

The Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity Sunday  
St. Luke 14:1-11  
October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019  
Sts. Peter & Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC  
Simpsonville, SC  
St. Michael and All Angels Evangelical Lutheran Mission, UAC  
Augusta, GA  
Pastor Jerald Dulas

## He Who Humbles Himself Will Be Exalted

*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 beseech Thee so to guide and direct us by Thy Holy Spirit, that we may not exalt ourselves, but humbly fear Thee, with our whole hearts hear and keep Thy Word, and hallow the Lord's Day, that we also may be hallowed by Thy Word; help us, first, to place our hope and confidence in Thy Son, Jesus Christ, Who alone is our righteousness and Redeemer, and, then, so to amend and better our lives in accordance with Thy Word, that we may avoid all offenses and finally obtain eternal salvation; through Thy grace in Christ, 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.

Our dear Lord + Jesus Christ asks the question today, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" Only a person who is concerned more about where he sits at the table would say, "No." Our Lord had been invited to eat bread at the home of one of the rulers of the Pharisees. At first glance this would seem like a nice gesture on the part of the ruler of the Pharisees. But we see what their real intention is, when a certain man with dropsy suddenly appears before the Lord. This man with dropsy is clearly ushered in by the Pharisees to see what our Lord + Jesus would do. For, it is the Sabbath and no one is supposed to be doing any work on the Sabbath. So, we are told that the Pharisees "watched Him closely" to see what He would do.

The Lord + Jesus does not fall for the trap, instead He makes it a teachable moment. He asks, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" The Pharisees in the hardness of their hearts do not answer. But, as closely as they were watching the Lord + Jesus, He was also observing them. They were all concerned more with themselves and their status in the room. They all desired the best places. They had no concern for this man with dropsy—a condition where fluids would accumulate in the body's tissues or cavities. This man is a plant; there only to give them a reason to further hate our Lord + Jesus, and provide reasons for them to lead our Lord to His death.

It was no big deal for them to rescue a donkey or ox that has fallen into a pit on a Sabbath. No one would be so cruel as to leave the animal in the pit until the Sabbath was over. Such an act would never even enter the thought of any of these Pharisees. How much more then would it be lawful to rescue a child of God from his disease on a Sabbath? Would you not want to rescue someone who is a man just like you? We all suffer the same condition as fallen mankind. We are all poor, miserable sinners. If we show care and concern for the animals under our care, we should certainly have care and concern for our fellow man. Even if it is the Sabbath—the day of rest.

This man with dropsy leaves the scene as quickly as he appeared. When the Pharisees refused to answer, our Lord + Jesus “took him and healed him, and let him go.” There was no hesitation on our Lord’s part. He healed the certain man with dropsy and let him go. This man comes and goes as quickly as the Evangelist St. Luke can write it down.

The Pharisees would have certainly rescued an ox or donkey fallen into a pit on a Sabbath. Then here is a man who is literally drowning in his own skin. The fluids in his body were pooling in all of his tissues and cavities so that his body was drowning. The root of the Greek word is “hydro,” that is, “water.” We get English words like hydration, or hydrant from this word. In other words, the name for the disease describes the disease. This man was filled with water. The water accumulated in the very pits of his tissues and cavities.

If you would rescue an ox or donkey in a pit on the Sabbath, how much more would you rescue this man from the water accumulating in the pits of his tissues and body cavities?

A person who is more concerned about themselves would not help this man, even as the Pharisees did not really care about this man. He was not there because they wanted our Lord + Jesus to heal him. He was there so they could say when our Lord did heal him that the Lord + Jesus had broken the Sabbath regulations by working on a Sunday. The Pharisees in this reading would only rescue the ox or donkey from a pit on a Sabbath, because it is their stuff, and a self-centered man would not want any bad thing to happen to his stuff.

The reality of the situation is that the Pharisees and this certain man with dropsy, and even us, are all under the same condition. We all suffer from the disease which we inherited from our first parents, Adam and Eve. We suffer from the disease of sin. We are drowning in our own flesh on account of our daily and constant sinning. We fall often into the pit of temptation and sin. We daily sin much, and we have no way of rescuing ourselves from this pit. We have no way to rescue ourselves from drowning in our sin and shame.

Our Lord + Jesus knows our condition, however, and He heals us through His Word and the working of the Holy Ghost. Daily we drown, but daily we rise again to new life through the working of the Holy Ghost. The Old Adam in us is drowned with all of his sins and evil desires and we in contrition and faith rise from the waters of Holy Baptism daily to live before God as those who desire to do His will and obey His commandments.

We are invited to this altar to receive the Supper of our Lord. We are given bread and wine, which is the very Body and Blood of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. This meal is the medicine for our soul. By this meal we are healed of our disease of sin, and given all of the gifts that our Lord + Jesus won for us by His death on the tree of the holy cross. We are unable to rescue ourselves from the pit and disease of sin, but our Lord + Jesus comes down from Heaven to rescue us.

He humbles Himself by coming down from His throne in Heaven, and takes upon Himself our flesh. He fulfills the Law perfectly for us, and suffers our punishment by being exalted—lifted up—upon the tree of the holy cross. He Who humbled Himself to the point of death for us, is now exalted to the right hand of God the Father, where through the preaching of His Word and the administration of His Blessed Sacraments, He calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies by the work of the Holy Ghost all those who cling to Him in faith; creating faith in us and all believers through these means of grace.

The Pharisees were concerned more about their seat at the table than they were for this certain man suffering from dropsy. Let us not imitate their example. Instead, let us always remember that our sins are great; we are suffering from the same disease as everyone else. Therefore, let us not be concerned with our status in this world, but let us rather be ready and willing to help all those who

struggle with sin be rescued from that pit that leads to despair. We do this not only by our own daily contrition and faith with our sins, thereby giving an example of how a Christian—a sinner—lives a Christian life in this world. But we also rescue our neighbors from their disease by inviting them to this place, where they will hear the Word of God and be enlightened through the work of the Holy Ghost.

Here in this place we find healing for our souls. Our sins are drowned, but we rise out of those waters and are made new creations. We are provided a meal that gives us forgiveness of our sins, grants us salvation, and prepares us for eternal life. This is the best place for poor, miserable sinners to be on the Sabbath, the day of rest. For in this place we can rest in the Word of God, and hear the proclamation that our Lord + Jesus humbled Himself to death for us, and was exalted on the tree of the holy cross, all so that we also will be lifted out of the pit of death, and exalted into our heavenly home for all eternity.

“It is lawful to heal on the Sabbath?” It is most certainly, not only lawful, but it is necessary for us poor, miserable sinners to be healed in this place every Sabbath. Therefore, my dear friends, come as often as you possibly can to receive the healing of your soul. Humble yourselves and confess your sins, and receive the absolution that was won for you by our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. For even though we are indeed poor, miserable sinners, and deserve to sit at the lowest place of honor in the Kingdom of God, our Lord + Jesus says to us, “Friend, go up higher.” For He has paid the price for us to sit in the place of honor, by His side in Heaven, for all eternity. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:**

Lord God, heavenly Father, we pray Thee so to govern and guide us by Thy Holy Spirit that we may with all our heart hear and receive Thy Word, and truly sanctify the Lord’s Day, to the end that we may, in turn, be sanctified by Thy Word, that we may rest all our confidence and hope on Jesus Christ, Thy Son, amend our lives in accordance with Thy Word, and avoid every offense, until we shall, by Thy grace in Christ, be saved forever; through the same, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee 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!*