

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
Aitkin, Minnesota
June 26, 2022
The Third Sunday after Pentecost
ONLINE ORDER OF WORSHIP

- P In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C **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,
C **who made heaven and earth.**
- P I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,
C **and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**
- P O almighty God, merciful Father,
C **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.
- C **Amen.**

Introit

Show us your steadfast love, | O LORD,*
and grant us your sal- | vation.

Let me hear what God the | LORD will speak,*
for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints;
but let them not turn back to | folly.

Surely his salvation is near to those who | fear him,*
that glory may dwell | in our land.

Steadfast love and faith- | fulness meet;*
righteousness and peace kiss each | other.

Righteousness will go be- | fore him*
and make his foot- | steps a way.

**Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit;**

**as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.**

Show us your steadfast love, | O LORD,*
and grant us your sal- | vation.

Collect of the Day

Proper 8 (Year C)

P Let us pray.

Lord of all power and might, author and giver of all good things, graft into our hearts the love of Your name and nourish us with all goodness that we may love and serve our neighbor; 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

1 Kings 19:9b–21

Behold, the word of the LORD came to [Elijah], and he said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” He said,

“I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away.” And he said, “Go out and stand on the mount before the LORD.” And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire the sound of a low whisper. And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And behold, there came a voice to him and said, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” He said, “I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away.” And the LORD said to him, “Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus. And when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael to be king over Syria. And Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint to be king over Israel, and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah you shall anoint to be prophet in your place. And the one who escapes from the sword of Hazael shall Jehu put to death, and the one who escapes from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha put to death. Yet I will leave seven

thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.”

So he departed from there and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen in front of him, and he was with the twelfth. Elijah passed by him and cast his cloak upon him. And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah and said, “Let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you.” And he said to him, “Go back again, for what have I done to you?” And he returned from following him and took the yoke of oxen and sacrificed them and boiled their flesh with the yokes of the oxen and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he arose and went after Elijah and assisted him.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Epistle

Galatians 5:1, 13–25

For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. . . .

For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other,

to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Holy Gospel

Luke 9:51–62

When the days drew near for [Jesus] to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. And he sent messengers ahead of him, who went and entered a village of the Samaritans, to make preparations for him. But the people did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw it, they said, “Lord, do you want us to tell fire to come down from heaven and consume them?” But he turned and rebuked them. And they went on to another village.

As they were going along the road, someone said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.” And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air

have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.” To another he said, “Follow me.” But he said, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.” And Jesus said to him, “Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.” Yet another said, “I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home.” Jesus said to him, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise be to Thee, O Christ.**

Apostles' Creed

C **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 everlasting. Amen.**

Sermon Text – Galatians 5:1,13-25

Theme – “Fighting the Battle Within”

“So,” the caller to a radio counselor begins, “this is my moral dilemma: Do I move in with my boyfriend or not?” After getting a little more information the radio talk show host tells this young woman that she would be crazy to move in with her boyfriend because he drinks too much, is abusive, and can’t hold a job. The trouble with this advice is that it is not really focusing on the “moral” part of this young woman’s dilemma. The moral part of her dilemma is that she knows that her living with her boyfriend outside of marriage is wrong in God’s eyes. Hopefully, that young woman will listen to her conscience. If not, she will end up suffering the consequences of her ill-advised actions.

We know what that is like to pay the price for the foolish decisions that we have made to do the wrong thing. God wants to spare us from such self-inflicted misery. God also wants to spare us from the eternal misery that comes from choosing a path that leads away from Him and the truth of His Word, the path that leads to unbelief. God wants to be glorified by the choices we make in life.

That’s why in our text, God warns about the battle going on within each one of us. Through St. Paul, God tells us to **“walk by the Spirit”** and **“not gratify the desires of the flesh.”** Some of the sins that result from gratifying the **“desires of the flesh”** are listed for us in our text: **“sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger,**

rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these.”

There are consequences to such sinful things. We know that. If not, all we need do is ask the seven year old boy who is living with the consequences of **“sexual immorality”** because his adulterous father left the boy and his mother to “shack up” with some other woman. Or, ask the twelve year old girl about the consequences of **“strife.”** For six years, over half of her life, she hasn’t been able to spend any time with her grandparents because her mother and her grandmother don’t get along. Or, ask the teenager about the consequences of **“drunkenness.”** This teen has to deal with the death of friend which was a result of an accident caused by someone driving under the influence.

