

Rogate  
St. John 16:23b-30  
May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
Sts. Peter & Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC  
Simpsonville, SC  
Pastor Jerald Dulas

## Ask, And You Will Receive

*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, Who through Thy Son didst promise us that whatsoever we ask in His Name Thou wilt give us: We beseech Thee, keep us in Thy Word, and grant us Thy Holy Spirit, that He may govern us according to Thy will; protect us from the power of the devil, from false doctrine and worship; also defend our lives against all danger; grant us Thy blessing and peace, that we may in all things perceive Thy merciful help, and both now and forever praise and glorify Thee as our gracious Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, 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.

The first part of the first verse of our Gospel pericope for the day we heard on Jubilate—two Sundays ago. It was the final verse of that Gospel reading from the Apostle and Evangelist St. John. Our Lord + Jesus said, “In that day you will ask me nothing.” Today, our Lord + Jesus tells us Who we are to ask. “Whatever you ask the Father in my Name He will give you.” When we pray, we ask the heavenly Father, through the Holy Ghost, for what we desire, in the Name of our Lord + Jesus. This is why many, if not all, of our collects end with a Trinitarian termination. We petition the Triune God, as One God, but implore all three Persons to hear our prayer and grant for us whatever we ask.

The promise that our Lord + Jesus has for us today is that whatever we ask in His Name, the Father will give to us. “Ask, and you will receive.” What a great promise for us poor, miserable sinners! Whatever that we ask of our Lord God, He will give to us. There is just a couple of problems with this. The problem is not because our Lord God is unwilling to grant what we ask. The problems lie with us. We are either unwilling to ask our Lord God for what we want, or forget to ask Him for what we want. Or, the problem is we ask for evil things, contrary to the Law and will of the Lord God.

He is not able to grant us some things for which we do not ask; we have to make known our requests. He is certainly gracious enough to grant us things without our asking, as we learn when we study about the Lord’s Prayer. His Name is hallowed without our prayer. His will is done without our prayer. His Kingdom comes without our prayer. He grants us daily bread, and even all evil people, without our prayer. But, He desires that we pray to Him and ask Him to grant us these things, and also forgiveness, as we forgive those who sin against us, and that He keeps us out of temptation, and that He would deliver us from the Evil One, and from an evil death (an evil death being one that leads to eternal damnation). He desires that we pray for all of these things, but in our sinful state we either forget to pray, or do not pray for them because we doubt whether He will actually grant them to us.

He is also not willing to grant us things for which we pray for with an evil, sinful intent. Even though He may grant these things to us to show us the folly of our prayers, and our ways, in His

compassion, He does not want us to ask for things that are not for our good and benefit. Consider how many people, ourselves included, in our anger and frustration, pray that our Lord God would cause some kind of harm to come to our enemies, or those who have angered us. If you are like me, you do this all the time when you are driving. You curse the person who is either zipping past you like a maniac, or cursing the person who is driving too slow in the fast lane like an idiot. In your anger and frustration, you call down the Lord God's wrath upon that person. These are not the things our Lord God would have us ask.

He would have us rather pray for our enemies. Even as we do in the General Prayer every Sunday. We pray that our enemies and adversaries would cease their enmity toward us and be inclined to walk with us in meekness and in peace. We are to pray for those who wish us harm. We are to pray for those who we think are wronging us. In doing so, we will find that in many cases we are the ones in the wrong, and the ones who need to repent and turn from our sins.

The Lord God desires to grant us all for which we pray. Our Lord + Jesus promises that what we ask the Father in His Name, He will grant to us. But there are things for which we pray that do not benefit us in a spiritual or eternal way. There are times when we treat our Triune Lord God as the eternal Santa Claus, or the never-ending candy dispenser; we treat Him as the genie in the lamp. We pray for all sorts of earthly things—worldly things—that do not benefit our souls, nor the souls of our neighbors in this life. We pray for riches, fame, and honor in a worldly sense. We want to have these things to the detriment of our fellowman. We want to appear to the world to be a better person than what we are. This is why having these things is not necessarily a bad, or evil thing, but our desire to use them selfishly is.

