your hearts revive.

33 For the Lord hears the needy and does not
despise his own people who are prisoners.

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS

In the drama of Good Friday, only Jesus has a psalm for his use. We have no hint that either the governor or the crowd is allowed a psalm, that is, neither of them reaches into the old tradition for a guiding script on how to speak or what to say.

Psalm 69 shows how this counter-power of Jesus conducts itself, as though the political crudities of Rome and Jerusalem really do not count. I want to speak about the penultimate power of honesty. This is not the last word of the psalm, but it is the first important word. The psalm is something of an embarrassment to us, because we do not expect such speech, especially on the lips of Jesus. But Jesus is a child of this Jewish script. He knows that this is how the faithful speak in the face of such a crisis.

So what is it that happened in that drama of power on that Friday? Do not give up the question for a heavenly, transcendental transaction out beyond worldly reality, for

these are real people struggling over real power. Friday is the ultimate day in which the church asks with unblinking honesty about the moral quality of reality. Or is it just that money talks and might makes right?

Jesus has become for us the lens through which we reread power, social relations, and formal policies. Jesus stands alongside all the powerless in his abrasive prayer, demanding justice on earth from God. Jesus' innocence is an exposé of and a threat to every other kind of power. It would indeed be quite an Easter if the church resolved to come clean on this moral claim. Talk about a coup! No wonder he made the governor nervous and the crowd frantic. They killed him, but he kept praying in his dangerous, abrasive honesty. The prayer he prays insists that God will not be mocked,

“For the LORD hears the needy, and does not despise his own that are in bonds.”
(v.33)

QUESTION TO PONDER ...

Do your prayer reflect the confidence and trust that you have in the Lord as you serve him and be his channel of blessings?



PRAYER

God of the poor and powerless, you have taught me how to speak in the face of inhumanity — you call me to tell the truth and expose the false orderings of power that oppress and kill. Make me bold to follow the example of Jesus and to speak your word, trusting in your justice and deliverance. Amen.

Adapted from:

Brueggemann, Walter. *A Way other than Our Own: Devotions for Lent*, Compiled by Richard Floyd. Kentucky: Louisville, Westminster John Knox Press, 2017. Kindle.