

Rogate
St. John 16:23b-30
May 5th, 2024
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
St. Michael and All Angels Ev. Lutheran Mission, UAC
Augusta, GA
Pastor Jerald Dulas

Ye Shall Ask in My Name

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 in dark sayings: the hour cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in dark sayings, but shall tell you plainly of the Father. In that day ye shall ask in My Name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from the Father. I came out from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go unto the Father.”

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

Lord God, our heavenly Father, Who by Thy Son hast promised to give us whatsoever we shall ask in His Name, We beseech Thee, grant us the power of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may make known our requests unto Thee in faithful prayer, and desire of Thee that which is well-pleasing to Thee and profitable for us, lifting up holy hands without wrath or doubting, and being firmly assured that Thou wilt hear our prayer; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, 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.

Hallelujah! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Hallelujah!

Dear friends, in chapter seventeen of the Apostle and Evangelist St. John’s Gospel, the next chapter after the one from which our reading is taken, our Lord prays on behalf of His Apostles. That prayer is known as the Lord’s “high-priestly prayer.” In that prayer our Lord prays for His Apostles, for those who will come believing after the Apostles, that is, us, and for all things necessary before His trial, crucifixion, and death. The main petition of our Lord is that we might be protected from our enemies; that we might be delivered from sin, death, and Satan. Our Lord + Jesus prays this because this is our greatest need. Our spiritual needs far outweigh any earthly, physical needs for which we may pray.

Our Lord teaches us this not only in His high-priestly prayer in chapter seventeen of St. John’s Gospel, but also in the prayer that He taught us to pray morning and evening and throughout the day. The Lord’s Prayer, as it is called, includes seven petitions. Six of those petitions are for spiritual benefits, and only one is for our physical needs. This is how we should learn to pray. We should learn to pray for our spiritual needs above our physical needs. The first three petitions request of our Lord to grant us spiritual blessings. Thus, the first petition asks that our Lord’s Name might be kept holy among us. How is this done? When the Word of God is taught among us in its truth and purity, and we lead holy

lives according to it.

The second petition asks that our heavenly Father would send to us His kingdom. Certainly, in this prayer is the desire that our Lord would come again and rescue us from this vale of tears, but it also prays that while we await our Lord's second coming that He would send to us His Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost, as we heard last Sunday, leads us into all truth. He opens up for us the truth of the Word of God, so that we may indeed hear His Word and lead holy lives according to it.

The third petition sums up the first three petitions. For in it we ask that our Lord's will may be done. The Lord's will can only be done when everything that wars against the Lord God's will is restrained. This includes the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh, which all war against the will of God among us. They do not want us to hear God's Word, or let us live holy lives. They want us to listen to their lies; that we can ignore the Law and do whatever our sinful flesh desires, because after all we are forgiven, and the Lord God will forgive us for whatever we do. This is what St. James preaches against in his Epistle; in the Epistle reading for today. If we claim to be Christians, that is, of Christ, we will do what please Him, not what please us. We will obey His Law, and when we do not, we will confess our sin, and ask that the Lord would send His Holy Ghost into our hearts so that we might amend our sinful lives and live according to His Word.

Thus, the last three petitions of the Lord's prayer ask our Lord God heavenly Father to deliver us from evil. The first evil we need to be protected from is our own sin. Therefore, we ask in the Lord's prayer to not regard our sins, or deny our prayer because of them. And we also pray that those who have sinned against us may be forgiven, just as we have also been forgiven. There is no room for grudges in the Christian's heart. This is the hardest thing to do, especially when someone has betrayed us, and hurt us beyond what we think we can handle. But our Lord would have us not carry the burden of holding a grudge, but leave that person's sins up to Him, so that we may live free from the burden of sin.

We also pray that our Lord would lead us not into temptation. God indeed tempts no one. But we pray in this petition that when we are tempted to commit a certain sin, that the Lord God would give us a way to avoid the sin. This is one of the questions I have been asked the most as a pastor. "In what way does the Lord God give us a way to avoid temptation?" The answer is always the Word of the Lord God. This is how the Lord + Jesus defeated the temptation of the devil in the wilderness. He defeated him with the Word of God. We resist temptation also by hearing and doing what the Word tells us, just as St. James said in the Epistle reading. Be doers of the Word and not just hearers. But we have to hear the Word first in order to be a doer. In order to be a hearer of the Word we have to know what the Word of God says. This is why we have been provided with a daily reading schedule. You will find it in your bulletin announcements. As a Christian, we need to be daily in the Word of God, if we are to withstand temptation. For it is by the Word of the Lord God that the Holy Ghost works in us, to will and to do the Lord God's holy will.

