

The Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity Sunday
St. Luke 10:23-37
August 29th, 2021
Sts. Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
All Saints Evangelical Lutheran Mission, UAC
Myrtle Beach, SC
Pastor Jerald Dulas

Go and Do Likewise

In Nomine Iesu!

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

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

Almighty and Everlasting God, Whose faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds, and Whose mercy endureth forever, be pleased to confirm and fulfill in us, we humbly beseech Thee, the covenant of Thy grace, made sure from the beginning of the world in Christ Jesus, our Lord, that we may be found in Him, not having our own righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, even the righteousness of God, which is by faith in Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe, to Whom, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Today we have the parable of the Good Samaritan from the Evangelist St. Luke's Gospel. There are many who mistakenly use this text as a means to preach about how we should be more like the Good Samaritan. We are to do just as he has done for our neighbor. After all, does not our Lord + Jesus say at the end of the pericope that the certain lawyer questioning Him was to "Go and do likewise." Therefore, we are to be more like the Good Samaritan in the parable from the Gospel reading. But this kind of thinking actually misses the point of the entire parable. This parable is not about being more like the Good Samaritan; it is about how we cannot be like the Good Samaritan at all.

Remember how the certain lawyer began his questioning of our Lord + Jesus. What is the first question that he asks our Lord? "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" The certain lawyer is looking for some work that he can do in order to appease the Lord God's wrath. So, since the lawyer is looking for a law answer, the Lord + Jesus gives him a law answer: "What is written in the law?" If we look for our salvation in the Law of God the only answer we can give is the same as the certain lawyer, to love the Lord God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind, and love our neighbor as ourselves. If we are looking for some work that we can do to earn salvation, like the certain lawyer was, there can be no other response from our Lord than, "Go and do likewise." In other words, if you want to save yourself by the Law of God; by your obedience to the Ten Commandments than you will need to love the Lord God with all your heart, soul, strength and mind, perfectly. You will need to love your neighbor as yourself, perfectly.

The parable of the Good Samaritan is not about how to act towards your neighbor and be saved. It is about how we are unable to do this work and be saved. The response of our Lord + Jesus to "Go and do likewise" is not advice on how to be saved, it is a condemnation against those who would trust in their own works as a means of their salvation. "Go and do likewise, and see if that will bring you salvation." It will not. We are not to picture ourselves in the person of the Good Samaritan from the

parable of our Lord + Jesus. If anything, we are to see how poorly we do act towards our neighbor.

The certain man that fell among thieves on his way from Jerusalem to Jericho is not the friend of the person who bandages his wounds and takes care of him. If this certain man had met the Samaritan on the road, he would not have given him the time of day. The Samaritans were hated by the Jews; they were their enemies. The Jews considered them to be outside of the veil of salvation. That the Samaritan has compassion on somebody that would consider him an enemy, is not something that we would readily do. How often do we even pray for our enemies, let alone give them the care and need of which they have need? No, rather we daily and often wish harm to come to our enemies. This is who our Lord is telling the certain lawyer, and us, who our neighbor is; our neighbor includes the person who is our enemy; the person we would rather see evil come upon than offer help.

This is why this parable of our Lord is not a parable encouraging us to be better neighbors. We are incapable of being better neighbors for we are filled with sinful thoughts, words, and deeds every day of our life, especially when it comes to the people we dislike. Does that mean that we should forget about being good to our fellowman? Are we to go on continuing to help only those who would appreciate and give us thanks for our help? Of course not! As Christians we should desire to love the Lord God with all of our heart, soul, strength and mind, even though we daily fail miserably. We should desire to love our neighbor as ourselves and do what we can to help all those in need. This is what the Law of God requires. But we should never think that our doing of these things is going to be the reason for our salvation. We are not saved by our works; not even in the least bit.

We are saved by the works of the Lord + Jesus alone. Our faith trusts in His works alone, and not in our works at all. This is why we should not picture ourselves in the role of the Good Samaritan from the parable, but rather picture our Lord + Jesus in the role of the Good Samaritan. He is the One Who comes down from Heaven to bear our flesh and fulfill the Law of God perfectly, and suffer and die in our place on the tree of the holy cross.

He comes down from Heaven and finds us poor, miserable sinners laid low by the thieves of the devil, the world and our sinful flesh—by our enemies. We are stripped of the righteousness in which our Lord God created us. We, like our first parents, are stripped of the image of God in which we were created. We are left naked; our sins are seen by the Lord God and by everyone. Our nakedness is a testament to the sin that dwells in each one of us. Not only has sin robbed us of the image of the Lord God; of the righteousness in which He created us, but our enemies of the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh have left us half dead. A dead person can do nothing. A dead person is not able to perform any good works. This is how our Lord + Jesus—the Good Samaritan—found us in this world when He came down from Heaven to bear our flesh as one of us. He found us naked and beaten half to death by the sin that exists in this world and in us.

It is He that bandages up our wounds, pouring upon them oil and wine. He anoints our spiritual wounds of sin with His Blood, and pours faith into our hearts by the work of the Holy Ghost through the preaching of the pure Word of God and the right administration of the Blessed Sacraments. He then carries us upon His own animal to the place where we are cared for until He returns. He brings us into the Church to be cared for by the innkeeper—the ministers of our Lord—who are given the two coins of the Law and Gospel to preach into our ears the words of healing found in the One Who gave Himself as a ransom for all mankind, so that all those who believe on Him have eternal life, and are saved.

This is the work of our Lord + Jesus alone. We are unable to save ourselves, because we have been beaten by the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh until we have reached the door of death. We live in this world half dead and unable to save ourselves by our keeping of the Law. Given this, how are we supposed to “Go and do likewise.” We cannot. We are unable to save ourselves by our keeping of the Law of God. Therefore, we should not picture ourselves in the role of the Good Samaritan, but

rather picture our Lord + Jesus in the role of the Good Samaritan. He has come to this world to bandage up our spiritual wounds cause by our sin and sin in this world, and take us to the place for which He can offer us care and hope.

In the Introit for today, we sing to our Lord to have respect for His covenant. What is the covenant our Lord has with us? This covenant is the promise that He made to our first parents in the Garden of Eden after they fell into sin. The promise is that He would send to them a Savior. This Savior is found in the Lord + Jesus and His works and merits alone. Knowing that our salvation is secure on account of the promise of our Lord God, we can firmly believe that we are saved by His works and merits. Knowing this we can also follow His example and love the Lord God with our whole heart, soul, strength and mind, and love our neighbor as ourselves. Not because we think we can be saved by these things, but through the faith dwelling in us, we desire to follow our Lord's example and love our neighbors just as our Lord God loves us. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

O Lord Jesus Christ, our Good Samaritan and only Mediator, Who, seeing us in our guilt and blood, didst have pity upon us, and of Thy infinite mercy didst give Thy innocent Blood in payment for our sins that we might live, we humbly thank and praise Thee, that Thou hast saved us from destruction, and by Thy holy Word hast brought us to the saving knowledge of Thee, our only Savior and Redeemer; and we beseech Thee, enable us by Thy Holy Spirit to love Thee, the true God, with our whole heart and our neighbor as ourselves, that we may show mercy on all men in their need, bind up their wounds with tender care, and ever in this evil world follow Thy example of love and service, Who livest and reignest with the Father 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!