

The Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity Sunday
St. Luke 17:11-19
September 10th, 2023
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
St. Michael and All Angels Ev. Lutheran Mission, UAC
Augusta, GA
Pastor Jerald Dulas

Jesus, Master, Have Mercy on Us

In Nomine Iesu!

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

Sermon Text:

And as He entered into a certain village, there met Him ten men that were lepers, who stood afar off: and they lifted up their voices, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us."

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

Lord God, heavenly Father, Who by Thy Son Jesus Christ hast delivered us through Thy Word and Holy Baptism from the dread leprosy of sin, and art pleased daily to manifest Thy gracious help in our every need, we beseech Thee, awaken our hearts by Thy Holy Spirit, that we may never be unmindful of Thy benefits, but ever live in Thy fear and perfect trust in Thy mercy, and with a joyous heart thank and praise Thee; through 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.

St. Luke the Evangelist tells us that our Lord + Jesus is heading toward Jerusalem. This is the third notification given in St. Luke's Gospel that our Lord is heading toward Jerusalem. This is also mentioned in chapters nine and fifteen. What the writer of the Gospel is getting at is that our Lord is on His way to sacrifice Himself for the sins of the world. The true High Priest will offer up the one, true sacrifice of the spotless Lamb of God to redeem the world from sin, death and the power of the devil. Our Lord + Jesus is on His way to Jerusalem as the events of today's pericope unfold. It is wise for us to remember them, for St. Luke does not say these words in vain.

While our Lord + Jesus is on His way to Jerusalem, He is found in between the borders of Galilee and Samaria; Galilee being on the north and Samaria on the south. As He enters into a certain city (the name of which we are not told) He is met by ten lepers. As we hear later in the narrative, nine of the lepers are Jews, and one is a Samaritan. A couple of things to note about this: the region that our Lord is in—between Galilee and Samaria—would contain a mix of Jews and Samaritans. Also, this is the second week in a row in the Church's year where we hear about a Samaritan. Last week, we heard the parable of the Good Samaritan, where our Lord told us in a parable that He was the Good Samaritan who heals us of all our spiritual wounds and preserves us steadfast by bringing us into the Church and leaves us under the care of the minister to continue our spiritual healing. Last week the Samaritan was the one doing the healing.

Today, our Lord is the One Who heals the Samaritan, as well as the other nine Jews. The Good Samaritan continues to heal those upon whom He has compassion. He continues to bring them into the Church, so that their spiritual healing continues through the means of grace. So, we hear about ten

lepers who were crying out on the way that the Lord + Jesus was going. They stood afar off. They were outside the certain city that our Lord was about to enter. Technically, they were not supposed to be congregated together. Lepers were expected to remain alone, so that their disease would not be passed on to others, and I suspect that they would heal faster. They were also to remain at least four paces from other people. This is why they stood afar off from our Lord. But upon seeing the Lord + Jesus enter into their territory they cried out in unison in their agony, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us."

Other times when our Lord healed lepers He would touch them, and then tell them to go show themselves to the priest, but not in this case. He simply tells them to be going and show themselves from the priest. It should be pointed out that Jerusalem is not exactly close by. They are between Galilee and Samaria. There is a whole region between where they are at and where Jerusalem is located. In other words, it is not just the next town over. It would be at least a day's journey, if not more. That they do what the Lord tells them to do shows that they have faith that they will be healed. They as one headed toward Jerusalem; they willingly made the long trek even though they at that point were not healed.

St. Luke gives the impression that it was not long into their journey that they were healed. Nine of them continued on their way to Jerusalem to show themselves to the priests. They would offer two separate sacrifices. One would be when they first went to the priest, and the priest declared that they were clean. They would take two living clean birds, and one would be sacrificed, and the other would be dipped in the other's blood, with running water and hyssop and cedar, and that would be placed upon the now cleansed leper. The living bird would be let go in the wilderness, and the leper would then wash his clothes, shave off all his hair, and bathe himself in water. And then seven days later he would again shave his hair, including his beard and eyebrows, and wash his clothes and bathe in water again. On the eighth day, the second set of sacrifices would take place.