This is why we need to read these words “ask, and you will receive” in their context. We have to remember what night this is that our Lord + Jesus promises these things to His Apostles, and to us. This is the night our Lord's betrayal, arrest, and trial that will lead to His suffering and death on the cross the next day. He is preparing His Apostles, and the Church, for the “little while.” The time after His ascension, when He is not present with us the way that He was present with His Apostles. In that day, we will ask Him nothing, but we will go to the heavenly Father and ask Him to grant us forgiveness, life and salvation in the Name of the Lord + Jesus.

The Lord + Jesus will intercede to the Father on our behalf. He will show the Father His hands and feet and side—the signs of His atonement for us and all the world—and the Father will hear His Son and grant us forgiveness for His sake. The Holy Ghost will create faith in us to believe that what we ask the heavenly Father will grant us, so that when we say, “Amen,” we truly believe that what we have asked for the Triune Lord God will give to us.

When we remember that our Lord + Jesus is promising us that whatever we ask and pray for from the desires of our hearts we will receive from the heavenly Father on the night before His crucifixion, it puts our prayers in perspective. We remember what we learned when we studied the Lord's Prayer: that we are unworthy of all the things we ask. We deserve nothing for which we pray; not riches, fame, power, or honor; not the destruction of our enemies and adversaries. We are not even worthy of the good things we for which we pray: forgiveness of our sins, eternal life, and salvation. We are worthy of none of the things for which we pray, but our Triune Lord God grants them to us out of His abundant grace and compassion.

When we remember how unworthy we are to receive for what we ask, we also remember that our Lord + Jesus knows our unworthiness, and offers up His life as a ransom for us on the tree of the holy cross. He grants our petitions with His very own life and blood. He makes us worthy by claiming us as His own in the waters of Holy Baptism, and through His feeding us with His Body and Blood in bread and wine. He forgives us of our sins by wrapping us in His righteousness; the righteousness that

He won for the whole world on the tree of the holy cross and the righteousness that He grants to all those who believe on His Name. We are clothed in His righteousness, and therefore we can now pray to our heavenly Father for the things that we desire.

Through His Holy Ghost He teaches us to pray for those things that benefit our soul, and benefit the soul of our fellowman. He removes all selfishness from us, and fills us with the desire to do what is best for our neighbor, even if that help for our neighbor is to our detriment. The Holy Ghost teaches us to pray for all of our spiritual needs: that the Lord's Name would be hallowed among us; that His will would be done among us; that His Kingdom would come among us also; that He would forgive us of our trespasses; that He would lead us out of temptation; and that He would deliver us from the Evil One and an evil death. The Holy Ghost also teaches us to give thanks to our heavenly Father for providing us all that we need to support this body and life—our daily bread.

Therefore, my dear friends, as we enter into this Rogation Week—this week of prayer and fasting—let us pray to the heavenly Father, through the Holy Ghost, in the Name of our Lord + Jesus for all that is necessary to support our body and life—both our physical, and especially, our spiritual needs of forgiveness, life and salvation. Let us pray for our enemies, and our neighbors, that everyone in all the world may turn from their sinful ways, and believe on the Name of the Lord + Jesus as the One and Only Savior of mankind. Let us give thanks that He has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light by revealing to us the truth of His Word. Let us pray that we might ever be preserved in this Christian faith, so that He might carry us through this life to our eternal home in Heaven. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:**

Lord God, our heavenly Father, Who by Thy Son hast promised to give us whatsoever we shall ask in His Name, we beseech Thee, grant us the power of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may make known our requests unto Thee in faithful prayer, and desire of Thee that which is well-pleasing to Thee and profitable for us, lifting up holy hands without wrath or doubting, and being firmly assured that Thou wilt hear our prayer; through Jesus Christ, 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!*