

St. John's Lutheran Church
Aitkin, Minnesota
June 21, 2020
The Third Sunday after Pentecost
Order of Worship (Online)

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

G Amen.

P Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

G who made heaven and earth.

P I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

G and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.

P O almighty God, merciful Father,

G I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.

P Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

G Amen.

Introit

Ps. 56:3–4, 10–11; antiphon: Ps. 56:13

For you have delivered my soul from death, yes, my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of life.

When I am afraid,

I put my trust in you.

In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I shall not be afraid.

What can flesh do to me?

In God, whose word I praise,

in the LORD, whose word I praise,

in God I trust; I shall not be afraid.

What can man do to me?

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

For you have delivered my soul from death, yes, my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of life.

Kyrie

**☩ Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.**

Gloria in Excelsis

☩ Glory be to God on High,

☩ and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.

We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee.

we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory.

O Lord God, heav'nly King, God the Father Almighty.

O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ;

O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,

that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us.

Thou that takest away the sin of the world, receive our prayer.

Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.

For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord.

Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Collect of the Day

P Let us pray.

O God, because Your abiding presence always goes with us, keep us aware of Your daily mercies that we may live secure and content in Your eternal love; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Old Testament Reading

Jeremiah 20:7–13

O LORD, you have deceived me,
and I was deceived;
you are stronger than I,
and you have prevailed.
I have become a laughingstock all the day;
everyone mocks me.
For whenever I speak, I cry out,
I shout, "Violence and destruction!"
For the word of the LORD has become for me
a reproach and derision all day long.
If I say, "I will not mention him,
or speak any more in his name,"
there is in my heart as it were a burning fire
shut up in my bones,
and I am weary with holding it in,
and I cannot.

For I hear many whispering.
Terror is on every side!
"Denounce him! Let us denounce him!"
say all my close friends,
watching for my fall.
"Perhaps he will be deceived;
then we can overcome him
and take our revenge on him."
But the LORD is with me as a dread warrior;
therefore my persecutors will stumble;
they will not overcome me.
They will be greatly shamed,
for they will not succeed.
Their eternal dishonor
will never be forgotten.
O LORD of hosts, who tests the righteous,
who sees the heart and the mind,
let me see your vengeance upon them,
for to you have I committed my cause.
Sing to the LORD;
praise the LORD!
For he has delivered the life of the needy
from the hand of evildoers.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm

Psalm 91:1–10 (antiphon: v. 1)

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High
will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.
I will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress,
my God, in whom I trust."
For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler
and from the deadly pestilence.

He will cover you with his pinions,
and under his wings you will find refuge;
his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.
You will not fear the terror of the night,
nor the arrow that flies by day,
nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness,
nor the destruction that wastes at noonday.
A thousand may fall at your side,
ten thousand at your right hand,
but it will not come near you.
You will only look with your eyes
and see the recompense of the wicked.
Because you have made the LORD your dwelling place—
the Most High, who is my refuge—
no evil shall be allowed to befall you,
no plague come near your tent.

Epistle

Romans 6:12–23

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions. Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. I am speaking in human terms, because

of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.

When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? The end of those things is death. But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Alleluia

C Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 10:5a, 21–33

These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, "Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans,

"Brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death,

and you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next, for truly, I say to you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

"A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household.

“So have no fear of them, for nothing is covered that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. What I tell you in the dark, say in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops. And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

G Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

Apostles' Creed

G I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.

**And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

The third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,**

**the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life ~~is~~ everlasting. Amen.**

Sermon Text – Jeremiah 20:7-13

Theme – “Worth It?”

“It’s not worth it!” Have you ever said that? Maybe something is just taking too long. Maybe someone is being stubborn. Maybe someone is ungrateful. So we throw up our hands and say, “I’m done! No more! That’s it! It’s not worth it!”

In a way, that’s what Jeremiah is saying in our Old Testament lesson. God had sent him to be a prophet to Judah, but the people didn’t want to listen to him. Jeremiah warns them of God’s coming judgment. He calls them to repent. All they do, though, is to mock him. More than that, some of the people are out to get him. They were waiting for him to mess up so that they could take revenge on him for calling them to repentance, telling them that they were wrong. So Jeremiah says in our text, in so many words, “I’m done! No more! That’s it! It’s not worth it!”

From what we read in our Gospel lesson, there must have been days in the disciples’ life when they are tempted to say, “I’m done! No more! That’s it! It’s not worth it!” That’s because Jesus tells them, in so many words, that what happened to Jeremiah was going to happen to them. He tells them that they will **“be hated by all for my name’s sake”** (Matthew 10:22). He tells them that they will be persecuted (Matthew 10:23). He tells them that they will be called demons (Matthew 10:25).

Why is that going to happen to Jesus’ disciples? Why did that all happen to Jeremiah? It’s because sin doesn’t like to be exposed. Sin wants to be left alone. When you try to correct sin, you are going to feel its wrath. I imagine that the disciples had their Jeremiah moments, times when they wanted to say, “I’m done! No more! That’s it! It’s not worth it!”

