

SAID ED March 19, 2017

Repent and Believe!

Repent and believe the good news! This is the message of Lent. We may have heard it as our foreheads were marked with the ashes on Ash Wednesday. As I was saying this prayer over and over again, the power of this mantra came over me as I heard myself reminding people that we all need to turn away from our sins and repent. But there is more to the message that struck me this year. It's not only the turning away from our sins that's important, it is truly the believing the good news, the good news of the gospel, the good news of salvation.

One of the purposes of Lent is to help us to come to a deeper understanding and a richer acceptance of the great mystery of God's love. Lent is not a merely time when we discipline ourselves, depriving ourselves from the good things of life without reason. We are not doing these acts of mortification, (as they sometimes called), just to tame our wild spirits. We are disciplining ourselves so that our hearts can listen more deeply to the power of God's love. "Turn away from sin and believe the good news."

So, what is the good news? Well, it's so simple and so good that it seems unbelievable. It costs us nothing! Again, hard to believe! We live in a culture where things don't have a value unless you pay for them. The fact of the matter is this: salvation was purchased for us by the Lord. Because of God's love we are saved. That's the good news. The good news is that God loves us! God wants us to be happy, God wants us to transcend all the pain and challenge and suffering that is a part of every one of our human lives. God wants us to recognize that He is present here in the midst of us all, loving us, affirming us, guiding us, picking us up when we fall, wanting us to see His loving eyes regarding us as precious, beloved and worthy of the price that Jesus paid to make us God's own.

Repent and believe the good news! Did you read "The Shack" or see the recent movie of the same name? It's there, all there.

Let go of your worries and anxieties, believe in God's love and providence. , As St. Paul would say: Believe "that God makes all things work together for good." (Rm. 8:28) Believe as the Palms say, "If God is for us, who can be against us!" (No one!)

I hope your Lent is going well so far. If you're tempted to slack off on whatever discipline you have accepted for yourself during this Lent, let the promise of a deeper awareness of God's love motivate you once again to know the good news. It is a legacy that is given to us as God's children, we need only slow down and receive it in gratitude!

Have a good week and a great Lent!