One was a trespass offering, and one was a burnt offering. The trespass offering was a he-lamb without blemish. This offering was considered the meal offering. The meat was not entirely burnt up but was cooked so that the priest and the one offering the sacrifice would share in a meal of thanksgiving for the forgiveness of sins. The burnt offering was either a she-lamb, or two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, depending on what the newly cleansed leper could afford. The burnt offering was completely burnt up as an atonement for the sins of the one offering the sacrifice. This is what the nine lepers continued on their journey to Jerusalem to do.

The one Samaritan, however, returned to the Lord + Jesus. It is true that he would not have been allowed to see a priest, since He was not a Jew, but a Samaritan. He would not have been able to perform the extensive rite given to the Jews in Leviticus chapter fourteen. But this is not the only reason why He returns to the Lord + Jesus. His healing produced actual saving faith in him. The nine recognized the healing, and most likely were thankful for being healed. But they did not recognize the One Who did the healing. The Samaritan leper did recognize what this healing declared about the One Who did the healing. This man + Jesus was not just some miracle-worker, but He was the Son of God. Only one of the ten healed recognized the Lord + Jesus for Who He actually was. He was the Son of the Most High God; He was the Messiah of the Lord, the Anointed One promised of old.

The Samaritan leper came back the Lord + Jesus and bowed down before Him and worshiped Him. He came to the One Who could actually be a High Priest to him. This Samaritan leper did not need three French hens, two turtledoves, and a partridge in a pear tree, or whatever other animals were necessary to make a sacrifice. He only needed one sacrifice. He only needed the trespass offering, meal offering, and burnt offering of the One True Lamb of God for the sins of the whole world.

This is the only sacrifice that we need too. For we have all been born with the dread leprosy of sin. This leprosy of sin has driven us outside the sanctuary of the Lord's grace. It has driven us outside

the community of the Church. By our Lord's sacrifice we are brought by grace once again into the fold of the Church, where our Lord continues our healing through the means of grace. For we are washed with the Blood of His once and for all time sacrifice in the waters of Holy Baptism. He has cleansed us of all our sins, He has washed us and made us as white as snow. We have been covered with His Blood, our sins have been covered with His Blood, so that they are no longer credited to us. No one has to shave off all his hair, including his beard and eyebrows. For our Lord has offered up Himself as a spotless Lamb for our sins. He destroyed sins grip on us completely by His burnt sacrifice upon the tree of the holy cross.

And He offers us this once and for all time sacrifice for us in a blessed meal. Just as the newly cleansed lepers would enjoy a meal with the priest as a thanksgiving for the forgiveness of sins, we too share in a meal from the sacrifice of our Lord + Jesus. He offers us His Body and Blood which was offered for us on the tree of the holy cross for the remission of our sins. He gives us His true and substantial Body and Blood in bread and wine so that we might have forgiveness for all our sins.

This meal and this remembrance of the cleansing we receive in Holy Baptism continues to heal us of the dread leprosy of sin. Our Lord + Jesus continues to keep us in the one true faith until He calls us to our eternal home. By His Word and Sacraments, we are daily and weekly reminded that He is indeed the Son of God—the Christ—sent to be our Lord and Savior from the dread leprosy of sin.

Let us therefore, my dear friends, come before Him at this altar and kneel before Him and worship Him in faith that He is truly the One sent by the heavenly Father to redeem us from sin, death and the devil. For our Lord + Jesus set His sight on going to Jerusalem, and He offered up His life as a ransom for ours. All so that we might be free from sin and live with Him forever and ever in Heaven with all the angels and archangels, and all the company of Heaven. Let us give Him thanks for this great gift, even as the leper gave Him thanks for the gift of salvation that was bestowed upon him. 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!