Compass Life Adult Sunday School

Pastor Pete

July 28, 2019

**“The Brothers Karamazov”**

**I. Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821-1881)**

Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoevsky was born of lower-middle-class parents in 1821, the second of seven children. His father, an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ attached to the staff of a public hospital, was a stern and righteous man while his mother was the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_—passive, kindly, and generous. Dostoevsky’s early education was in an army engineering school. While he was away at school, his father was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by the serfs on his estate. This murder impacted him and, he began to write about crime, and murder; Dostoevsky was never free of the horrors of homicide and at the end of his life, he chose to write of a violent death of a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. After spending two years in the army, Dostoevsky launched his literary career with Poor Folk, a novel that was an immediate and popular success. He was deeply influenced by new and radical ideas entering Russia from the West, and he soon became affiliated with those who hoped to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Russia. Dostoevsky published political articles knowing they were illegal, as all printing was controlled by the government. He was deemed a treasonous revolutionary and placed in prison and after nine months he was tried, found guilty, and condemned to be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. All preparations were completed, and he was tied and blindfolded. Then, seconds before the shots were to be fired, a messenger from the Tsar arrived. The Tsar had never intended that he was to be shot; he merely used this sadistic method to teach Dostoevsky a lesson. After the commutation of the death sentence, Dostoevsky was sent to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and during the years there, he changed his entire outlook on life. During this time, amidst horrible living conditions—stench, ugliness, hardened criminals, and filth—he began to re-examine his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. He believed that the salvation of the world was in the hands of the Russian folk and that eventually Russia would rise to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the world. It was also in prison that Dostoevsky formulated his well-known theories about the necessity of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Suffering became the means by which man’s soul is purified; it atones for sin; it became man’s sole means of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. In 1866, he published his first masterpiece, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. The story of Raskolnikov, a university student who commits a senseless murder to test his moral and metaphysical theories concerning the freedom of the will. Most of Dostoevsky’s adult life was plagued with marital problems, epileptic seizures and by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Often, he had to compose novels at top speed in order to pay his many mounting debts, but by the end of his life, he was sufficiently free of worry so that he was able to devote all his energy to the composition of The Brothers Karamazov and at his death, only a year after the publication of this masterwork, he was universally acknowledged to be one of Russia’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**II. The Brothers Karamazov Summary**

