

The Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity Sunday
St. Matthew 22:34-46
October 8th, 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

The Son of David

In Nomine Iesu!

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

Sermon Text:

“Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, saying, ‘What think ye of the Christ? Whose Son is He?’ They say unto Him, ‘The son of David.’ He saith unto them, ‘How then doth David in the Spirit call Him Lord, saying, “The Lord said unto my Lord, ‘Sit thou on My right hand, till I put Thine enemies underneath Thy feet?’” If David then calleth Him Lord, how is He his son?’ And no one was able to answer Him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask Him any more questions.”

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, Who hast given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness through the glorious revelation of the Gospel, cause Thy Word to dwell in us richly, we beseech Thee, and fill us with the knowledge of Thy will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that we may know our sin, and Thy Son as the Savior from sin, and may walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; 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.

My dear friends, there are three types of churches one must always avoid. The first type of church is the one where they seek to imitate the world. They adopt all of the world’s false philosophies. If something in the Scriptures conflicts, or even contradicts, something that the world holds dear, then the teaching of the world is upheld. They diminish, or even corrupt, the teachings of the Bible in order to match their teaching to the false philosophies of the world. Examples abound but this is easily seen in how they belittle the commands of the Lord God. They say that the things that the Lord God has made abominable, are not only not abominable, but can and should be practiced by those in their church. This is one type of church to mark and avoid as a false teacher.

The second type of church one must avoid, my dear friends, is the type of church that makes the Word of God into nothing more than pseudo-psychology. These types of churches convince people that the Scriptures are really nothing more than some sort of self-help manual. They give you a whole list of things one should do, in order to be happier, make more money, have better relationships with people, and the like. They corrupt God’s Word and make it a manual for living and make the pastor into just another therapist. These churches take away the forgiveness of sins by diminishing sin in the church’s adherents. For who needs absolution if one does not really have sin? If there are only a few minor things one has to fix in one’s personality, what need is there to confess one’s sins, or receive

forgiveness for those sins. For this reason, these types of churches should also be avoided.

The third type of church that should be avoided is given in the Scripture reading for today. These are the churches that are only concerned with the Law. They only preach the Law. They too give people a laundry list of things to do; a way to act and be; a standard of living one must uphold if they are to be considered a "good Christian." For them the Church is a place to follow the rules, and if you step out of line with the rules then one has to wonder if you truly are a Christian like you say. This is what makes this third type of church so dangerous, because it easily leads many sheep astray. We are to obey the Law of God; we are to order our lives according to the Ten Commandments. So, people are easily drawn to these types of churches because the Old Man likes to receive a list of things to do in order to make him feel good about himself when he accomplishes them.

What is often avoided in these churches is the spiritual minutia that the Law requires. Most people do not go around murdering and robbing people. Being faithful to one's spouse and not committing adultery is not that difficult if one is dedicated to remaining faithful to his spouse. The outward tenets of the Law of God are easy for one to keep. Even the outward tenet of the First Commandment is easy to keep. Many people, including the Pharisees from the Gospel reading from the Apostle and Evangelist St. Matthew, think that as long as they do not worship some wooden or metal idol, that they have kept the First Commandment of having no other Gods before the Lord God. Therefore, these churches are much like the Pharisees in the Gospel reading, for they fail to see that they are focused on the wrong thing.

This is after all why the Pharisees ask the Lord + Jesus this question. They wanted to trip Him up on the Law. They wanted to test His knowledge of the Law. St. Matthew tells us that our Lord had silenced the Sadducees. They had also tested the Lord + Jesus with a question. Their question related to the resurrection of the dead, in which they did not believe. Here the Pharisees ask the Lord a question regarding the Law in which they believe is easily kept.

If the Law of God is easily kept, then one has no need for a Savior; one has no need for the Messiah, the Christ. If we are able to save ourselves by our own working and doing, what need have we for a Savior? And this is what all three of these types of churches one must avoid have in common. They fail to give their adherents a Christ. They do not give anyone a Savior and Redeemer. For all three have replaced the need for a Savior, a Christ, with other things. The first replaces the Christ with the philosophies of the world. The second replaces the Christ with psychobabble. The third replaces the Christ, the Son of David, our Lord + Jesus, with the keeping of the Law. All diminish the Christ, all replace the Christ, all lead men into Hell. Therefore, my dear friends, mark and avoid such false churches.

