

The Festival of St. Titus, Bishop and Confessor
St. Luke 10:1-9
January 26th, 2025
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
Pastor Jerald Dulas

The Harvest Indeed Is Plenteous

In Nomine Iesu!

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

Sermon Text:

“And He said unto them, ‘The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He send forth laborers into His harvest.’”

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

O Lord, send out Thy Light and Thy Truth, let them lead us. O Lord, open Thou my lips, that my mouth may show forth Thy praise. O Lord, graciously preserve me, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected. Amen.

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

My dear friends, the Lord God in the Flesh comes to redeem mankind, to make for Himself a people who were no people: by healing souls afflicted and burdened by sin, by inviting and welcoming back the rebellious, wasteful sons, by opening His house and table to the Gentiles, the Prostitutes and Tax-collectors, the sinners. He sends out seventy emissaries with a message of peace and hope: “The Kingdom of God is nigh unto you.” But some do not want peace. His message reveals the thoughts of their hearts. It causes the rising and falling of many. And the anger, the hatred, the betrayal, and the violence He inspires first against Himself and then, against His followers, pierces St. Mary’s soul like a sword. It will pierce your soul, also.

The Kingdom of God is here in Christ + Jesus. It is where the Lord God rules by grace, by forgiveness, through His Word. But that Kingdom is a threat to the devil’s kingdom. The devil rules by lust, greed, and fear, through coercion, bribes, and lies. No man can be a citizen of both kingdoms, can have two masters. So, the devil fights for every soul, wages war against every bearer of that holy peace, turning brother against brother, friend against friend, breaking hearts and piercing souls along the way. He divides the Kingdom by dangling petty rewards, offering earthly glory and honor he cannot give, recruiting traitors and encouraging treason for a fading and unsatisfying moment of fleshly pleasure. And the casualties are great. Ten thousand fall. The sons of Judas, those self-seekers and promoters, attempt to steal the kingdom for themselves and the devil’s lying “gospel” of “peace” that the Lord + Jesus did not bring, of “peace” without sacrifice or the True God, of “peace” that is no peace.

Where are those noble men of old, who counted not the cost, whose conviction was matched only by their courage and their zeal to proclaim the Truth? Who will stand against the prince of Hell and suffer his abuse? Who will boldly say that the Triune Lord God is good? Where are those who will not turn, who will not compromise, who will not lie to save face or to gain an earthly reward? St. Titus, the Bishop and Confessor was such a saint that did not compromise on the truth. That is why He is call “confessor” because he boldly confessed the truth. He was a student of St. Paul. St. Paul was a Hebrew of Hebrews, circumcised on the eighth day, just like all male babies born of the seed of Abraham. But

St. Titus was a Greek. With him St. Paul set an example for all Gentiles to follow. Salvation was found in faith in the Christ, not in circumcision of the flesh. It was found in the circumcision of the heart, that is, faith. St. Titus and St. Paul determined for the good of the Church that St. Titus should remain uncircumcised. He would be a testament to what St. Paul had been teaching.

St. Titus would also go on to preach and teach the same things that St. Paul taught. He taught in various places. Eventually landed in the city of Crete, where according to Church tradition he became bishop of that place. St. Titus is mentioned throughout St. Paul's writings, and in the writing of St. Luke, the Book of Acts. The Gospel reading has our Lord send our seventy men to preach the Word, to prepare the way of the Lord. St. Titus was also sent into the region of Asia Minor to prepare the way of the Lord by proclaiming that the Lord + Jesus who suffered and died on the tree of the holy cross, also rose again from the dead on the third day. He preached and taught, and baptized all those who confessed the Name of the Lord + Jesus, teaching all who would hear that we are saved by the circumcision of the heart, not of the flesh. We are saved by faith.

Judaizing Christians would try to preach against St. Paul and St. Titus. They would enslave mankind again under the Law. St. Titus continued to faithfully preach what he had learned from his teacher, from St. Paul.

Because the truth of the Word of God cannot be stopped. It is not driven by our worthiness, by our keeping of the Law of Moses, but by His! Those seventy in the Gospel reading from the Evangelist St. Luke preached against all odds, announced the arrival of the Kingdom in God's Son, the Son of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It was also planted by St. Titus in a different region and in a different land. And, by the Lord God's good grace it was also preached by those who learned from the twelve Apostles, from the seventy sent out by our Lord + Jesus, from St. Paul, and even from St. Titus, so that now in far off and unlikely places, across an ocean and a sea, through the years, that goodly seed takes root and grows and bears a hundredfold here in our midst! That Word, so boldly confessed by St. Titus, is good. That Word, defended by St. Titus' unwillingness to submit to circumcision of the flesh, is powerful. That Word, delivered and confessed by the bishop St. Titus, changes sinners into saints, converts cowards into heroes, creates confidence in the depressed and worried, and makes ordinary men into bishops and confessors. For that Word does not fail. It will not pass away. Through St. Titus, that dear bishop and confessor, the Lord God has left unto us that same, mighty Word and revealed salvation through faith alone. Because of faithful men like St. Titus, the Kingdom ours, remaineth. May the Lord of the harvest send more faithful laborers like St. Titus into His harvest, for the harvest is plenteous, but the faithful laborers are few.

For the Lord God in the Flesh came to redeem mankind, to make for Himself a people who were no people: by healing souls afflicted and burdened by sin, by inviting and welcoming back the rebellious, wasteful sons, by opening His house and table to the Gentiles, the Prostitutes and Tax-collectors, the sinners, to the uncircumcised in flesh. Come, O ye children of the Word, ye citizens of grace, ye friends of the True God and receive the medicine of immortality. The Lord's Body and Blood given and shed for the remission of all our sins. For we have been circumcised in the heart by faith. We cling to His promise of forgiveness and redemption through the bread and wine which is His Body and Blood. Come, my dear friends, and be healed of your transgressions. Enjoy the foretaste of the Feast of the Lamb in His Kingdom which has no end, and receive life everlasting. For the angels and archangels and the whole company of Heaven is gathered around this altar with us to remember and proclaim the good thing that our Lord + Jesus did for us. He won for forgiveness, life, and salvation by His suffering and death on the tree of the holy cross, and rose again the third day to open the way into Heaven for all those who cling to Him in faith. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Almighty God, be pleased to accompany Thy Word with Thy Holy Spirit and grant that Thy Word

would increase faith in us; bring into the Way of Truth all such as have erred; turn the hearts of the unrepentant; and for sake of Thy Name grant succor to all heavy hearts and those who are heavy-laden, that they may through the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ be relieved and preserved so that they succumb not to the temptation of despair but rather that they gain the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil; through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with the 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!