

Cantate

St. John 16:5-15

May 19th, 2019

Sts. Peter & Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC

Simpsonville, SC

Pastor Jerald Dulas+

The Spirit of Truth

In Nomine Iesu!

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

O Lord, send out Thy Light and Thy Truth, let them lead us. O Lord, open Thou my lips, that my mouth may show forth Thy praise. O Lord, graciously preserve me, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

St. James in the Epistle reading for today says that we should be “*swift to hear,*” and “*slow to speak.*” We should be listening to the Word of God intently. In other words, close your lips and open your ears. Why is this important? Because it is through the Word of God that His Holy Ghost creates and sustains faith in you. This is what our Lord + Jesus Christ tells His Apostles on the night of His betrayal while He was still in the upper room with them. That He would send His Holy Ghost to convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.

Our Lord gives His Apostles a definition of sin, for what does He tell them? The world will be convicted of sin because of their unbelief. Unbelief is sin. It is the ultimate sin from which no one can find salvation. Any good works a person may do in unbelief do not merit that person anything. Good works apart from faith are null and void, because good works done outside of faith are dependent upon the works and merits of the one doing them. There is no salvation for the unbeliever. Faith, however, is what saves because it justifies. Faith negates sin. For faith clings in hope to the righteousness of the Lord + Jesus.

This is also what our Lord + Jesus tells His Apostles. The Holy Ghost will convict the world of righteousness. Now, this at first sounds strange to our ears. Is not righteousness a good thing? Is not being a good person a good thing? Is not doing good works a good thing? Why then is the world going to be convicted because of righteousness? The righteousness that our Lord is speaking of is His own righteousness; His own perfect obedience to the Law of God. Because our Lord + Jesus suffers our punishment on the tree of the cross, even though He is innocent is true righteousness.

He suffered and died, and after going away from His Apostles for three days in the grave, He returned to them alive. Further, He says that He also goes to the Father. He goes to the Father to offer up on our behalf the innocent and unblemished sacrifice that He made for us on the tree of the holy cross. The Father accepted the sacrifice that our Lord + Jesus made for us. Therefore, those who reject this sacrifice for the atonement of their sins, through their unbelief, are considered unrighteous. Those, however, who put their faith and trust in the works and merits—the righteousness—of the Lord + Jesus, the Christ are considered righteous on account of their faith.

Unbelievers are therefore unrighteous, and therefore face the judgment of the Lord God. The

Holy Ghost will convict the world of judgment. For, our Lord + Jesus says that the prince of this world is already judged. Those who have no faith share the same lot as the devil, the prince of this world. It should be pointed out that the devil is not called the prince of the world because he has any real power or authority, but because he has claimed this world's authority through trickery and deception. This unbelieving world has given over their lives and salvation to the devil. They have given him the authority to rule over their lives by their wanton sinfulness and their rampant unbelief and unrighteousness. The devil is the prince of this world because mankind let him be the prince of this world.

The prince of this world, however, is already judged. He is already condemned. It is easy for us to consider this knowing about our Lord's suffering and death on our behalf. But make note that our Lord says this *before* His suffering and death. The cross of our Lord + Jesus looks like an utter defeat of Him by the devil and the world. He is mistreated. He is killed. These things do not smack of victory. But this is precisely what our Lord is telling His Apostles. Even before His suffering and death, the devil is already condemned. He is already defeated, because of the innocent life and perfect obedience to the Law of God of our Lord + Jesus. All that remains is the sacrifice of His innocent life on the tree of the holy cross.

His sacrifice on the cross atones for the sins of the whole world. All those who cling to the cross and our Lord + Jesus' works and merits are gifted with faith by the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, the Paraclete. All those who remain in unbelief are condemned as unrighteous unbelievers and therefore share the same fate as the devil. Unbelievers share the same fate as their prince, the prince they allow to rule their world.

We also share the same fate of our Prince—the Prince of Life. Our Prince of Life sits on the right hand of the heavenly Father and intercedes for us who cling to Him in faith, reminding the Father of His sacrifice that He worked for us. It is this Gospel message that the Holy Ghost preaches into our ears. It is why we need to be quick to hear, and slow to speak, for we must allow the Holy Ghost to work on our hearts through the Word of God.

The Holy Ghost works on our hearts by first convicting us of our sins through the preaching of the Law, reminding us daily and often that we are indeed poor, miserable sinners in need of God's grace and favor. We fail miserably when it comes to resisting temptation and avoiding sin. And if you think that you do a good job of resisting temptation, then you need to reexamine yourself, because you are not evaluating yourself correctly. And so the Holy Ghost uses our failures to obey the commandments of God to draw us closer to the Lord God; to lead us to realize just how far away we are from Him, and how much sin rules our life. This is part of the reason that the Holy Ghost is called the "*Spirit of Truth*" because He leads us to see the truthfulness of our sinful corruption.

But the Holy Ghost does not leave us in our sinfulness. No, after our hearts have been smashed with the hammer of the Law of God, He comes to us with the comforting words of the Gospel. Our Lord + Jesus has paid for our sins by His perfect obedience to the Law—His innocence covers over our disobedience. And, He has paid the penalty of our sins by His suffering and death on the tree of the cross. He dies so that we may live. Our sins are covered over because of His sacrifice on our behalf. This is the other reason why the Holy Ghost is called the "*Spirit of Truth*." For, He preaches into our ears that we are saved on account of the works and merits of our Lord + Jesus.

Therefore, my dear friends, close your mouths and open your ears when the Word of God is being spoken, so that the Holy Ghost may work on your heart to drive out sin, and fill you with faith in the Lord + Jesus, the Christ. But do not just close your mouths and open your ears when the pastor is preaching, but open your ears when the words spoken over you at your Holy Baptism are spoken. Remember the Name placed upon you, that you have been claimed by the Lord God with the words, "In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." These words proclaim who

you are, and more importantly *whose* you are. You no longer are ruled by the prince of this world, but through your Holy Baptism you belong to the heavenly Kingdom of the Lord God Almighty.

Listen also when you approach this altar to receive our Lord's Body and Blood in bread and wine. For the Words of Institution—the *Verba Domini*—proclaim what our Lord did on your behalf and announce what you receive when you come and kneel before this altar. You receive the remission of your sins. And wherever there is forgiveness and remission of sins, there is also eternal life in Heaven with all the saints who surround us and join us at this Holy Supper, and there is also salvation and deliverance from our enemies in this life.

The Holy Ghost, "The Spirit of Truth," will convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, for He proclaims the Word of God through the means of grace; through the Word and the Sacraments. In doing this He delivers into your ears that which He received from the Lord + Jesus, Who received it from His heavenly Father. The work of the entire Holy Trinity is to draw you to Himself, so that you may be free from the power of the ruler of this world, cling to Him in faith, and live with Him in Heaven for all eternity. This is truly a great reason to sing and give praise to the Lord God even now and for all eternity. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give glory! I will extol Thee, O Lord, and I will praise Thy Name forever and ever. Amen.

The Votum:

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria!