**Opening Scripture**

*Exodus 8:22-23 NLT*

*[22] But this time I will spare the region of Goshen, where my people live. No flies will be found there. Then you will know that I am the LORD and that I am present even in the heart of your land. [23] I will make a clear distinction between my people and your people. This miraculous sign will happen tomorrow.”*

**Communion**

*Hebrews 9:11-15 NLT*

*[11] So Christ has now become the High Priest over all the good things that have come. He has entered that greater, more perfect Tabernacle in heaven, which was not made by human hands and is not part of this created world. [12] With his own blood-not the blood of goats and calves-he entered the Most Holy Place once for all time and secured our redemption forever. [13] Under the old system, the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer could cleanse people's bodies from ceremonial impurity. [14] Just think how much more the blood of Christ will purify our consciences from sinful deeds so that we can worship the living God. For by the power of the eternal Spirit, Christ offered himself to God as a perfect sacrifice for our sins. [15] That is why he is the one who mediates a new covenant between God and people, so that all who are called can receive the eternal inheritance God has promised them. For Christ died to set them free from the penalty of the sins they had committed under that first covenant.*

**Righteous Protest**

Last week we identified the reality that the Gospel message and Social justice go hand and hand. As is clear through the message of the Old Testament prophets, through the public ministry of Jesus, and the message of the Apostles, God is very interested in how the “least of these” are treated, especially by those of us who are members of the Body of Christ. Peacefully protesting the injustices in our country is both our right as American citizens and duty as the people of God. However, in the midst of the peaceful protests that are going on in our land, there is also a spirit at work right now that is trying to increase the depth of strife and division amongst us to bring destruction. My goal tonight is to explore the scripture to identify how we as the Body of Christ can “protest” in such a way that we can be effective agents of change, avoiding the Bait of Satan.

**What does the word protest mean?**

A Protest is a statement or **action** expressing disapproval of or objection to something. (Oxford Dictionary)

Based on this definition we can protest or show disapproval of something with both our words and our actions. (Lead into the text-what is important to God)

*Isaiah 58:1-12 NLT*

*“Shout with the voice of a trumpet blast. Shout aloud! Don’t be timid. Tell my people Israel of their sins! [2] Yet they act so pious! They come to the Temple every day and seem delighted to learn all about me. They act like a righteous nation that would never abandon the laws of its God. They ask me to take action on their behalf, pretending they want to be near me. [3] ‘We have fasted before you!’ they say. ‘Why aren’t you impressed? We have been very hard on ourselves, and you don’t even notice it!’ “I will tell you why!” I respond. “It’s because you are fasting to please yourselves. Even while you fast, you keep oppressing your workers. [4] What good is fasting when you keep on fighting and quarreling? This kind of fasting will never get you anywhere with me. [5] You humble yourselves by going through the motions of penance, bowing your heads like reeds bending in the wind. You dress in burlap and cover yourselves with ashes. Is this what you call fasting? Do you really think this will please the LORD?*

*[6] “No, this is the kind of fasting I want: Free those who are wrongly imprisoned; lighten the burden of those who work for you. Let the oppressed go free, and remove the chains that bind people. [7] Share your food with the hungry, and give shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help. [8] “Then your salvation will come like the dawn, and your wounds will quickly heal. Your godliness will lead you forward, and the glory of the LORD will protect you from behind. [9] Then when you call, the LORD will answer. ‘Yes, I am here,’ he will quickly reply. “Remove the heavy yoke of oppression. Stop pointing your finger and spreading vicious rumors! [10] Feed the hungry, and help those in trouble. Then your light will shine out from the darkness, and the darkness around you will be as bright as noon. [11] The LORD will guide you continually, giving you water when you are dry and restoring your strength. You will be like a well-watered garden, like an ever-flowing spring. [12] Some of you will rebuild the deserted ruins of your cities. Then you will be known as a rebuilder of walls and a restorer of homes.*

(Expound on verses 6-7, 10)

Highlight the components of the fast (or protest) God wants:

* Free those who are wrongly imprisoned
* Lighten the burden of those who work for you
* Let the oppressed go free and remove the chains that bind people
* Share your food with the hungry
* Give shelter to the homeless
* Give clothes to those who need them & don’t hide from relative who need help

(Lead into verse 8)

*1 Peter 4:8 NLT*

*Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins.*

**Practical Acts of Love open the door for Healing while safeguarding us from the root of bitterness**

(Tie in DBT Therapy Concept and Emotional Stability/Protection) Opposite action is a dialectical behavioral therapy (DBT) skill that involves choosing to do exactly the opposite of what your emotions tell you to do.

When you think about it, we all have emotions that can cause us to make choices we’d rather not make.

(Expound on the enemy’s plan to have promote division in the Body of Christ between the so-called white church and the so-called black church)

*John 13:34-35 KJV*

*A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. [35] By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*