Spirituality
Pencil Preaching





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“There is nothing hidden except to be made visible; nothing is secret except to come to light” (Mark 4:23).

2 Sam 7:18-19, 24-19: Mark 4:21-25

The over-arching theme of the time of Epiphany is that light drives out darkness. Jesus came as the Light of the World to expose the works of evil that thrive in darkness. The agents of evil, the invisible spirits that lie hidden in their victims, are afraid of Jesus because he exposes them. Religious teachers who distort the law to protect their own status or who benefit financially from temple rituals fear Jesus because he exposes their self-interest. The crowds delight in Jesus because, unlike their leaders, he has real authority and he tells the truth.

The effect of Jesus’ preaching is to bring light into the darkness, and that light restores the order of creation God intended. What was confused, twisted or deliberately obscured becomes clear. Jesus’ physical miracles are spiritual signs that the underlying damage done by sin has been healed. Not only do the blind to see and cripples walk, families and communities are made whole again. In the presence of the light, right relationship is restored to everything and everyone.

Jesus instructs his disciples to be light and let it shine freely on everyone. He tells them not to be afraid of opposition to the truth because, even if people try to block it, the truth always triumphs. Those who engage in wrongdoing seek to cover it up. The first indictment of any wrongdoing is that even the perpetrators acknowledge that it needs to be covered up. They fear the shame of being exposed. One of the few safeguards of truth is that most people do not want to be caught in a lie or doing

something that time and history will judge to have been evil or self-serving.

Jesus reinforces his instruction by reminding his disciples that what they give is what they will get. “The measure with which you measure will be measured out to you.” Lies for lies, darkness for darkness. No, give light and you will have light, tell the truth and you will be surrounded by and protected by truth. Give freely and you will grow. Hold back and you will be diminished.

We hear much about corruption today, both in the church and in government. What is being described is evil done in secret, covered up by the webs of complicity required to contain the truth, hold a conspiracy together in order to elude detection and judgment. What Jesus knew from common wisdom was that corruption and deception cannot escape the light of truth or outrun history, whose arc may be long, but always bends toward justice.

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