We sum up the petitions in the Lord's prayer by praying "deliver us from evil." Literally, in the Greek language the phrase is "deliver us from the Evil One." He is the one that uses the world and our sinful flesh to deceive us and mislead us with his lies. He desires that we end up with the same fate as him; that we will end up in the eternal fires of hell. He uses all of his cunning and art to deceive us. He knows our weaknesses and exploits them often. This is why the remedy for this is to continually keep going back to our heavenly Father and petitioning Him to grant us our spiritual needs. This is why in the Small Catechism, in the section of how one should be taught to pray, the Lord's Prayer is suggested to be prayed when we get up, and before we go to bed. It is also supposed to be prayed before, and after, every meal. If we eat three meals a day, this means that we would pray the Lord's Prayer eight times throughout the day. We pray it two times in the Divine Service. It is prayed at least once in both of the daily Offices of Matins and Vespers.

Therefore, my dear friends, we should pray this Lord's Prayer daily and often. For it encompasses all of our needs, both spiritual and physical. This is why our Lord + Jesus taught His Apostles, and us to pray this way. This is why our Lord + Jesus prays for what He prays in His high-priestly prayer in chapter seventeen of St. John's Gospel. And this is why our Lord + Jesus in the Gospel pericope for today, tells His Apostles that whatever they ask of the heavenly Father should be asked for in His Name.

This is what our Lord did for us by His death and resurrection and ascension. He opened up for us access to the heavenly Father. He now sits on the right hand of the heavenly Father interceding for us. He sent His Holy Ghost to teach us all truth; to teach us how to pray properly. To pray properly one addresses the Father in the Name of the Son, by the help of the Holy Ghost. This is why most Collects end with all three Persons of the Holy Trinity mentioned. We pray to One, Triune Lord God to grant us all of our spiritual and physical needs.

Martin Luther listed five points that make true Christian prayer:

The first, is that we cling to the Lord God's promise that He will grant us our petitions. This is what our Lord + Jesus tells His Apostles in the Gospel reading for today. Whatever they ask for in His Name the heavenly Father will give to them. The second point of true Christian prayer is faith, that is, that we believe that our prayers will be granted. We cannot expect to have our prayers answered if we do not believe that the Lord God will indeed grant them. The third point of true Christian prayer is that one must definitely name something that he brings to God for which he prays, that is, one must definitely set forth his petition. We see this in the Lord's Prayer. We are given specific things for which we pray. Our prayers also need to list specific things we need and desire, not generalities. Be bold and ask for what it is you want in a specific language. And when you do not have the words, believe that the Holy Ghost will put your prayer into a language that the Lord God will hear. The fourth point of true Christian prayer is that we must desire or wish for the petition to be granted, that is, we must ask for it to be granted. And as our Lord + Jesus says in today's Gospel pericope, we must ask for it in His Name. For, what we pray for in His Name the heavenly Father will give to us. And this is the fifth point of true Christian prayer that we ask in the Name of the Christ.

For our Lord + Jesus promised His Apostles, and through them He promises us, that whatever we shall ask in His Name to the heavenly Father by the assistance of the Holy Ghost, will be granted. Therefore, my dear friends, let us pray to our heavenly Father, knowing and believing that what we ask He will grant to us. Especially let us pray that He might protect us from every assault of the Evil One. For we daily sin much, and are worthy of none of the things for which we pray. But our Lord God in His mercy grants to us our petitions. For He wants us to learn to pray to Him for all of the spiritual needs that we have, and if we pray for our spiritual needs first, He will willingly and gladly give to us all of our daily bread, our physical needs for which we pray. For the Christ has suffered and died for us so that He might be our intercessor to the heavenly Father. He pleads on our behalf. So that when we come to Him with our sins and trespasses, asking that He might forgive them and grant us grace to amend our sinful lives, He sends to us His Holy Ghost into our hearts to assist us in all our troubles and sorrows. Thanks be to Him! 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!