

Christ, Mary, and the Church: Building upon our Scriptural Foundations- Presentations given by Fr. Paul Shovelain

Presentation 1: Jesus Christ: The Unifier

- Two Truths that we behold for all eternity
 - o The Divinity of the Blessed Trinity
 - There is a beautiful harmony among the three persons of life, communion and love
 - o The Humanity of Christ
 - There is a beautiful humility there, he is a person and elevates all humans
- Key principles to keep in mind
 - o Action follows being
 - The fact that he is God and Man allows us to be united in Him
 - o Man is a fallen creature, created in image of God and wounded by sin, in need of a savior
 - o Jesus comes to restore and unite us to God thus bringing us fulfillment
- Everything in the Old Testament Points to Christ
 - o Christ is the new Adam Genesis (1-2)
 - No Father but God/Virginal Conception, Dominion over the world/Dominion over all things, Brings death by eating from tree/Brings life by dying on cross
 - Disobedience brings death/obedience brings life
 - o Recapitulation- Christ aligns things in proper order
 - St. Paul speaks about this, all truth is in him
 - Vocation to be in persona Christi, in the person of Christ
 - Everything is ordered to God, physical, mental, spiritual, supernatural
 - Grace is given to all times from Christ, redeems people of all ages
 - o The fullness of time
 - Covenants prepare us for Christ- God's initiative, promises, demands and a sign
 - o OT and NT figures prepare us for Christ
 - Moses leads people out of slavery into the Promised Land, King David leads people with great success
 - St. John the Baptist, the last prophet and Mary, the first believer, prepare us
 - The Word enfleshed is the point of contact with God
 - We encounter Christ through his humanity and receive salvation from that contact
 - We are forgiven and healed through contact with him
 - o Woman touches him, Jesus lays hands on people
 - o Church gives us the ability to have contact with Jesus now
 - o The Gospels on Jesus Christ
 - Mathew, Mark and Luke- focus on his humanity
 - A normal man, he ate, drank, had passions, surprised, disappointed, weeping, sought information, experienced abandonment and rejection
 - His life is shaped by prayer which allows him to perform mighty deeds
 - Came to establish the kingdom of God and to save what was lost
 - John focuses on his Divinity and his relationship with the Father
 - United to the Father in his heart and desires to unite our hearts to the Father
 - He is the Passover Lamb sacrificed for our sins and rises to bring us life
- Early Church Fathers- Writers who believed in Jesus Christ in early years of the Church
 - o Christ as priest, prophet, king
 - Priest
 - Not a Levite, rather a priest in the line of Melchizedek, chosen by God to offer sacrifice

- Thus Priesthood shifts to being chosen and called by God
 - Prophet
 - Called people to sin no more
 - Announces salvation
 - King
 - He is a good shepherd
 - He leads by serving
- Christ is the priest, altar and sacrifice
- Brings God to men and men to God
- Early Church Teaching
 - Fully God and Fully Man (Hypostatic Union)
 - Not just appeared to be one or the other
 - Council of Nicea in 325 AD affirms Christ is Fully God and Fully Man
 - Begotten not made, One in Being with the Father, Maker of all things
 - Terms point to his Divinity
 - Was incarnate of the Blessed Virgin Mary and became man
 - Points to his Humanity
- More recent Church Teaching
 - Christ pays God the debt voluntarily, he is not punished by God
 - It all comes down to love the Christ offers
 - Christ offers perfect human love to the Father, an undivided heart
 - Luther says Christ was punished by the Father
 - Grace allows Christ to work in us, not just covered by it
 - St. John Paul II
 - Christ reveals man to himself
 - The more we understand Christ, the more we understand ourselves
- Conclusion- Jesus of History and Christ of Faith
 - Know that Jesus truly existed, the Gospels and many other documents
 - The belief in him as Savior requires faith
 - Why should we believe?
 - His humility- does not seek his own kingdom or will
 - His sacrifice-offers his life out of love, washes feet, gives us his body
 - He has authority-commands the enemy to leave, raises the dead, over physical and spiritual order
 - His intimacy- Abba Father
- The words of Jesus
 1. Instruct us- form us as human beings
 2. Save us- they have a dynamic function that allows them to move us

Questions for Discussion:

1. What's one take away from the presentation for you?
2. What do you find most inspiring about Jesus Christ?
3. How do you grow in your relationship with him? How would you like to grow in relationship with him?