

## **Prophecies for February 24, 2008**

We look through music every week. We are Christians. We are Christ based, so there are plenty of songs for our use. There just never seem to be enough songs about God our Father or the Holy Spirit who was given to us after Christ went up. That's perhaps the part of God that's with us more than any other part of God. It's in us when we're baptized. He's our comforter. So, I just want to sing Him a love song today.

I just want to confirm the word that Jack was speaking before that song. We worship a Trinitarian God. We are not Unitarians, folks. We are Trinitarian. We believe in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not an "it". The Holy Spirit is a person. There are three persons in the trinity; God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. And He expects us in the unity of that trinity to have a personal relationship with each member of the trinity. But without the Spirit, Jesus hasn't been revealed to us. Without the Spirit we don't even have the word of God in the bible. Without the Spirit we cannot come to the Father. And it's through the sacrifice that Jesus made, that sacrifice that is made present to us by the power of the Spirit, that we can be reunited with the Father. And so to have that personal relationship with the Holy Spirit is to have life, to have the fullness of life, to have the fullness of life in Jesus Christ dwelling in us. You receive the Spirit at your baptism. You've been empowered by the Spirit at your confirmation. Now live in the Spirit and know the joy of the Lord this day and everyday. We are resurrection people. We live in the power of the resurrection. And that resurrection is made present to us in the Holy Spirit of God. Alleluia.

It occurred to me while we were singing that song, part of the reason we don't hear a lot of songs of the Spirit or prayers or anything is because the Spirit is constantly pointing us away from Himself and toward the Father and toward Jesus, saying don't look at me, look at them. Look at them. Look at them. Look at them. It's like the air you breathe. You don't notice the air you breathe; unless it's not there and then you gasp and die. That's how the Holy Spirit is we don't notice Him in our lives a lot of times, but if He weren't there we'd be gasping and dying. It's the same kind of phenomenon. It's partly because of the way the Holy Spirit operates, and the fact that He does point away from Himself, but it's as essential to the well being of our life as the air that we breathe.

I can't help but think that when we were singing Ben's song at the very beginning of the presentation that He's a great God of course because He wraps Himself in life, because He wears the crown of glory and because the darkness must tremble before Him, we must tremble before Him. We can't even look at His face and live. But He's a truly great God because He was willing to wear that other crown. The crown of thorns for us and come down to be with us and to be part of this earth and to be a human being with all of the indignities that that entails. The highest indignity being turned on by those very people He came to save and mocked and crowned with thorns. Whether they knew it or not they were proclaiming another crown too. And that's why He's great. That's why He's inexpressibly great. He's not just powerful and mighty and up there and high and lofty. He's down here too with us as Jesus Christ experienced Him by the Holy Spirit. We are turning to Him now, here. That's why He's inexpressibly great and worthy of all praise.

## **Prophecies for March 2, 2008**

The scripture tells us that Jesus will fill all in all. The whole earth is certainly full of His glory. All of Heaven is full of His glory. Even, strangely enough, all of hell is full of His glory, because there's nothing anywhere, ultimately without His glory. And it's really just a question of how you respond to His glory. How it seems to you. Hell is so bad because those who are in hell are full of their own glory, and therefore God's glory is a very painful thing to them. Heaven is so glorious because those who are there are empty of their own glory and therefore are able to be full of His glory. And we're kind of in between. We have a choice how much of our own glory we're going to be filled with and how much of His glory we're going to be filled with. But you can't have it both ways. It's either your glory or His glory. Lord, we just pray that You will enable us to empty ourselves of our own glory and be filled with Yours.

We must decrease that He might increase.

There's a place in each and every one of us--I feel like the Lord is telling me this morning--a place where we bottle things up: sins, anguishes, sorrow, bitterness, busyness, resentment. I feel like the Lord's saying He's popping the top off that bottle right now. Just let it flow out. It's where it belongs. It's not in us. I also feel like He's telling us now that we've let that out. We need to allow Him to come in and fill that spot. Lord, we just receive that in Your name. Lord, the good news is that You cannot, You do not despise a broken, contrite heart.

## **Prophecies for March 20, 2008 – Maundy Thursday**

I was reading today and there was a quote from author Peter Kreeft making the comment that, "Besides Heaven, there is nowhere else but hell." Earth is not a separate place. Earth is the womb or the workshop of heaven, or alternatively; he didn't say this, but what occurred to me when we were singing, the womb or the workshop of hell. We live in the crossroads; two eternal realities. We know from our experience that we're in a war during heaven now, but Satan also says accurately from the Scriptures that he's the prince and the power of this world. So we're living, if you will, in both places at once. The earth is both places at once and we by our choice live in one or the other. There is not somewhere where we cannot be engaged in the eternal battle. We choose which part we can be in. I've just really been struck by the power of the choices we make of where we walk, because a lot of us have been dealing with demons of discouragement, demons of confusion, during this Lenten time. We know which Kingdom we come from and that's not where we want to be living. We want to be living in the Kingdom of Heaven and be shepherded, as the song says and follow Him to that path. Because if we're not in Heaven, there's only one other place we can be and that's hell.

