

The Seventh Sunday after Trinity Sunday
St. Mark 8:1-9
July 18th, 2021
Sts. Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
St. Michael and All Angels Evangelical Lutheran Mission, UAC
Augusta, GA
Pastor Jerald Dulas

They Set Them Before the Multitudes

In Nomine Iesu!

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

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

O Almighty God, heavenly Father, Whom to know is everlasting life, Whose service is perfect freedom, enable us by Thy grace, we beseech Thee, to take upon us willingly Thy easy yoke, and to yield all our members servants to righteousness, that we may render unto Thee filial obedience, under the perfect law of liberty, and may after this present life obtain eternal inheritance in glory; through Thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One 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.

Like the crowds in today's pericope from the Evangelist St. Mark's Gospel who were in the wilderness, we too are in a wilderness. We live and breathe in the wilderness of the world. The conditions of the wilderness are harsh. There is little or no food. There is little or no water. Wild beasts roam about seeking whom they may devour. This is the same for the wilderness of the world. There is little or no spiritual food found in the wilderness. False doctrine and false religions abound. There is little or no spiritual drink found in this wilderness world. All of the false religions of the world point one to their own behavior and good works. "Be a good person," they say, "and you will go to Heaven." Such are the lies of the world that leave many in this world starving and thirsty and causing them to faint on the road of their long journey.

But just like the crowds in the Gospel reading from the Evangelist St. Mark, we are not alone in this wilderness world. They were in the presence of the Lord + Jesus. When we are brought into the ark of the holy Christendom—into the ark of the Church—we are also brought into the presence of our one and only Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Here in the Church, the Lord + Jesus has sent to us His Holy Ghost, Who satiates our hunger and quenches our thirst through the means of grace. The preaching of the Word of God is food for our soul. Those in the world who only listen to the false religions of the world do not have the proper food for the soul. They continue to go through this world seeking for true food that will satisfy their soul. They will find none in the world. We will find none in the world. Only in the Church is their food for our soul. For the Word of God gives to us the Bread of Life—our Lord + Jesus.

The Lord + Jesus has fulfilled the Law on our behalf perfectly, and He has suffered our punishment on the tree of the holy cross unto death. He conquered sin, death and the devil on the tree of the holy cross, and He gives to all those who cling to Him in faith the rewards that He won by His suffering and death. He atoned for the sins of the whole world, and He gives the rewards of His atonement to all those who believe on Him. Those who believe on Him are justified before the heavenly

throne of the heavenly Father. This is true food for our soul for it takes our salvation out of our hands, and puts it firmly in the hands of the One Who can actually accomplish our salvation. If our salvation is left in our hands, we remain in doubt. This is why any Gospel which attributes any portion of our salvation in our hands is no Gospel at all. A Gospel that is only partially the result of our Lord + Jesus' works is no Gospel at all, and is therefore no food for our soul. For doubts will creep in. The devil is always looking for a way in to destroy our faith, and casting doubts into our minds about our salvation is one way that he does it.

This is why the world remains starving and thirsting in this world, for they remain filled with doubts. The Holy Ghost, however, in the Church continues to feed our soul by continuously placing into our minds and hearts the promise of salvation found in the Lord + Jesus alone. In the Church we are given a steady diet of our Lord and Savior and His works and merits on our behalf. This is done through the pure preaching of the Word of God—through the pure preaching of the Gospel of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. But our Lord God is superabundant in His gifts and promises toward us. He does not just feed us with His Word. He does not just feed us with the Bread of the Word of God.

Like the crowds in today's Gospel from the Evangelist St. Mark He gives us to eat actual bread. This bread is the very true and substantial Body of our Lord + Jesus. He gives us to eat of His Body in bread at this altar. The Body of our Lord + Jesus gives to us forgiveness, as we remember and proclaim His death on our behalf on bended knee. We come to this altar and receive Bread from Heaven for the remission of all of our sins. Our Lord + Jesus even gives us to drink of His Blood in the wine which we receive at this altar. This Body and Blood in bread and wine provides us with the remission of our sins. And where there is remission of sins, there are also eternal life and salvation promised and delivered.

Our Lord + Jesus does not leave us hungering and thirsting in this wilderness world, but He supplies our needs of body and soul. He provided this for the crowds in the wilderness in the Gospel from St. Mark. He had been preaching to them for three days straight. Their souls were filled His preaching for three days straight as they followed Him deeper and deeper into the wilderness. After three days, they were stranded in the wilderness with no means to satisfy their needs for the journey home. Our Lord + Jesus in His compassion provides not only for their spiritual needs by preaching to them in the wilderness, but also supplies their physical needs by supplying them with bread and fish, as much as they desired, to have the strength for their journey back home.

The Lord + Jesus also sustains us in this life by providing needs of body and soul. He does not leave us to wander in this wilderness to our eternal destruction, but He provides His means of grace to us through the work of the Holy Ghost to draw us closer to Him, and keep us in this one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church until He calls us to our eternal home in Heaven.

Therefore, my dear friends, let us not forsake these gifts that our Lord + Jesus would have us receive. For these gifts sustain us on our journey in this wilderness world, as we face the trials and temptations of this life. We are surrounded by false doctrine and false religions. The devil and his demons attack us from within and without, both through our inner doubts and struggles, and through various physical and worldly dangers that they place before us. Our Lord + Jesus does not leave us without hope and help in this world, though. He places us into His Church where He feeds us with the Word of God; the Word that dispels all doubts in us. For this Word of God preaches into our ears that the promises of forgiveness of sins, eternal life and salvation are for us. They are for all those who cling to the works and merits of the Christ in faith.

Let us therefore us these gifts for our benefit. Let us rejoice daily in our Holy Baptism, where we have been washed clean and pure from all sins and stand before the Lord God in the white robes of our Lord's righteousness that He won for us. Let us rejoice daily to read, study, learn, mark, and inwardly digest the Word of God, and give thanks to the Lord God daily in prayer for keeping us in the one, true

faith until He calls us to our eternal home. Let us rejoice that the Pastor preaches into our ears that our sins are forgiven, not because of anything we have done, but solely because of the Christ, the Anointed One of the Lord God. Finally, let us rejoice that we get to come to this altar as the Body of Christ, united in faith and doctrine, to receive the very Body and Blood of our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ for the remission of all of our sins.

The crowds were not left to hunger and thirst in the wilderness after hearing the preaching of the Lord + Jesus. Neither are we left to hunger and thirst in this wilderness of the world when we attend preaching and the Sacraments. For our Lord + Jesus feeds and sustains our faith in Him through the work of the Holy Ghost, and continues to keep us in this one, true Christian Church on Earth—the Church Militant—until we join with Him and all the saints and angels in Heaven, in the one, true Christian Church Triumphant. May the 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!