

The Seventh Sunday after Trinity Sunday
St. Mark 8:1-9
July 26th, 2020
Sts. Peter & Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
Pastor Jerald Dulas

How Can One Satisfy These People?

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 in the wilderness didst by Thy Son abundantly feed four thousand men besides women and children with seven loaves and a few small fishes: We beseech Thee, graciously abide among us with Thy blessing, and keep us from covetousness and the cares of this life, that we may seek first Thy Kingdom and Thy righteousness, and in all things needful for body and soul, experience Thine ever-present help; through Thy Son, our Lord Jesus 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.

We pray in the Fourth Petition of the Lord's Prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread." When we pray this, we are asking our Triune Lord God to grant to us all of the wants and needs of the body and this life. Certainly, asking for "daily bread" includes the bread—the food to sustain our bodies—which we eat every day. However, daily bread includes not just our physical needs, but also our spiritual needs. We are daily in desperate need of our Lord's protection from our enemies of the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh. This is why we remain steadfast in the Word of God. It is why we daily and often study the Word of God and respond to what our Lord God says in His Word with daily prayer. We daily have a conversation with our Lord God. He speaks to us through His holy Word, and we respond in prayer by responding with His Word that we have just heard.

This is why the Psalter has been called the "Christian's Prayer Book." For in the Psalms our Lord God gives us the words to express our sin and woe in this life through our daily praying of the Psalter. This is why a schedule is listed in the bulletin each week that will take us daily through the Psalms, and will have us praying the entire Psalter every month. There is a Psalm appointed for morning and evening for each week, and also a continuous praying of the Psalms from one to one-fifty.

It is essential for us poor, miserable sinners in this life to remain faithful to our prayer and study of the Word of God. We are constantly surrounded by our enemies of the devil, the world and our sinful flesh. If we could see just how many slings and arrows are aimed at our head every second of every minute of every hour of every day, we would not cease to continue studying the Word of God and pray to Him every day—every minute—of our lives. This is why there is a schedule of readings from God's Word for us to follow printed each week in the bulletin. There is the daily lectionary from the Lutheran Hymnal, and there is a course of readings that take us through the entire Bible, including the Apocrypha, each year. Because we are under constant attack, it is important for us remain faithful to our weapons of prayer and studying of God's Word.

The crowds in the Gospel reading from the Evangelist St. Mark appear to understand this need

to hear the Word of the Lord. For the Evangelist St. Mark records that the multitudes had come from afar and spent three days in the wilderness with Him. They did this without any seeming concern for their daily needs. They were not concerned about daily bread. They only wished to hear the Lord + Jesus. Their concern was for their spiritual well-being. This is certainly good and proper, and it serves as an example to us of how important remaining steadfast in the Word of God truly is.

Our Lord + Jesus, however, also recognizes their physical needs. Here the multitudes have continued with our Lord + Jesus for three days hearing His Word, but our Lord + Jesus, having lived thirty plus years as a man, knows that the body needs food. Fasting is certainly fine outward training. Skipping a meal certainly gives us time and opportunity to spend more time in study of God's Word and prayer. But our bodies still need food. We need the physical gifts of our Lord + Jesus even as we need His spiritual gifts. This is why we daily and often pray the Lord's Prayer and pray "Give us this day our daily bread," because we need the physical needs and wants of the body given to us by our Lord + Jesus every day.

It is also why we pray this prayer often throughout the day, because those petitions need to be repeated not only to request the Lord for the petitions prayed in the Lord's Prayer, but also for our ears to hear what we need from our Lord God. If we follow the suggestions of Martin Luther in his Small Catechism, we would pray the Lord's Prayer daily when we rise in the morning, before and after every meal, and before we lie down at night to go to sleep. This is how we continue with the Lord + Jesus every day and every hour, not just for three days, but for every day of our lives.

