

The Feast of Pentecost (*Whitsunday*)

St. John 14:23-31

May 19th, 2024

Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC

Simpsonville, SC

St. Michael and All Angels Ev. Lutheran Mission, UAC

Augusta, GA

St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Mission, UAC

Ormond Beach, FL

Pastor Jerald Dulas

Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled

In Nomine Iesu!

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

Sermon Text:

“But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, Whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you. Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be fearful.”

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

Send, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, Thy Holy Spirit into our hearts, that He may rule and direct us according to Thy will, comfort us in all our temptations and afflictions, defend us from all error, and lead us into all truth, that we, being steadfast in the faith, may increase in love and all good works, and in the end obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. 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 Gospel for today, the Feast of Pentecost, from the Apostle and Evangelist St. John is often chosen for funerals. It is often chosen for funerals because of the words that make up the title of this sermon, “Let not your heart be troubled.” This Gospel speaks of comfort and peace. Our Lord + Jesus admonishes His Apostles on the night before His crucifixion and death in the Upper Room to not let their hearts be troubled or let it be filled with fear. These are the words one needs to hear at a funeral. We who mourn the loss of a loved one need to hear most in our hour of grief and pain the comforting words of our Lord + Jesus in today’s Gospel reading. We need to hear that our Lord has compassion upon us. That He will comfort us and give us peace.

At a funeral is when we need to hear these words the most. But these words are not lost on us in our daily lives; when no great tragedy is befalling us. For we have plenty of things in this life and world that cause us to mourn: the loss of righteousness, the continuing increase of evil, the lack of morals and the increasing shouts against any opinion or expression of anything that is good, of any speech about what we as Christians hold as valuable ideals. Yes, my dear friends, we have much in this life that causes us to mourn; much that causes us to have troubled and fear-filled hearts.

Not only do we have the external warring against the faith by this unbelieving world, but we have the spiritual battles that we face constantly in this life. We are surrounded by death. Death is the result of sin in this world—of sin in us. Death is the wages of sin; it is the result of our sinfulness. We will die,

our loved ones have died, everyone who has ever lived and died, died because of sin. Not only do we have to contend with sin and death in this life; not only do we have to constantly bear the fear of our eminent death, but we also have the devil about us seeking our downfall. He seeks to lead us into despair, grief, and great shame. He deceives us into committing sin. He uses our vices, those sins which we commit daily and often, no matter how much we try to shake them off of us. The devil knows our every weakness and uses that to lead us into sin and shame.

He even uses the world. This corrupt world also lures us into sin. We have an innate urge to not be at odds with the world. Nobody wants to be unpopular. We all want to be one of the “cool kids.” We do not want to be alone and by ourselves. We want to be a part of the crowd. The evil world uses this guile to draw us to itself. It draws us to accept the evils of this world. Consider how many people in this world think that murdering babies is okay. How many people think that homosexuality is not a sin; that it should be praised and lauded? How many people in this world get their panties in a twist when someone states that a man should be the head of the household? The outcry always centers around some form of oppression, as if men do not possess the ability to be lead without being oppressors. But still many people are swayed by the arguments of the world. This is also a cause for us Christians in this society to mourn and be troubled.

Many others fall into gross and manifest sinning also. Our own sinful flesh also causes us much fear and trouble—much grief. We are often tempted and fall into sin because of the many lusts that fill our hearts. We desire our own way; we desire to fulfill our own wants and needs. When we are trapped in our sinfulness, when we seek only to satisfy our wants and needs to the detriment of our fellow man, we are firmly in the devil’s grasp. It is hard for us to see our need for repentance when we are so trapped by the devil, the world, and our flesh. We do not see we are on the path to eternal destruction.

But our Lord sees our need. He sees us in our grief. He sees us in our shame. He sees us in our sinfulness. He sees that we are thoroughly trapped by the devil; that we are firmly in his grasp. Therefore, He sends to us the One Who can help us in our need. He sends the Holy Ghost to us and the whole world. For the Holy Ghost is the One Who works on our hearts to root out sin and make us holy and pure. The Holy Ghost convicts us of our sins. He leads us away from the lies and deceptions of the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh. He reveals their lies for what they are. For He opens our ears and hearts to hear the truth of the Word of God. Just like He did on that very first Day of Pentecost in Jerusalem, when the Israelites who were gathered there “were pricked in their hearts.” They felt the sting of the Law, and asked the only natural question that comes from realizing one is trapped in their sinfulness, “Brethren, what shall we do?”

The answer is to receive the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. For He leads us into the truth of the Word of God. He opens our deaf ears to hear the Word of the Lord God. He is the One Who through the Word of God gives us peace, removes the fear and trembling from our hearts. For He tells our troubled hearts what our Lord + Jesus, the Christ has done for us poor, miserable sinners. He tells us that we have a Savior and Redeemer in the Lord + Jesus. We have One Who has perfectly fulfilled the Law of God which we are unable to fulfill. We have One Who has offered up Himself in our place of punishment. He has borne the penalty of our sin in His flesh. He has suffered and died in our stead, so that we need fear death and Hell no longer.

This is what the Holy Ghost does for us. He is our Comforter in times of trouble, for He opens our ears to hear the Word of God which we so desperately need to hear. For He fills our ears with the Gospel of our Lord and Savior + Jesus, the Christ. Therefore, my dear friends, one has to ask, “How does one obtain this Holy Ghost?” It is not something that we do. He freely gives Himself to us. Indeed, He is continuing daily to work in the hearts of all mankind through the pure preaching of the Word of the Lord God and the right administration of the Blessed Sacraments. This is why we continue to gather in this place. For it is here in the Church that the Holy Ghost is given to us. Here in this place, we have

the pure preaching of the Word of the Lord God. Here in this place, we have the right administration of the Blessed Sacraments. Through these means the Holy Ghost comes to us and comforts us with the truth of the Word of God.

For this, my dear friends, is what we need to hear at all times, but especially when we are engulfed by grief and pain. The comforting preaching of what our Lord + Jesus has done for us, and all mankind, needs to fill our ears when we go to a funeral. The works and merits of the Christ are what comfort us and give us peace through the trials and tribulations of this evil life. The suffering and pain which our Lord endured for us is what comforts us when we are weighed down with the weight of the evil of this world. For the Holy Ghost speaks into our hearts the same words that our Lord + Jesus tells us today, "Let not your heart be troubled."

My dear friends, let not your heart be troubled. For you have been baptized into the Name of the Triune Lord God. Let not your heart be troubled for you have been absolved of your sins by the pastor in the words of absolution. Let not your heart be troubled for your ears have heard once again the good news of what your Savior and Redeemer has done for you. And let not your heart be troubled, for you are about to come to this holy altar and remember and proclaim the Lord's death in the Sacrament of the Altar. We will receive our Lord's true Body and true Blood in bread and wine for the remission of all of our sins. It is sin that is really the cause of all of our grief and pain in this life. Sin leads to death. Death leads to the grave. Death and the grave lead us to fear, mourning, and troubled hearts.

Let not your heart be troubled, my dear friends, for our Lord + Jesus has conquered sin. He has conquered death. He has conquered the grave. By His Holy Ghost leading us by the Word of God He leads us into our eternal home in Heaven. For He creates and sustains faith in our hearts. This faith clings to the promise of salvation in Heaven. Therefore, my dear friends, let not your heart be troubled. For the Lord + Jesus, the Christ, has sent His Holy Ghost to us so that we may have comfort and peace in this life until we are all called into our eternal home in Heaven, so that we may join once again with all those who have gone before us in the faith. Thanks be to God! 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!