

The Fourth Sunday after Trinity Sunday
St. Luke 6:36-42
July 13th, 2025
St. Titus Ev. Lutheran Mission, UAC
Athens, GA
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
St. Michael and All Angels Ev. Lutheran Mission, UAC
Augusta, GA
Pastor Jerald Dulas

Be Ye Merciful

In Nomine Iesu!

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

Sermon Text:

“Be ye merciful, even as your Father is merciful. And judge not, and ye shall not be judged: and condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: release, and ye shall be released: give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom. For with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again.”

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.

My dear friends, many people when they read this text latch onto the “judge not, and ye shall not be judged” part of the text. Their intent in latching onto these words is to criticize someone for judging them. No one likes to have their sins pointed out. Nobody really likes to hear the Law of God preached directly at them. Therefore, when a person's sins are pointed out, they are quick to cry out “Judge me not.” Which just means that they want to continue on in their sinful behavior without someone pointing it out. They have no interest in repentance, which is the main purpose of preaching the Law. It is preached so that men are shown their sins and transgressions, and would be led into repentance. As we heard last Sunday, repentance is to turn away from our sins. But it is not only turning away from our sins, but turning to the Source wherein we find forgiveness of those sins. To repent means to turn in faith to the Lord + Jesus, and cling to His works and merits on our behalf.

That some people cry out, “Judge not” when they are met with the Law of God just shows their impenitence. It shows their unbelief. For impenitence is a symptom of unbelief. A person who clings in faith to the Lord + Jesus; one who hungers and thirsts after righteousness, the righteousness only found in the Lord + Jesus, desires to be free from sin, to not be burdened with temptation and failure at breaking the Law of the Lord God. When a person with faith is shown their transgressions, they repent. When an unbeliever is shown their sins, they put up a defense of their actions, and say, “Judge not.” But pointing out the judgers and condemners is not really the main focus of our Lord's discourse in today's Gospel reading.

There may be a difference between showing someone their transgressions and judging and condemning them, but this is not the main focus of what our Lord + Jesus is trying to convey in this Gospel reading from the Evangelist St. Luke. To not judge someone is a part of a bigger point that our Lord is preaching into our ears. As I mentioned last Sunday today's Gospel is really about faith and mercy.

The faithful person, when he is shown the mote in his eye, desires to remove that mote and cast it away. The person who clings to the Lord + Jesus desires to be free from sin, as has been said. The person who clings to the Lord + Jesus in faith will also be merciful toward his fellowman. "Be ye merciful, even as your Father is merciful" is not a commandment from the Lord + Jesus. He is not laying down a new law. This is to be understood in the same sense as the language of the Ten Commandments in the Hebrew. When our Lord God gave the Commandments, He was declaring how His people were to behave. He was saying "Thou shalt live this way, and not this other way because thou art My people." Thou shalt have no other gods is a declaration of what the Lord's people will do. We will have no other gods, for the Lord God is our God, and we need no other.

The same is true here when our Lord + Jesus says, "Be ye merciful, even as your Father is merciful." He is telling us what those who cling to Him in faith will be doing. We will be merciful. Why? Because our heavenly Father has been merciful to us. He has not treated us the way that our sins and transgressions deserve. He forgives and covers over our sins. He does this on account of the works and merits of our Lord + Jesus. He fulfilled the Law on our behalf. He suffered in our place and paid the penalty of our sins upon the tree of the holy cross. Therefore, when we see our fellowman sinning, we go to him and show him his sins so that he may turn from them and live. We do not go to him and condemn him for his sins. We show mercy to him. We point him to the Christ; to what He has done for us. For in our faith, we know how damaging and destructive sin is to us. In our mercy, we desire that others not be burdened as we have been.

But there are those who do not consider their sins. They view themselves as righteous. Our Lord would have us live in repentance; in constant understanding that we can do no good thing to save ourselves from the Lord God's eternal wrath and destruction. If we are puffed up in our own righteousness, if we view our works as somehow holier than another person's, we are making ourselves into hypocrites. That is, a person who condemns others when they are committing the same sins themselves. This is the point of our Lord's parable in today's Gospel pericope. "Can the blind guide the blind? Shall they not both fall into a pit?" If we are not living in daily repentance, if our sins are not burdens which we woefully bear, but are something which we ignore or gleefully take pleasure in, we have no business being the voice in the wilderness crying out to come and receive forgiveness.

We will lead both of us into a ditch, either because they will see our unrighteousness and mimic it, or they will ignore our pleas on account of our unrighteousness. This is why our Lord + Jesus is preaching into our ears today the message of faith and mercy. He pleads with us to remove the plank of sin from our own eyes. That is, in faith, cling to Him and His works, and not trust in our own righteousness. When we are clinging firmly to the Lord + Jesus and His Passion on our behalf, then we can see clearly to remove the mote from our brother's eye. Our Lord would have us point ourselves and our fellowman to Him. When we are burdened with sin, when we are racked with the weight of our transgressions, we find relief from Him and Him alone. We find comfort because of His mercy. He showed His mercy by humbling Himself to be born a man, and suffering our punishment upon the tree of the holy cross. He showed us mercy, in that He bore our pain and suffering in Himself, and did not subject us to the penalty which we deserve.

It is this mercy of our Lord + Jesus to which we in faith cling. We cling to Him for all comfort and strength when we are facing trials and temptations, for we know by reason of our faith that He will deliver us. Indeed, we know that He has already won the victory for us, so that when we come to this

place to hear His Word and receive His Sacraments, we know that we are receiving His mercy; we are receiving the forgiveness of all our sins. It is into these ears of faith which clings to Him and His works and merits that our Lord + Jesus preaches “Be ye merciful, even as your Father is merciful.” In the same way that He has shown us mercy by being the source of forgiveness and life, we also desire, on account of faith, to be merciful to our fellowman.

Therefore, we do not preach the Law to judge, or condemn, but to lead to repentance and faith; so that those who hear the Law, might turn in repentance to the Lord + Jesus and receive the forgiveness of their sins. It is in this way that we show the mercy of our heavenly Father to our fellowman. For He showed us that same mercy by sending to us His Only-begotten and Beloved Son, our Lord + Jesus, the Christ, to atone for our sins, and the sins of the whole world.

There will be those who reject that message. There will be those who cry “Judge not.” They are not against us, but against the Lord Who desires to show them mercy. They are not so much as rejecting our mercy, but the Lord’s. Despite this, however, we continue to be even as our Father is, we continue to be merciful, but living a life worthy of repentance and leading others away from their works and self-proclaimed righteousness to the true righteousness found only in the Lord + Jesus. Let us therefore, my dear friends, continue to hunger and thirst after the righteousness found in our Lord + Jesus. For in Him is life and salvation. In Him is forgiveness of all our sins found. Let us also show mercy to our fellowman by pointing them to the works and merits of the Christ. Point them away from their transgressions into the redemption found in our Lord’s perfect obedience to the Law of God. Then shall be given to us, and them, the gifts of Heaven, in “good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over.” For our Lord has shown Himself to be abundantly merciful to us, and we who are His people also show the mercy which has been shown to us. 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!