

The Fourth Sunday after Trinity Sunday
St. Luke 6:36-42
June 23rd, 2024
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
Pastor Jerald Dulas

He Spake Also a Parable

In Nomine Iesu!

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

Sermon Text:

“And He spake also a parable unto them, ‘Can the blind guide the blind? Shall they not both fall into a pit?’”

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

Merciful God and Father, Who makest Thy sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and art kind unto the unthankful, teach us by Thy Holy Spirit, we beseech Thee, to have compassion on all men, covering our neighbor’s frailties and faults, being always ready to forgive, and showing forth everywhere the fruits of faith; 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.

Today our Lord + Jesus asks, “Can the blind guide the blind?” The question expects a negative answer. Of course, a blind person cannot lead another blind person, for as our Lord says, they will both fall into a ditch. The same is true of those who openly and unrepentantly commit a particular sin, but condemn other people for committing the same sin they are. If you live in fornication and tell other people it is wrong to live in fornication, you do not show yourself to be a good witness to the truth. If you constantly gossip about people and then go around telling everyone it is wrong to gossip, you do not really give a good witness to the truth. If you show that you openly hate people and tell everyone that you should love your neighbor, well then, you do not show yourself a good witness to the truth. You are a blind guide. If you do not know the right way to act, how can you show others the right way to act?

The religious leaders of our Lord’s day were the blind guides. They had taught the people how to act, not by their words, but by their actions. This is why in this discourse to His disciples; our Lord instructs them concerning how one is to teach one’s disciples. “The disciple is not above his teacher.” What that means is that the teacher is the one with the knowledge, and the true teacher of our Lord knows not only to teach the pure Word of God with his lips, but also in his actions. Our Lord even goes on to say that those who are taught in this fashion will go on to be as “perfected” just as their teacher is perfected.

Consider this for a moment! Our Lord is teaching His disciples, both in Word and deed. The disciples will become as “perfected” as our Lord. Indeed, this is shown us by the events of history, where after our Lord’s death, resurrection and ascension, the disciples went to every corner of the world proclaiming that the Lord + Jesus, the Christ was the one and only Savior of the world, Who came into the world to redeem the world; to suffer and die for the world; and to destroy death and the power of Satan, so that all those who believe on Him might have forgiveness of sins, eternal life and salvation.

They preached not only with their lips, but with their deeds, as can be seen from the various examples in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles where after the disciples healed someone, or performed some other miracle, the report went out about them and on account of the event many believed the Words that were spoken by the disciples.

This would not be so if the disciples were hypocrites, that is, they lived other than they taught. The religious leaders of our Lord's time were hypocrites; they expected the people to bear a yolk that neither them nor their ancestors could bear. They demanded obedience to their manmade traditions, and condemned people as sinners for silly things as not washing one's hands before eating a meal, and picking grain to eat on the Sabbath, even though if one of their sheep or oxen were to fall into a pit on the Sabbath, they would work to get it out.

Sadly, there are just as many blind guides; so-called religious leaders who lead the sheep entrusted to them down the path to Hell. For they teach falsely that what our Lord has condemned as sin is not sin. They contradict the Lord!

When our Lord says that we should not judge or condemn, He is not talking about sin, but rather He is talking about condemning and judging people for doing the same things you are doing. It is the duty of the holy catholic Church to condemn and judge sins. This is what we do when we admit some people to this altar to receive the Lord's Supper, and forbid others. We are examining a person, as our Lord instructs us to through the Blessed Apostle St. Paul, and finding that person lacking in what is required to receive the Lord's Supper. Faith is required to receive this Blessed Sacrament, that is why the Minister of God has a duty to examine what his sheep entrusted to him believe so that he can ascertain if they are truly worthy to receive the Lord's Supper. However, since only God can see what is truly in a man's heart, the Minister is left to make this determination based upon the outward works of the communicant.

And to those who are penitent, just as our Lord shows mercy and forgiveness, the Minister and the Church show mercy and forgiveness to those who struggle with sin and temptation in this life. There is a difference between those who struggle with sin—committing the same sin over and over again against their desire and will—versus someone who wantonly commits the same sin over and over again because “it makes them feel good,” or “because it is only a small sin,” or some other nonsense that that person tell himself to ease his conscience about breaking God's Law. Or, sadly, he may not believe that what he is doing is a sin; that he is actually pleasing God by doing this sinful behavior.

It is true that no one will be saved by their good works—by their keeping of the Law—but people will be condemned for remaining in their sin, because it shows the person's unbelief, and ultimately that is what persistence in sin truly is—it is unbelief; a lack of faith. This is why it is important for us as Christians to live daily in our Holy Baptism—drowning the Old Adam, and washing away the stain and stench of sin, and live as a New Adam before God doing His will gladly and willingly. What that means is that daily we should confess and repent of our sins; we should show contrition and repentance, and believe that our sins are forgiven by God Himself, on account of our Lord's sacrifice for us.

We learn how to confess our sins to God; learning to be honest about our sins against Him, when we regularly participate in private confession. For in private confession, we learn to speak with our lips the sins that we have committed, both small and great, and we become “perfected” in what sin is and how greatly we sin; we learn that we cannot by our own reason or strength save ourselves from our sin, that we need to be shown grace. And in private confession, we are shown that grace, as the Minister forgives our sins, just as if our Lord + Jesus forgave our sins Himself.

And our Lord's forgiveness is abundant, even as He says in today's Gospel, “Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom.” When our Lord forgives

us for our sins, our Lord's forgiveness will be running over our bosom, like anointing oil poured over our heads. This image that our Lord invokes is an image of the Early Christian being baptized, when they would pour anointing oil over the head of the newly baptized as a sign and seal that this person had received the Holy Ghost, this would be an image with which the Early Christian would readily identify; they would know that this was an image of the forgiveness that they received in Holy Baptism. Let us therefore also live in our Holy Baptism, drowning the Old Adam, and rebuking Satan and his temptations, and boldly proclaim our desire and will to obey the Law of God, so that we may not be blind guides, leading blind students, but we may with the eyes of faith and love, lead the true disciples of our Lord to become "perfected" in every good work, and that they may rejoice in faith in our Lord's forgiveness of sins, and in eternal life and salvation. 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!