If I may add, to dovetail from that, and I swear I did not consult with her beforehand on this. The word I was getting was: I've come here very empty and I feel like I've not a lot to bring tonight, but the Lord seems to be saying that's okay. We made the right choice to be here because here is where we'll be fed. And the simple thing He's offering us tonight, as He offers

us every time we come: this is My Body. This is My Blood. That's all you get. That's all you need. It's all He has to offer and it's everything we need. At the end of life, during last rites, if you have the chance to get last rites while you're still alive, you get what's called viaticum, which is very roughly translated, "one for the road." It's basically that you're given sustenance on your journey to your death. That's essentially what we're doing here except you're not dying. Although you are dying to yourself, but your sustenance to get through all of that stuff that she was talking about; to make those choices, because you can't do it on your own. So He offers His Body and Blood as one for the road, not just at the end of our life, but here and now, in Heaven, in the reality we are living in.

This really wasn't a conspiracy of the McLoughlin family...but as we were singing that last song, I had this image from the Book of Proverbs of the woman of loose morals out in the market place, crying out to the saints. For the world would say that what we're doing here tonight is just a complete waste of time. That there is this warfare going on, if you will, in the market place. And the world is crying out to us, there are more important things you can be doing. There's something better that you could do with your time. And the Lord is crying out and saying, I have the food. I have the Bread of Life. I have the Cup of Salvation. Come. Come. The woman of loose morals is saying, don't waste your time. Come, I can give you pleasure. I can give you joy. And the Lord cries out and says true joy is found in my Son Jesus Christ. The world gives us a choice. The Lord gives us life.

### **Prophecies for March 30, 2008**

I feel like the Lord's saying this morning that He knows all things. He sees all things. For every covenant that we made, we've broken quite a few and He's very, very well aware of that, but what He was telling me this morning that the most important thing is that we showed up. Lord, right now in Jesus' name, we just lay it before Your throne.

I can't help but think as we were singing that song about what my family was discussing this week, about a number of things, and the importance of love and what that means. What is love, and to me it is the greatest proof of God's existence and is the most important thing we can do, is the one shield we have against the hate -- the finality that this world has to offer us. The simple words, "I love you" to God or to another person are the most powerful words we can say and no amount of sentimentalizing, Hollywood, and bad novels, can take away the power of those three words. The most important thing about those three words is the price. Christ showed us what that means on the cross. By dying He showed us that love is not a sentimental thing at all; it is rather the ability to give that makes someone else more important than you -- to say that your existence means something to me, everything to me. I'm willing to lay down everything for you. He was willing to do that for us and He asks us in turn to do the same thing for Him. More importantly to do the same things for those we love. That is our most powerful weapon against evil. It's not some sort of action plan for the Church or anything like that. It is love. It is self sacrifice and giving ourselves to Christ the same way He gave Himself for us.

What the Lord has been showing me this week is that you can't do that alone. It's kind of a participation sport. You can do it on your own, but you won't be very successful.

I believe the Lord was also saying to us even on what is often called low Sunday. It is said we have a tendency to concentrate on what's missing instead of what we have right in front of us. Thomas demanded to see. Unless I see the nail holes in His hands and put my hand in His side, I will not believe. And by demanding to see the examples of someone who loves us, to demand to see the people in order to believe that God's working in a Parish or demand to see the good things, things of this world, instead of seeing the good love of God made manifest in the love of our brothers and sisters for us, we are often looking at what we don't have in our lives. What God is saying to us this morning is, look at what I've already done for you. Look at my sacrifice of my Son for you. Look at the love that I show you in those who are around you. Look at the love that I pour out to you even in the pouring rain or the flowering blooms. Look at the love that I have for you in the good things that are already here. See my love for you in the love that you have for someone else. Look and see and believe, because I love you and I will continue to love you and I will continue to pour out My love for you. Look not at what is not here, but look at what I have already done for you and what I continue to do for you and what I am to you. For, I am dwelling within you. See my love for you in my relationship with you. Do not fret. Do not be afraid. For I will never leave you nor forsake you, says the Lord.

There's part of the resurrection story that just jumped out at me this year that hadn't really done so in the past. And maybe it was because of having to move heavy pieces of furniture out of the studio office this week to get the carpet put in. It's the part about when the ladies come back to the tomb on the morning after He rises. They're worried about having to move the stone away, so they can go in and prepare Him for burial. It just reminds me of how men have their things to worry about and women have their things to worry about. Because we (women) aren't as strong – I was worried about how I'm going to get this desk out of the office and they were worried about how they were going to get the stone away from the tomb so they could go in and do what they needed to do; for what they felt they needed to do. Once they got there it was already rolled away. It just reminds me of how we do spend and waste time worrying about things that the Lord takes care of for us. It also reminded me of when Jack said, we just needed to show up today. The women showed up to do what they were supposed to do. The Lord took care of the problems that they thought that they saw. He had already had the stone rolled away for them and after that He's not even in there. Then He meets them. He comes back and meets them where they are. That's just so Jesus. That's the love part. Like Christopher was speaking about. We don't have to do a whole lot, but show up and He meets us right where we are. He takes care of those problem spots; those stones that are in our way. So much of the time in our minds, we just have to show up and He'll take care of those things and meet us right here. I just thank you for that, Lord.

We got to that lesson in the weekly lectionary; the one where they were worrying about the stone rolling away and Christopher commented...I hadn't really thought about it until he mentioned it and now it's been on my mind all week, that he can never read that passage without remembering Bishop Chung's sermon. Jesus takes your problems and puts them aside and sits on them. We need to give them to Jesus who rolls your problems aside and let Him sit on it so it's not a problem. He's got it under control, literally. That's a beautiful image of all those things that seem so big and monstrous that Jesus just rolls out of the way and sits on it for you. That was encouraging news.