By his first wife, Fyodor Karamazov had one son (\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_) and by his second wife, two sons (\_\_\_\_\_\_) and (\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_). None of the Karamazov boys, however, was reared in the family home. Their mothers dead and their father a drunken fornicator, they were parceled out to various relatives. Fyodor could not have been more grateful; he could devote all energy and time to his notorious \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Dmitri comes of age, as the novel opens, and asks his father for an inheritance that, he has long been told, his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ left him. Dmitri and his father find themselves instinctive enemies, and besides quarreling over the inheritance, they vie for Grushenka, a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of questionable reputation. Finally, it is suggested that if there is to be peace in the Karamazov household, the family must go together to the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and allow Alyosha’s elder, Father Zossima, to resolve the quarrels. Fyodor parades his usual disgusting vulgarities, makes a dreadful scene, and when Dmitri arrives late, he accuses his son of all sorts of degeneracy. Dmitri then retorts that his father has tried to lure Grushenka into a liaison by promising her \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and in the midst of their shouting, Father Zossima bows and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Dmitri’s feet. Years ago, a ragged girl who roamed the town was seduced and bore a child; everyone, naturally, assumed that Fyodor was responsible. The child grew up to be an epileptic and now cooks for Fyodor his name is Smerdyakov. He enjoys talking \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with Ivan. The emotional, impulsive Dmitri explains to Alyosha that he is sick with grief—that some time ago, he became engaged to a girl named Katerina, and had recently borrowed 3,000 rubles from her to finance a liaison with Grushenka. He pleads for Alyosha to speak to Katerina, to \_\_\_\_\_\_ the engagement, and to help him find some way to repay the squandered money so that he can feel free to elope with Grushenka. Alyosha reaches his father’s house and finds more confusion: Smerdyakov is loudly arguing with another servant about religion, spouting many of Ivan’s ideas. Fyodor taunts Ivan and Alyosha about God and immortality, and Ivan answers that he believes in \_\_\_\_\_\_. Alyosha quietly affirms the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of both. Dmitri then bursts into the room crying for Grushenka and when he cannot find her, attacks his father and threatens to kill him. Alyosha tends his father’s wounds, then goes back to the monastery for the night. Alyosha comes upon Ivan in a restaurant, and they continue the conversation about \_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that they began at their father’s house. Ivan says that he cannot accept a world in which God allows so many innocent people to \_\_\_\_\_ and Alyosha says that, although Ivan cannot comprehend the logic of God, there is One who can comprehend all: \_\_\_\_\_. Ivan then explains, with his poem “The Grand Inquisitor,” that Jesus is not an easy answer-all for his questionings—that He placed an intolerable burden on man by giving him total \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. When Alyosha returns to the monastery, he finds Father Zossima near death. The elder rallies a bit and lives long enough to expound his religious beliefs to his small audience, stressing, above all, a life of simplicity, a life in which every man shall \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and all things, and shall refrain from condemning others. This is Zossima’s final wisdom, and when he finishes, he dies. Next day many people gather to view the holy man’s corpse, for popular rumor has whispered for years that upon Zossima’s death, a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ would occur. Instead, a foul and putrid odor fills the room, and all of the mourners are horrified. Even Alyosha questions God’s justice and, momentarily yielding to temptation, he flees to Grushenka’s house. But after he has talked with her, he discovers that she is not the sinful woman he sought; she is remarkably sensitive and quite understanding and compassionate. Alyosha’s \_\_\_\_\_ is restored and, later, in a dream of Jesus’ coming to the wedding of \_\_\_\_\_, he realizes that life is meant to be joyously shared. Now he is absolutely certain of his faith in God and in immortality. Dmitri goes to his father’s house looking for Grushenka; then after discovering that she is not there, he tries to escape but is cornered by an old servant. He strikes him aside, leaving him bloody and unconscious, and returns to Grushenka’s house. Dmitri makes a final decision: he will see Grushenka once more, for the last time, and then \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. He finds Grushenka is she is convinced that her former lover is a scoundrel and that it is Dmitri whom she really loves. The police arrive and accuse Dmitri of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ his father. Dmitri indeed seems guilty and is indicted to stand trial. Alyosha, in the meantime, has made friends with a young schoolboy, the son of a man brutally beaten by Dmitri in a rage of passion. Now that the youngster is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Alyosha remains at his bedside, where he hopes to help the family and also to reconcile the young boy with his schoolmates. Ivan, the intellectual, has neither the romantic passion of Dmitri nor the wide, spiritual interests of Alyosha, and when he learns of his father’s murder, he broods, then decides to discuss his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with Smerdyakov. He is astonished at the servant’s open \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that he is responsible for the murder. But Smerdyakov is clever; he disavows total responsibility and maintains that Ivan gave him the intellectual and moral justification for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and, furthermore, that he actually permitted the act by leaving town so that Smerdyakov would be free to accomplish the deed. Ivan is slow to accept the argument but after he does, he is absolutely convinced of Smerdyakov’s logic. His newfound guilt drives him mad. That same night, Smerdyakov \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. During the trial, the circumstantial evidence is presented in so thorough a manner that Dmitri is logically convicted as Fyodor’s murderer. He has the motive, the passion, and was at the scene of the crime. Perhaps the most damning bit of evidence, however, is presented by Katerina. She shows the court a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of Dmitri’s in which he says that he fears he might be driven to murder his father. After the conviction, Dmitri agrees to certain plans for his escape but says that it will be great torture and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for him to flee from Mother Russia. As for Alyosha, his future holds the promise of hope and goodness (qualities not associated with the Karamazovs), for after young Ilusha dies and all his schoolmates attend the funeral, Alyosha gathers them together and deeply impresses them with his explanation of love and of friendship. Spontaneously, the boys rise and cheer Alyosha and his wisdom.

**III. The Grand Inquisitor Poem (Jesus returns to Seville, Spain)**

Ivan believes that the notion of God doesn’t make sense in a world where there is so much \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Ivan argues with his devout younger brother, Alyosha that the suffering of children in particular must \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the existence of God because, if it doesn’t, then God is a terrible being who is unworthy of our \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ anyway.

**IV. Main Themes of The Brothers Karamazov**

1. Conflict between Faith and Doubt 2. The Burden of Free Will

**8/4 “Calvin’s Institutes of the Christian Religion, Book One”**