Maybe we have been tempted to say the same thing as a parent, as a spouse, as a friend, or simply as a Christian living in an increasingly un-Christian and sometimes even anti-Christian world.

And, maybe, there have been times when we are the ones causing someone else to say, "I'm done! No more! That's it! It's not worth it!" They say that because of our sin, our stubbornness, our pride.

To be sure, there have been times when we have had the attitude reflected in our second lesson (Romans 6:12-23) for today. There have been times when we have sinned because we figure that "**we are not under the law but under grace**" (Romans 6:15). This is the attitude that says, "I can sin because I know Jesus will forgive me. I knew I shouldn't do it, but I really wanted to do it, so I did it anyway. But, God will forgive me."

Paul calls that being a "**slave to sin**" (Romans 6:17). The world calls that "freedom" – the freedom to do whatever you want to do, the freedom to follow your own desires no matter what they may be. Let me tell, though, that's not freedom. It is not freedom when you are controlled by things like lust and pride. It is not freedom when you are controlled by something else; it is slavery.

Because we are the way we are, could you blame God if He threw up His hands and said, "I'm done! No more! That's it! It's not worth it!"

That's not what God did, however. He didn't want to leave us in slavery to sin. So He sent His Son, Jesus, who like Jeremiah was hated by many who didn't want to listen to Him. They mocked Him and waited for Him to mess up. Even though He didn't, they found a way to put Jesus to death.

It was all a part of God's plan of salvation that Jesus should throw up His hands upon the cross. He died there to show that we are "worth it." He did it, not so that we could go on sinning, but He did it to set us free from sin.

Jesus is the One who was really free and yet He died a slave's death for us. His perfect life was offered for our imperfect lives. He did it all so that we could be **"set free from sin"** to **"become slaves of righteousness"** (Romans 6:18). In other words, with faith in our hearts we will want to do what is right and not do what is wrong. We will do what is good and not do what is evil.

But you might say: "If I am a slave to righteousness then I am not free." We all want to be free. We want to be our own master. But really that kind of thinking is a form of idolatry. When it comes to spiritual matters the question is not whether we will have a master; the question is who is going to be your master. Is it going to be sin? Or, is it going to be God? One is leading you to death; the other is giving you life.

Our second lesson is a part of what some call Paul's "Baptism chapter." The point is: through Baptism we are given a new master, a better master, a master who forgives our sin; a master who does not want us to continue to be slaves of sin.

That's why He sent Jeremiah to the people of Judah. That's why the disciples were sent out. That's why pastors and missionaries are still being sent out. It was so that sinners like us could be called to repentance. It is so that we who are slaves to sins could become slaves to righteousness. It is so that we who deserve the wages of sin which is death, can receive the free gift of God which is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 6:23).

This gift is ours through faith in Jesus. This gift of eternal life is ours because Jesus' death on the cross is enough! Nothing more is necessary! To Jesus we are worth it! AMEN

☐ The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

☐ **Amen.**

Offertory

☞ Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.

Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free spirit. Amen.

Prayer of the Church

O merciful Father, hear Your people as we pray in the name of Jesus on behalf of all manner and conditions of people.

Faithful God, when we are fearful of our enemies and weary of the struggle, You have been our shield and our strength. Grant to us the full measure of Your grace to sustain us against all who are against us, and help us to endure the trials and temptations of this mortal life and be faithful unto death.

Faithful God, with Your favor upon us, we pray You to help us in our fight against temptation and sin. Help us to live holy and righteous lives by the power of Your Spirit, and keep us from surrendering ourselves to the slavery from which Christ has set us free.

Faithful God, we remember those who serve us in Jesus' name. Bless the leaders of our Synod, all pastors and teachers, and all church workers, that they may be faithful in their calling and honor Christ with an obedient life. Raise up those who will follow in their steps and serve Your Kingdom in the years to come.

Faithful God, give healing and strength to the sick and all afflicted in body or mind, and grant to those who struggle the gift of peace of mind and heart. Hear us especially for those who have requested our prayers [*including _____*] and those whom we name in our hearts now. Restore our nation and the world in health and livelihood, and preserve us from pestilence and fear.

Faithful God, give courage to those near life's end and comfort those who mourn [*especially _____*]. As we recall

the saints who trusted in You in life and who died in Christ, encourage us by the witness of Your grace and their faith, so that when Christ comes in His glory we may be found faithful and delivered with them into the glory of Your eternal presence.

Faithful God, sanctify us as Your people and make us bold to confess You on earth. When this earthly life is ended and we stand before You on high, grant us to hear the Savior's acknowledgment that we are His and He is ours forever.

All these things, Father, and everything else for which we need, we pray You to grant us for the sake of our Savior Jesus Christ, who died and rose and lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

C **Our Father who art in heaven,**
hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who
trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from
evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.

Benediction

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

C **Amen**

Acknowledgments

Divine Service, Setting Three from Lutheran Service Book

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