

The Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity Sunday  
St. Luke 10:23-37  
September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019  
Sts. Peter & Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC  
Simpsonville, SC  
St. Michael and All Angels Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC  
Augusta, GA  
Pastor Jerald Dulas

## He Who Showed Mercy

*In Nomine Iesu!*

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

### **Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:**

Lord God, heavenly Father, we most heartily thank Thee that Thou hast granted us to live in this accepted time, when we may hear Thy holy Gospel, know Thy fatherly will, and behold Thy Son, Jesus Christ! We pray Thee, most merciful Father: Let the light of Thy holy Word remain with us, and so govern our hearts by Thy Holy Spirit, that we may never forsake Thy Word, but remain steadfast in it, and finally obtain eternal salvation; through Thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, one true God, world without end. Amen.

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

*“God, be merciful to me the sinner”*—that is what the penitent cries as he laments his sin and asks for grace to do better. + *“Jesus, Master, have mercy on us”*—that is what the sick and afflicted say as they stare in the face of death and see their own end. *“Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David”*—that is what a mother and father pray as they see danger enveloping their child, and know they are helpless to help. *“Lord, have mercy upon us—Kyrie eleison”*—that is what the Church continually prays, and what every Christian ought to continue praying without ceasing.

For without the Lord’s mercy, how can we survive from day to day? Without the Lord’s mercy, how can we live through the grief, the stress, the sickness, the offending hurts, and the temptations that we often face? Without the Lord’s mercy, how can our joy, our laughter, our celebrations, our happiness, and our triumphs be meaningful and endure? And without the Lord’s mercy, how can we be gathered together in the Holy Ghost to stand before our Father, and how can we hope for anything from Him?

And so, in the Church’s Liturgy we sing, “Lord, have mercy upon us.” And then we sing, “Christ, have mercy upon us.” And then we sing, “Lord, have mercy upon us.” For everything depends on the Lord’s mercy—to us, for us, on us and in us.

But I beg you—do not fall into the trap of thinking the Lord owes you mercy. For then it is no longer mercy. Thinking that you are owed the Lord’s mercy, that it is your just reward, and what the Lord better give, makes it no longer something that is undeserved. And then you have negated the Lord’s mercy—all because you arrogantly require it. Mercy is, after all, not being treated the way we deserve. On account of our sins, we deserve God’s eternal wrath and displeasure. We deserve every bad thing that happens to us in this life. Therefore, it is incorrect of us to say that we do not deserve any sort harshness in our life. We most certainly deserve it; and even much worse on account of our

manifold transgressions. Therefore, the Lord does not owe us mercy. To think that He owes us mercy makes it no longer mercy.

The Lord gives His mercy not to those insist they ought to have it. Rather, He gives His mercy solely from His fatherly, divine goodness, without any merit or worthiness in you or me. *His mercy is on those who fear Him.* And so, He gives it precisely to those who see no way out and leave it solely up to Him. And He gives it to lift up those who have been laid low—like the penitent, like the hopeless parent, like the blind and leprous, like the unloved and disrespected and despised and guilty. These are the people who fill the churches—who sing together, “Lord, have mercy upon us.”

The young lawyer in today’s Gospel was blinded by his pride, and so he would not see that he too was in need of the Lord’s mercy. It was pride that drove him to stand up, believing his schooling and genius was better than others—even better than the Lord Jesus’. It was pride that caused him to think that he could trap the Lord + Jesus. It was pride that urged the lawyer to believe that he had already succeeded in loving God with all he was and all he had through his perceived holy keeping of the Law. And so, it was with the man’s pride that Jesus traps him in his sinfulness.

At another time, to another man who asked the same question, Jesus would say, “*One thing you lack...*” Now our Blessed Lord + Jesus says the same thing with a parable. And this is His point: “The proud, those who demand respect, those who want to justify themselves, those who boast of their learning or heritage, those who belittle the weak and addicted, those who will not tolerate the sinful, those who will not embrace the unloving—one thing you lack: mercy. For *I desire mercy and not sacrifice. Yet you have omitted the weightier matters of the law—especially mercy.*”

To omit mercy in your dealings with others; to omit mercy by refusing to forgive to the same degree that the Lord has forgiven you; to omit mercy by insisting first that others meet your conditions; to omit mercy by making a home for bitterness; to omit mercy by shoving aside those who do not please you; and to omit mercy by refusing to see that anyone you come into contact with is the neighbor the Lord has given you—that is where this brilliant young lawyer stumbled, and where his pride threatened his inheritance of eternal life.

