**One Does Not Live By Bread Alone 2016 02 14**

**Luke 4:1-13 Pr. H. Adachi**

May the Grace and Peace of the Lord be with you and in your hearts! Amen.

During the Lenten season, we host a soup supper several times. Have you ever thought about why we host soup suppers?

Since it is often understood that the Lent is the time for fasting, and soup is a simpler diet, the soup supper serves as a reminder of this season.

When I was a small child, our tradition was not to eat beef in our family during Lent.  Maybe I should say that was more of an economical reason, though… However, I was at the soup supper last Wednesday, and I found beef curry and beef chili as well.

Is it against God’s will to eat luxurious foods? If I say the answer to this, I do not think so… Even if Sashimi or something like cockroach flies, which is a food held in high-regard among Southeastern Asians, are served at the soup supper, I do not think that is against God’s will… Although not likely to work at LCR.

Let’s dive in the Gospel text today. For 40 days, Jesus was tested by the devil.  What is the devil? It may be simply stated as a personification of a conflict that draws someone’s mind from God’s will.

Therefore the devil tempted Jesus’ mind from God’s will. According to the Gospel text, this happened three times. The first one was that the devil said to him who was hungry, “Why don’t you transform a stone to a bread to eat?”

Since Jesus, the Lord, could change the water to the wine, probably it was a piece of cake for him to change from the stone to a loaf of bread.

Let me tell you the other two temptations. The second one  “If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” And for the third one was  “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from the top of shrine, for it is written, ‘He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,’ and ‘On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’ ”

For the second and third temptations, Jesus responded quoting the words of Deuteronomy chapter 6: “It is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.’ ” and “It is said, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’ ”

For the first temptation, Jesus did not command the stone to turn into bread in order for him to satisfy his stomach… He replied to the devil quoting the words from Deuteronomy chapter 8, “One does not live by bread alone.”

In the eighth chapter of Deuteronomy, God brought enslaved Israelites back from Egypt by leading them through the wilderness for 40 years, to a rich land where they could enjoy milk and honey. But they had to persevere through and when they were hungry, God gave them Manna instead of bread.

God tested the people and taught them that they were not alive from physical foods alone, but also by the words that came out from the Lord.

So what is God, the Lord, teaching us through the words of Jesus, “One does not live by bread alone”? Some may be people say, “Of course, I live not only by bread but rice, vegetables, meat, and fish.”

Of course, various foods is critical to our survival of humans, but the point is: We must continue living by the word of the Lord as described in the Bible, since it is he and his words that freed the slaves from Egypt and ultimately lead them to a land of richness. We are urged to live by the Word of the Lord just as the Israelites trusted God’s intent.

So then, what is the word of the Lord?

The Bible is very thick, and there is a lot to learn. Ultimately, the most important law is “To love the Lord and to love your neighbour as yourself.” We are to live with the Lord who loves us and with our neighbors in His love. Caring for yourself, seeking food for yourself, and collecting riches only for yourself is not the life God wants you to live.

To conclude, I would like to share the story about the people eating in heaven and hell using long chopsticks. In hell, each person is trying to eat his own food by themselves but cannot carry the food to his mouth since the chopsticks are too long. People are frustrated and angry. If you look at heaven, however, people are carrying the food with chopsticks to other mouths so that everyone is able to eat. There is peace.

Our soup supper not only serves as a reminder of the Lenten season, but it is representative of living by God’s word through the sharing of our food. I implore you to reflect on what the soup supper means to you. Amen.