Our Lord + Jesus does not desire that men end up in Hell. We can see this in His response to the Pharisees question. He answers their Law question with a Law answer. However, in His response He makes it clear that no one can perfectly keep the Law, for one has to love the Lord God with all his heart, soul, and mind. The whole person needs to keep the Law in order to have actually kept it. One must fear, love and trust in the Lord God above all things in order for him to have perfectly kept the Law. One cannot love the Lord God with one's whole heart, soul, and mind if he trusts in other things when hard times come. Nor can we even keep the second great Commandment to love our neighbors as ourselves. For can always find someone, or some group of people, which we can set ourselves above, in order that we do not need to love them as we love ourselves.

Our Lord + Jesus breaks the teachings of the Pharisees with basically two sentences. One cannot save himself by the keeping of the Law. But our Lord + Jesus does not stop with the Law. In His love for mankind, and in His desire that all men be saved and come to Him, He asks the Pharisees a question. This is the question upon which all Christian churches should make their stand. For it is the

question that gives all who hear it the Christ. Who is the Christ? He is the Son of David? But more than that He is the Lord of David. He is both Son and Lord of King David. The Christ, our Lord + Jesus, is both God, Lord of all Creation, and man, born out of the lineage of King David. Our Lord + Jesus gives Himself in response to the accusations of the Law. He gives us Himself in response to the requirements of the Law. For He has kept the Law perfectly. He is without sin. He is innocent of the condemnations of the Law. He alone is worthy of our praise, worship, and thanks. He is the only One upon Whom the churches of this world should place their focus.

For in Him alone do we find our salvation. In Him alone we have forgiveness from our transgressions against the breaking of the Ten Commandments. In Him alone do we have comfort from the pains and sorrows of this life. In Him alone do we have rescue from a world that seeks our demise by leading us away from the truth into its false notions. Our Lord + Jesus gives us Himself so that we might have life and salvation in Him alone, and so that we will not need to seek it in any other thing the false churches of the world try to draw us into. For all false philosophies that are contrary to the teachings of the holy Scriptures are silenced by the true teaching of the Lord + Jesus. All falls silent at the teaching of the Christ as the Savior of man.

And this is how the Gospel reading from St. Matthew ends, that no one durst from that day on ask Him any more questions. What is not said, but implied, from this narrative that occurs during Holy Week, is that the reason they dared ask Him no more questions, is that now they actively sought to kill Him. Our Lord + Jesus gives Himself as the answer to the Law, and the false church decides to eradicate Him. The false churches of the world cannot have a Christ that is the reason and source of all salvation, for then society, and self-help lectures, and Law to-do lists will have no place or purpose. Therefore, they seek to get rid of Him by nailing Him to the tree of the cross.

The cross is where our Lord + Jesus rescues us from the penalty of the Law which we cannot keep. He sacrifices Himself. He offers up His life as a ransom for our transgressions against the Law. He gives His life for ours. He goes into the grave and rises again on the third day so that we may never see nor taste death. We now have forgiveness, life, and salvation by clinging to Him in faith. We have the rewards and joys of Heaven because we have forsaken all the false churches with their false teachings; their false notions which lead men away from the Christ. We have clung like a burr on a dress to the Lord + Jesus. For in Him alone is life and salvation. In Him alone is forgiveness for all the sins and transgressions which we daily and often commit.

Therefore, my dear friends, let us continue to cling in faith to the Lord + Jesus, the Christ, the Son of David, the God Who became man for us. For in Him alone do we have life and salvation. In Him do we find the culmination of all the teachings of the prophets and Apostles. For He has put His enemies under His footstool—our enemies are under His footstool. And He sits at the right hand of the heavenly Father upon the throne of victory that He won by His death and resurrection. He will come again on the Last Day and He will take all those who cling to Him in faith to live with Him forever in Heaven. For He has come to save mankind and prepare for us all a place in Heaven for all eternity with Him and all the saints and angels of Heaven. May He keep us steadfast in this faith until He calls us into that eternal home. 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!