So, did the lawyer beg for mercy? He would never thought to have stooped so low. Yet when we go down on our knees and plead for the Lord to overlook our sins, when we cry out for help, when we sing, “Lord, have mercy upon us”—do we let the Lord’s mercy stop with us? Do we let it die within our hearts by storing up anger or resentment; or by hiding from others; or by living only for ourselves? The Lord gives His mercy for only one reason—so that it has its way with us; so that it comes alive in us; so that His mercy is lived in us and through us toward anyone and everyone.

The mercy we seek from the Lord—that is the mercy that ought to be lived in the same way we have received it: without demands, without conditions, without envy, without pettiness, but in a self-sacrificial love that is no different to the neighbor than it is toward the Triune Lord God. That is, with a love that is ready and willing to empty yourself and all that you have in order to bandage another man’s wounds and bring him into the inn of Christ’s holy Church.

That is what the Good Samaritan does in our Lord’s parable. And who is this Good Samaritan? Is he not the very picture of our Lord + Jesus? For just as the Samaritan was despised and rejected and laughed to scorn by the Jewish leaders in that day, so was our Lord. And just as the Samaritan stepped in where the priest and the Levite feared to tread, so does our Lord. And just as the Samaritan spared no expense for the well-being of his enemy, so does our Lord.

And just as the Samaritan poured on the healing medicine of oil and wine, so our Lord pours over us the sacred chrism of His Holy Ghost and then nurses us back to spiritual health with His holy

Blood. And just as the Samaritan carts the man off to the inn so that he might safely be cared for and ministered to, so our Lord graciously and compassionately and willingly sets us within His holy Body, the Church, so that the preaching and sacraments in the apostolic tradition may see us safely to the Kingdom of Heaven.

The Good Samaritan is the very picture of our Lord + Jesus. Yet with this parable, our Lord is also telling the young lawyer—and us—that the Samaritan is equally the very picture of our life in the Lord God. For we are to *be merciful, just as our Father also is merciful*. And we are to *let brotherly love continue*—not strangling it with our harsh words, nor killing it with our refusal to love as we have been loved. *For if you will not love your brother, whom you can see, how can you love God, whom you have not seen?* So, we are to love all men—even our enemies; just as you are to *bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you*.

Therefore, my dear friends, let us not deal with others in harshness or meanness. Let us not harbor anger or bitterness toward those who have hurt us. And let us not turn away from those who need the healing balm of our kindness and compassion. Instead, let us have mercy in the same way that we beg our Lord to have mercy on us. *For the merciful man does good for his own soul, but he who is cruel troubles his own flesh*.

And let us remember why we daily cry out for and rely upon our Lord's mercy. For truly He is *ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abundant in kindness and great in mercy to all men*—and especially to those who trust in Him. For to them—that is, to us who deserve from Him nothing but punishment and Hell—to us, our heavenly Father readily and mercifully gives us His Holy Ghost so that we might be united to His Son by the Holy Eucharist, and so live in Him and His abundant mercy, even as He lives His love in and through us toward all men. To this Lord + Jesus Christ, together with the Holy Ghost Who proceeds from Him and the Father, belongs all glory, honor and worship. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:**

O Lord Jesus Christ, our Good Samaritan and only Mediator, Who, seeing us in our guilt and blood, didst have pity upon us, and of Thine infinite mercy didst give Thine innocent blood in payment for our sins that we might live, we humbly thank and praise Thee, that Thou hast saved us from destruction, and by Thy holy Word hast brought us to the saving knowledge of Thee, our only Savior and Redeemer; and we beseech Thee, enable us by Thy Holy Spirit to love Thee, the true God, with our whole heart and our neighbor as ourselves, that we may show mercy on all men in their need, bind up their wounds with tender care, and ever in this evil world follow Thy example of love and service; Who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

**The Votum:**

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

*Soli Deo Gloria!*