

The Fourth Sunday after Trinity Sunday
St. Luke 6:36-42
July 5th, 2020
Sts. Peter & Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
Pastor Jerald Dulas

Your Father Also Is Merciful

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 art merciful, and through Christ didst promise us, that Thou wilt neither judge nor condemn us, but graciously forgive us all our sins, and abundantly provide for all our wants of body and soul: We pray Thee, that by Thy Holy Spirit Thou wilt establish in our hearts a confident faith in Thy mercy, and teach us also to be merciful to our neighbor, that we may not judge or condemn others, but willingly forgive all men, and, judging only ourselves, lead blessed lives in Thy fear, through Thy dear 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.

Our Lord + Jesus says today in the Gospel reading from the Evangelist St. Luke, the Sixth chapter, "Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.' Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven." Many people, especially Christians and non-Christians who want to remain secure in their sinful behavior, want to focus on the words, "Judge not." But the focus of our Lord's words is not so much on not being a judge of one's neighbor, but of being a hypocrite. A hypocrite is someone who judges and condemns other people for the same things that they are doing. This is what our Lord + Jesus says towards the end of the Gospel reading. You have a plank in your eye on account of your continuing in sin and living a sinful life, while at the same time to are accusing and judging your neighbor with a speck in his eye; for the sin that you continue to do.

What our Lord + Jesus is ultimately getting at is that no one is without sin. No one is better or more righteous than any other person. For we are all sinners, just like was mentioned in last Sunday's sermon. We are all sinners and deserving of God's eternal wrath and displeasure. But even though we are all sinners, as I said last week, there are two types of sinners: the repentant and the impenitent; those who are sorry for their sins and wish to live better and holy lives, and those who want to continue to go on living in their sins, and still claim a semblance of righteousness. The repentant place their faith in the righteousness of the Christ, our Lord + Jesus. The impenitent stubbornly hold on to their righteousness through their self-perceived righteousness. In other words, the impenitent are only righteous in their own sight. They are not righteous in the eyes of the Triune Lord God.

This is why the impenitent are blind guides. Everyone they lead is also blind and so they both fall into a ditch, because they cannot see that they have no righteousness in themselves; they fail to see just how full of sin they really are. This is the way of the world. There are so many who are so self-absorbed with their own righteousness that they fail to see that they are on the path of eternal destruction. This is why they lash out at those who point out the Law to them, because they do not want to admit that the way that they live, and what they choose to believe is in error. They refuse to believe

that their way of life is worthy of God's eternal wrath and displeasure. This is why the focus on the "Judge not" part of today's Gospel reading from the Evangelist St. Luke. They do not want you judging them; they want to hold onto their sinful and corrupt behavior.

Such a person lacks mercy. For mercy can only be given by someone who understands the consequence of their sinful actions. Someone who does not want to admit their sinful actions cannot show mercy, because they do not know what it means to live in fear of eternal damnation on account of their sins.

We can be merciful because we know how full of sin we are. We know that we break the Ten Commandments daily and often. Even when we come to church and confess our sins, we are right back out there in the world committing the same sins of which we confessed. The devil knows how to lead us into sin and shame. Our own flesh knows how to fulfill its sinful desires. The Old Adam keeps rearing his ugly head. Therefore, we know what it means to receive mercy from the Triune Lord God. We know what it means to be forgiven of our sins. We know what it means to hear those words "Your sins are forgiven." It is a relief. It is pure joy. For we know that this forgiveness is not account of anything that we did; it is not because we have somehow obtained some superior level of righteousness, and now the Lord God views us differently.

No, we know that our forgiveness is dependent upon what our Lord + Jesus has done for us. He also understands mercy, even as His Father also is merciful, for He suffered the full weight of our sin on the tree of the holy cross. He bore our punishment—the torture that we deserved on account of our sins—in His holy and innocent Body on the tree of the holy cross. He knows what it means to suffer for our sins, and so He too is merciful. His Father is also merciful, because our Lord + Jesus intercedes for us to the heavenly Father. They desire that we might be saved. They desire all mankind to be saved, but many in this world instead of clinging in faith to the Lord + Jesus and His works and merits, and repenting of their sins, foolishly deceive themselves into thinking that there is righteousness in the lives that they live and things that they do. They refuse to take the plank out of their eyes, and can only point out the speck in our eyes, because we have desired to rescue them from their path of destruction.

The impenitent by their continuation in sin, continue to blind guides of the blind. They choose to all into the ditch of sin. They choose the path of their destruction. They refuse to see that there is no one who is righteous; no, not one person who is righteous apart from faith in the Lord + Jesus. It is bad news for them, for it means they are choosing eternal destruction in Hell.

Those who repent of their sins, know the cost of sin; they know what the penalty of sin it—what its wages are. The repentant know that the wage of sin is death; eternal death. But they also know that our Lord + Jesus paid the wages of death by His suffering and death on the tree of the holy cross. Because of His innocent life and obedience and fulfillment of the Ten Commandments, His suffering and death paid the penalty of our sins. We deserved death on account of our sins, but the gift of the Lord God is eternal life with Him, because He desired to show us mercy. He desired to not treat us the way that we deserve to be treated. For in coming down from Heaven and taking upon our flesh, without sin, He lived among us as one of us, and He learned from us what it is like to live in this corrupt world constantly being tempted into sin by the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh.

On account of this He has compassion upon all those who remove the plank from their eye—who repent of their sins, and turn to Him and His works and merits in faith. He has compassion upon us. He is merciful to us. And we knowing Him and His mercy, and knowing how much we have gained through faith in Him, also freely show mercy to our fellowman who also struggles with sin. We are ready to forgive our brother in Christ when He sins against us. We are ready to show mercy to each other, because we all know how much we daily struggle with sin. We know what that fight is like. And so we know what that fight is like for our fellowman who also struggles with sin. Therefore, we gladly show

him mercy. We readily forgive him his sins, especially the sins he commits against us. For just as we are always ready to confess our sins, and own up to the wrongs that we have done, and ask forgiveness when we hurt and harm our neighbor through our actions, they are ready to forgive us just as we forgive them.

The truth of the matter is that we are all poor, miserable sinners seeking the Lord God's mercy. Our Father in Heaven is merciful to us on account of the works and merits of the Lord + Jesus. Let us also remember that our brothers in Christ, and our fellowman, are also poor, miserable sinners, who struggle with sin daily, and are in desperate need of our forgiveness whenever they confess their sins; whenever they come before this altar on bended knee and beg for forgiveness for all the wrongs that they have done. Our Lord + Jesus is here to offer us all forgiveness through His wonderful gifts. His mercy is abundant. It will be given to you in good measure, and it will be running over and will be put into your bosom. His mercy is given abundantly whenever we come to this holy house, and He pours His mercy into our ears through the preaching of the Gospel, and pours it onto our tongues through His Body and Blood given to us in bread and wine. When we are here in this place, He shows us mercy by forgiving us of all our sins, even though we are not worthy. May we also learn to show mercy in the same way to others. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Merciful God and Father, Who makest Thy sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and art kind unto the unthankful, teach us by Thy Holy Spirit, we beseech Thee, to have compassion on all men, covering our neighbor's frailties and faults, being always ready to forgive, and showing forth everywhere the fruits of faith; 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!