

The Festival of St. Bartholomew, Apostle
St. Luke 22:24-30
August 24th, 2025
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
Pastor Jerald P. Dulas

I Appoint unto You a Kingdom

In Nomine Iesu!

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

Sermon Text:

“But ye are they that have continued with Me in my temptations; and I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as My Father appointed unto Me, that ye may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom; and ye shall sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

O Lord, send out Thy Light and Thy Truth, let them lead us. O Lord, open Thou my lips, that my mouth may show forth Thy praise. O Lord, graciously preserve me, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected. 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 Apostles in the reading for today argue amongst themselves who among them is the greatest. They are worried about an earthly kingdom. They are worried about a kingdom that does not last, nor is it a kingdom which our Lord + Jesus will establish. Our Lord did not come to establish an earthly kingdom; He did not come to establish a temporal kingdom. He came to establish an eternal, heavenly kingdom. His kingdom is a table around which all those in the kingdom enjoy the food of Heaven—His Body and Blood given in bread and wine. It is a kingdom where we enjoy perfect fellowship with each other, but especially with our Lord and Savior.

The kingdom of which we, and the disciples, are a part of is not a kingdom ruled by any of us. It is not a kingdom where we focus on our abilities, gifts, and successes. No, it is a kingdom ruled by our Lord and Savior + Jesus, the Christ. He won the victory over sin, death, and the devil by suffering and dying on the tree of the holy cross after His perfect obedience to the Law and will of His Father in Heaven. It is His kingdom, and we have no right to this kingdom unless He appoints it unto us. However, our Lord's love for us is also a perfect love. He created us. He made us. And, just like we are proud of the things which are produced by our own hands—the food we make, a room or house we build, furniture we may produce, the children to which we gave birth—our Lord also loves His creation.

It is out of that great love for us that our Lord is willing to suffer all to redeem us. Just like a parent would endure all things for the love of his children. On account of His love for us He appoints unto us a kingdom. He calls us into this kingdom through His holy Word—the promises that are revealed to us through His holy Gospel. He promises us that He has atoned for the sins of the whole world through His death on the cross. He bestows that forgiveness to us through the working of the Holy Ghost. He washes us through Holy Baptism. He forgives our sins through the absolution spoken by the pastor. He feeds us His Body under the bread. He quenches our spiritual thirst through His Blood given in the wine. He gathers us together under His Name to enjoy fellowship with other Christians, so that we might bear each other's burdens; that we might speak comfort to one another with the Word of God,

when we experience trial, suffering, persecution, and trouble in this life.

In our Lord's kingdom, He desires not to be served. This is how the disciples in our Gospel for today would have it. They were arguing over who would serve whom. Who was the top dog? Who was above whom? That temptation happens to us sometimes, when we forget who the Lord of the Church is. We forget that He is the Lord of us all, and that it is His Church, and that we should listen to and follow Him and what He would desire for us in His Church.

What does our Lord desire for us? The Gospel reading from the Evangelist St. Luke tells us that our Lord desires to serve us. How does He serve us? He serves us by defeating our enemies of the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh. He serves us by forgiving us of our sin, rescuing us from death, and giving us an eternal life in His eternal kingdom with Him and all the saints who have gone before us. Like the saint we celebrate and remember today, St. Bartholomew, one of our Lord's Apostles who was at this meal with the others. All those who cling to Him in faith, the Lord + Jesus has appointed unto them a kingdom.

Satan, however, desires to sift us as wheat. The devil desires to take us out of the one, true faith. He does not want us to have comfort in our Lord and His Word. He does not want us to hear our Lord's promises that our sins are forgiven on account of Him and His work, and not on account of anything that we do. The devil does not want us to hear that our Lord has saved us from sin and death, that our Lord has saved us even from him. Satan does not want us to hear about our eternal kingdom which our Lord + Jesus has bestowed upon us through His death and fulfillment of the Law. The devil wants us to be like the disciples who worried who should be in charge. The devil wants us to worry about an earthly, temporal kingdom and desires to take our eyes of faith off of our eternal kingdom in Heaven.

But, our Lord intercedes for us continually before our Father in Heaven. He pleads on our behalf. He serves us by reminding our heavenly Father that He has indeed fulfilled the Law perfectly. He has repaired that which we broke through our disobedience with His perfect obedience. The Law is fulfilled by His perfect obedience to it. And, He reminds His Father in Heaven that the punishment that we deserve on account of our daily and continuous sinning has been paid by His trial, suffering, punishment and death. He went into the grave—He died our death—so that we might have life and have it eternally.

The grave now no longer bears any hold over us. We are freed from the bondage of sin, and we are freed from the prison of the grave. We were slaves to sin and doomed to eternal death, but our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ has freed us by entering into our prison; entering into our grave; entering into our bondage, and breaking us out and freeing us so that we might be rescued from the devil's kingdom and brought into His eternal kingdom which He bestowed upon us.

Therefore, let us give thanks to our Lord and Savior for all the good things which He has done for us. For, our kingdom is not of this world, but our kingdom is His eternal kingdom in Heaven. We enjoy a taste of the benefits of this kingdom even now when we continue steadfast in His Church, but we will one day enjoy this kingdom in its full glory and joy when our Lord calls us out of this life to our eternal home in Heaven. There we will join with all the saints who have gone before us in the faith. Our friends, family, and the Apostles, whose sin caused them to argue about earthly things. We will even join together with St. Bartholomew, the Apostle whom we honor and commemorate today. For our Lord + Jesus has appointed unto us a kingdom, the kingdom of eternal life in heaven with Him. 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!