

Exaudi  
St. John 15:26—16:4  
May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC  
Simpsonville, SC  
Pastor Jerald Dulas

## These Things Have I Spoken unto You

*In Nomine Iesu!*

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

### **Sermon Text:**

“These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be caused to stumble. They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you shall think that he offereth service unto God. And these things will they do, because they have not known the Father, nor Me. But these things have I spoken unto you, that when their hour is come, ye may remember them, how that I told you. And these things I said not unto you from the beginning, because I was with you.”

### **Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:**

Almighty God, Who hast given us commandment to pray for the gift of the Holy Ghost, most heartily we beseech Thee, through Jesus Christ, our Advocate, to grant us Thy Holy Spirit, that He may quicken our hearts by Thy saving Word, and lead us into all truth, that He may guide, instruct, enlighten, govern, comfort, and sanctify us unto everlasting life; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

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

Hallelujah! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Hallelujah! My dear friends, faith is not just knowledge of the Lord + Jesus. One often hears this from the billboard and bumper sticker theologians in our society. All one needs to do to be saved is to “know + Jesus as Lord.” This is not faith, and certainly is not saving faith. Even the devils know that the Lord + Jesus is the Lord of heaven and earth. They know that He is the Son of God, just as they often confessed when some poor demon-possessed person was brought to the Lord for healing, and the demon inside cried out with such words. It is not enough for salvation to know Who the Lord + Jesus is. True faith involves one’s heart. For faith needs to cling to something outside of itself. Faith is the trust in someone, or something, when things are not going as we want.

As we learn in the meaning of the First Commandment. Faith is that in which we place our fear, love, and trust above all things. Who, or what, do we look to not only in good times, but also when bad things come our way? True faith clings to the Lord + Jesus, the Christ, in good and bad times. Faith looks to Him for comfort, strength, rescue, and reward. It goes well beyond mere knowledge of Who He is. Faith trusts Him that He will deliver us from sin, death, the powers of Hell, from the grasp of the devil, and from the persecutions of the world and our own guilty conscience.

Thanks be to the Lord God Almighty, that this true, saving faith is not something that we must do. It is not, as some imagine it, something we must drum up inside of ourselves. Faith is not something that we create in ourselves; it is not a work that we do. It is not something we have to pull out of the deep recesses of our own selves. No, my dear friends, true saving faith is a gift. It is a gift of the Holy

Ghost. This is why the Holy Ghost is called by our Lord in today's Gospel reading from the Apostle and Evangelist St. John, the Comforter. He comforts us poor, miserable sinners by granting us faith to cling to the Lord + Jesus; to cling to Him in both good times and bad. This is what a "Comforter" does. Someone who gives us comfort not only relieves us in all times of our sadness, but also points us to the fulfillment of greater joy.

This is how we are comforted, by having our eyes of faith turned from the trouble and sorrow that we endure, to the eternal comfort that we will receive when our heavenly Father calls us out of this vale of tears to our eternal home in Heaven.

This is why our Lord + Jesus sends His Holy Ghost. So that He may lead us into all the truth. The truth is that the world hates us. It hated our Lord + Jesus and nailed Him to a tree. It hated the Apostles who were all martyred, with the exception of St. John, the writer of our Gospel for today. But even he was exiled to Patmos. What one often does not hear, however, is that his exile was not to just lay on the beach of some paradise island. He was exiled to Patmos to work in the marble mines. He also happened to be in his nineties. This is because in the same way that they hated the Lord + Jesus, they also hated the ones sent by Him. The world continues to hate the Lord + Jesus by persecuting and rejecting that He continues to send, the faithful bishops, pastors, and deacons who carry the pure preaching of the Word of the Lord God, and who administer the Sacraments according to the Christ's institution.

Our Lord on the night of His betrayal, arrest, and trial, the night before His suffering, crucifixion, and death, tells His Apostles that these things will happen. Indeed, He goes so far as to say that those who will persecute them will think they are doing what is pleasing to the Lord God. But they do not believe on the Lord God, nor do they believe on the One Who He sent, His Beloved Son, our Savior, the Lord + Jesus. This is why it is a different thing to know the Lord God, and to have faith in Him. The Jews certainly knew God, they read about Him in their writings. But they did not cling to Him in faith. And they certainly rejected the Messiah that was sent to them by Him for their salvation. They nailed Him to a tree. They did the same to His Apostles after the Lord + Jesus had ascended into Heaven.

This is why He has sent unto us the Holy Ghost from the Father. And do make note that the Lord + Jesus informs us that all three Persons of the Holy Trinity are involved in this action. The Father and the Son send the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son. Just as the Son was sent by the Father, and conceived of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary. All three Person work in unity and harmony to bring salvation to mankind. The Son was sent to fulfill the Law of God as a man, and to suffer and die, innocently, on the tree of the holy cross in our place. He paid the penalty of our sins in His own flesh. He then raised Himself up from the dead in our flesh, so that we no longer need fear death, for He has paid the price of death, and opened up the way of everlasting life for us.

The Holy Ghost has now been sent by the Father and the Son to us after the Lord's ascension so that through the means of grace we may be gifted with the gift of faith. The Comforter comforts us with faith in the works and merits of the Lord + Jesus. He comforts us with all that the Lord + Jesus has done for us. He not only relieves the pain of our sin-burdened consciences with the declaration of absolution; He not only declares to us that our sins have been fully paid for by the Christ, but He also shows us that sin, death, and the devil, no longer have a hold on us. He shows us the pathway into eternal life. He reveals to us the unspeakable joys that will be ours when we shed this mortal flesh and are crowned with the crown of eternal life.

It is this promise of life everlasting; this promise of being free from all pain, sorrow, misery, and death, to which we look forward. This is the hope that the Apostles clung to in the midst of their martyrdom. Indeed, my dear friends, it was the hope of eternal life to which all the martyred saints clung

to in their hour of trial and death. The persecutions of this world paled in comparison with the rewards of Heaven. For they had true faith. They did not just “know + Jesus as Lord.” But they knew the Lord + Jesus as their Lord, as the only true and faithful Lord. They knew the Lord + Jesus as the one in Whom they could place all of their fear, love, and trust above all things.

Therefore, my dear friends, let us also rejoice on this day of Exaudi Sunday. For the Holy Ghost is here among us in the means of grace—in the pure preaching of the Word of God and in the right administration of the Blessed Sacraments—to create in us true and saving faith. He has come through these means to open up our deaf ears so that we may hear the Gospel, that our Lord + Jesus has fulfilled the Law of God on our behalf, and paid the penalty of our sins with His own suffering and death. So then, let us rejoice in our Holy Baptism, where the Word of God first opened up our ears to receive the gift of faith. Let us rejoice in the Holy Absolution where our sins have been declared absolved, so that we are free of their burden. And let us rejoice that we may come to this holy altar and receive the Lord’s Body and Blood in bread and wine for the remission of our sins. For in this meal, we remember and proclaim our Lord’s death on our behalf until He comes again to take us out of this vale of tears to our eternal home in Heaven. Take comfort, my friends, in this good news. Hallelujah! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Hallelujah! 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!*