

b16Pentecost 12 ~ August 23, 2009 ~ A homily preached by The Rev'd Erl G. Purnell at *Old St. Andrew's Church*, Bloomfield, CT

1st Kings 8.22-30, 41-43; Psalm 84; Ephesians 6.10-20; John 6.56-69

Psalm 84: "walk with integrity"

Lockerbie bomber set free

- against death penalty
- Life - appropriate penalty

Moral/Ethical questions – important

Wednesday conversation

- Sleepy's mattress story blocked
- Courant consumer columnist (Geo. Gombossy) laid off
- Sleepy's \$200K advertizer

Don Hewitt (60 Minutes creator) died

- 1995 – killed "insider" piece on tobacco
- CBS brass/Hewitt worried about liability at time company being sold
- Later "regretted" capitulating to pressure

Moral/Ethical questions

- How do we comport ourselves?
- What guides us?

- Where are the moral guidelines?
- What is the ethical thing to do?

Ex: Current healthcare debate

- Woman asks Rep. Allen Boyd if health care reform proposals would force people to let the government access their bank accounts
- Woman holds sign of the President looking like Hitler at Barney Frank meeting; compares healthcare proposals to Nazis
- A former governor suggested House healthcare bill would create "death panels"
- President & leaders of Congress say 'way too much bad information, misinformation & out right lies'
- Complex, important issues deserve intelligent discussion, not hyperbole & hysteria.
- CNN has *Truth Squad* to present honest, factual information-Good idea

We need healthcare reform

- We do NOT need to sacrifice civil dialogue
- Ugly – Disrespectful - Mean Spirited

President appeals to faith leaders

- Moral/Ethical issue
- Contest between Hope & Fear

- Urges leaders to reject “folks out there who bear false witness”

The Public Forum in American needs to reflect character, integrity, honesty, a sense of fairness, openness & compromise.

Ask questions again

- How do we comport ourselves?
- What guides us?
- What about character, integrity, honesty, fairness, openness & compromise?
- Where are our moral guideposts?
 - ... around issues of healthcare for all
 - ... in the debate itself
- What is the ethical thing to do?
 - ... about caring for & about our neighbors
 - ... in conducting the public conversation

Open & Inclusive at OSA

So, what do we get here? Why are we here?

- To practice listening
- To practice tolerance
- To practice honesty
- To practice asking hard questions
- To practice wrestling with doubt & contradictions

- To practice disagreeing & compromising
- To practice struggling with faith & belief

- To practice being loving in place of needing to be right

If we say we are Christians, we need to *BE* Christian

At OSA ... to practice living and treating others the way Jesus lived and treated all people—w/o exclusion ever

Jesus set moral/ethical standards

Then ... go into world and boldly proclaim this Spirit to everyone we meet ... and in all that we do and who it is we are

Amen.

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