Our Lord + Jesus knows our wants and needs even before we ask them. But we still make our petitions known to Him. He knew the needs of the multitudes. They had continued with Him for three days, and if they were sent home they would faint on the way. For they fasting with Him for three days, content to only receive the bread of the Word of God. Therefore, our Lord + Jesus has compassion on the multitudes. He turns to His Apostles and tells them that He intends to feed them here in the wilderness. Notice that He does not ask the Apostles to supply the food. He does not even ask—at this point—how much food they have. He just simply tells them that He is going to supply the multitudes with food for their journey home.

It is the Apostles who ask, "How can one satisfy these people with bread in the wilderness?" It is then that our Lord + Jesus asks, "How many loaves do you have?" He does not ask this as a logistical question; He is not trying to figure out if they have enough food to feed the four thousand men, plus women and children. He asks to show the Apostles that He can provide for the multitudes even with seven loaves and few small fish. He can provide so abundantly that there will be seven baskets full of leftovers remaining, even after everyone has eaten to their full.

This is how the Triune Lord God provides for us His people. He provides us abundantly with all of our daily bread. He also supplies us daily with all of our wants and needs of the soul. Daily we can certainly study the Word of God, and pray. But here in this house of God—in this holy sanctuary—we gather every week, and as often as we can to receive the Lord God's spiritual gifts. We gather as the body of Christ, to receive the Christ. He gives of Himself through the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the Blessed Sacraments. This is why He sends to us Ministers of His Word—Deacons and Pastors—to give us these precious and beloved gifts. This evening we will receive another Minister of the Lord God who will faithfully dispense the gifts of the Lord God to us. I encourage you all to make effort to attend in person or online and receive this faithful minister into our midst. For, he has been called by you to give you the gifts of the Lord + Jesus.

He has been called to preach the Word of God in its truth and purity and to administer the Blessed Sacraments according to Christ's institution for your benefit. He was sent by the Lord + Jesus to show us the compassion of the Lord + Jesus. He was sent to us by the Lord + Jesus to satisfy all

these people with the bread of the Word of God; to teach us to remain steadfast to the Word of God, and to continue with our Lord + Jesus daily in prayer and study of God's Word. This is how the Lord + Jesus continues to show mercy to us poor, miserable sinners in the wilderness of this life—who cling to Him in faith and cling to His Word daily—He gathers us together in this place to receive the gifts that He wishes to pour out upon us abundantly. So that even as the Apostles distributed the bread and fish to the multitudes, the ministers of our Lord + Jesus today distribute the gifts of the Lord + Jesus to us here in this place.

We do not only receive our physical needs from the Lord + Jesus, but more importantly we receive our spiritual needs. For in this life filled with sin as we are surrounded by our enemies, we need constant help and support in our spiritual warfare. Our Lord + Jesus supplies our weapons by reminding us that He is the One Who has already fought the battle and won. He has suffered and died on the tree of the holy cross after perfectly fulfilling the Law of God for us. He has won for us an eternal victory. He has promised us the crown of eternal life. Many things in this life seek to draw us away from this promise. They cause doubt, despair, self-righteousness and the like. Our Lord + Jesus has compassion on us and knows how to satisfy all of us with His Word and Sacraments. Through His promises proclaimed in the Word and the Sacraments, He reveals to us that He does have compassion on not only the multitudes, but upon us poor, miserable sinners, as well.

Therefore, my dear friends, let us remain steadfastly in the Word of God and prayer. Let us continue to daily and often pray in the Fourth petition of the Lord's Prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread." For our Lord + Jesus desires to have compassion on us and supply all of our needs of body and soul. He desires to satisfy us all in this wilderness. He knows our needs and well supplies them. Let us daily give Him thanks that He has called us into the Church to receive His gifts often that our souls may be strengthened, and we may not faint in the wilderness, but finally in the end make it to our home far away from this world of sin and shame—our eternal home in Heaven. May the Triune Lord God grant this unto us all. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, Whose mercies are new unto us every morning, and Who, though we have in no wise deserved Thy goodness, dost abundantly provide for all our wants of body and soul: give us, we pray Thee, Thy Holy Spirit, that we may heartily acknowledge Thy merciful goodness toward us, give thanks for all Thy benefits, and serve Thee in willing obedience; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. Amen.

The Votum:

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

Soli Deo Gloria!