As you and I look at the list of the **“works of the flesh,”** we would feel better about it if it just stuck to things like **idolatry, sorcery, [and] orgies.”** But, there are things on that list that we are guilty of, like **“impurity”** – that covers things like course language that we may use at times or if we don’t use that kind of language, it also covers impure thoughts we might have. What about our **“fits of anger?”** We might have such a fit because someone cuts us off in traffic? Oh, we could try to argue that our sins are not that bad, only until we get to these words in our text: **“I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”** Make no mistake about it there are eternal consequences to our being guilty of such **“works of the flesh.”**

Ask the young girl who grew tired of her life with her mother living in a small town. She ran away to the big city. We could say it was to **“gratify the desires of [her] flesh.”** When she got to the big city, things were not as wonderful as she thought they would be. To survive, she ended up selling her body as so many other disillusioned young women living on the streets often do. When the girl looked at herself in a mirror she didn’t recognize herself. What had she become? She was so ashamed. She knew she could never go home.

Little did she know, her mother had scraped together all that she had and had come to the city herself. Once there, her mother had gone to a photo shop and spent all that she could afford on wallet size pictures of herself. Then she went to every seedy hotel in town and posted those pictures in the hotel lobbies until they were all gone. Then she went back home.

Three weeks later the girl came down the dirty stairs of yet another dirty hotel to find in the lobby a picture of her mother. She recognized her. When she looked at the picture she found a note attached which said, “I love you. Come back home.”

I think that story can help us understand a little better what Jesus did for us. He came from heaven, to our sin filled world, to bring us home. He gave His all to make that happen – that all included His life which He gave up on the cross. In that cross we see the face of God with the message: “I love you. Come back home.”

We can “come back home” because Jesus paid the price for all of our sin. Through His life and death and gained for us forgiveness. And we receive this

forgiveness through faith in Jesus Christ. That's what our text is talking about when it says, **"Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires."**

We are free from the eternal consequences of our sin! That's why our text says, **"For freedom Christ has set us free."** It then goes on to say, **"stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery."** The battle within each one of us is going to continue until we die. Until the day die we are going to continue to be tempted to **"gratify the desires of the flesh."**

That may be frustrating for us at times. That's why we need to remember that we are not alone. The Holy Spirit is with us, helping us to **"walk by the Spirit."** What does our text say about that? **"walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh."** Instead, our lives will show the works of the Spirit which include: **"love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, [and] self-control."**

Such works of the Spirit will come if we, with the Holy Spirit's help, keep on fighting the battle within each one of us. With His help we will make the right choices whenever we face a moral dilemma. AMEN

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

℞ Amen.

Prayer of the Church

God of our salvation, when Your Son set His face to go to Jerusalem and the cross, His zeal would not be

deterred. Grant us to pray with the same fervor and boldness, trusting that You hear us for the sake of the Son of Man.

God of the Church, You give pastors and church workers to proclaim Your steadfast love, to announce freedom from the yoke of slavery to sin, and to point all toward the cross of Christ. Bless their faithful work, that their labor in the Lord may never be in vain.

God of compassion, You established the family to be a place of protection and growth. Grant that our homes would never become a stumbling block to the kingdom of God, but that they would serve to foster within us the fruit of the Spirit.

God of all power and might, to You belong the kingdom and the glory forever. Give insight and wisdom to our president, governor, legislature and magistrates. Direct them to punish evildoers, reward the righteous and strive for peace. Grant that Christians may live quiet and peaceable lives.

God of refuge, Your salvation draws near to all who trust in You. Grant peace to Your people, and show us Your salvation. Hear our petitions for healing, strength and comfort for [_____ and] all for whom we pray. Be near them as the refuge of the weary and the God who preserves His people.

God of holiness, in this heavenly food and drink, You graft into our hearts the love of Your name. As You create new hearts within us, bless us with the fruit of the Spirit, that our love for You might be expressed for our neighbor's good.

God of our Lord Jesus Christ, grant that the whole Church might fix her eyes on Him. Teach us the way of the cross. Remove hindrances and distractions. Do not let the freedom we have in the Gospel become an excuse for sin and vice, but an opportunity for love and service

Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **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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