

23 August 2020
12th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

CONCORDIA

Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod
725 Truxton Drive. Kingsport, TN.

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Jesus asked
His disciples:
*“But who
do you say
that I am?”*

Matt. 16:15

Collect

Almighty and Merciful God, defend your church from all false teachings and error that your people may confess You to be the only true God, and rejoice in your good gifts of life and salvation, through Jesus Christ, Your son, our Lord, who with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever.

Introit

Readings

Old Testament/Isaiah 51:1–6. Epistle/Romans 11:33—12:8. Gospel/Matthew 16:13–20.
The Lord Jesus Christ Is the Son of the Living God

- Jesus asked His disciples: *“But who do you say that I am?”* (Matt. 16:15). The question is also put to us: Who do you say that He is? Flesh and blood do not reveal this to us, but by the ministry of the Gospel, the Father in heaven reveals His Son to us on earth, who has become flesh and suffered death for our salvation. Thus, we believe and confess that He is *“the Christ, the Son of the living God”* (Matt. 16:16). As He died for our transgressions and was raised for our justification, He looses us from all our sins and preserves our life within His Church, against which even *“the gates of hell shall not prevail”* (Matt. 16:18–19).
- His salvation is forever, and His righteousness *“will never be dismayed”* (Is. 51:6). He comforts us with the Gospel in His Church, so that *“joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song”* (Is. 51:3).
- Therefore, *“according to the measure of faith that God has assigned”* (Rom. 12:3), we also offer ourselves *“as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God”* (Rom. 12:1) through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Stewardship

Matt. 16:27 – “For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.”

St Paul talks about rewards on the Last Day in 1 Corinthians 3, and Jesus says more about this “repaying” in Matt. 19:27-30. Bottom line: Your good works can’t buy you heaven, but in Christ your good works do matter. They are pleasing to your Heavenly Father, and they will be rewarded. In other words, our sacrifices for the Lord’s Kingdom are not in vain, and they are not unnoticed by your Father. This should encourage you in your faithfulness.

+ Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost +

The Hard Sayings of Jesus. Matthew 5:48; 6:13; 27:46.

- ***You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.***
- ***And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.***
- ***“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”***

The hard sayings of Jesus force us to reexamine our cherished assumptions and challenge us to rethink our view of His life and the life of the Church of which He is the Head.

1. **Jesus teaches us to be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect.**
 - a. We mistakenly assume the impossibility doing what Jesus commands.
 - b. Be all-embracing, without restriction, in your acts of mercy
2. **Jesus teaches us to pray for strength in our spiritual struggles.**
 - a. Jesus is NOT teaching a rapture/escape from temptation, tribulation, testing.
 - b. May our faith stand firm in the time of trial / temptation.
3. **Jesus’ cry of dereliction shows that He would pay any price for us.**
 - a. Jesus felt the full weight / consequence of sin.
 - b. Jesus’ experience of God-forsakenness is our rescue.

Discipleship Leading to Evangelism

“We believe a faith once delivered, not one renegotiated every generation.”

Scripture is replete with references, commands, and exhortations to hold fast to the faith delivered to you, to the tradition, to the Apostles' doctrine, *koinonia*, *eucharistia*, and prayers... and this gives us a commitment to continue in the truth—and not futile efforts to become relevant—forms the basis of a Christian witness that has the evangelical power to make a dramatic difference in the world.

We believe a faith once delivered, not one renegotiated every generation. A truth powerful enough to refashion the world, not one remolded in accord with changing political or moral or cultural fashions.

- *“Hold fast,”* St. Paul urges, to *“that word which I preached to you”* (1 Cor 15:2).
- Again: *“Stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught.”* (2 Thess. 2:15).
- This urgent exhortation echoes through the Bible: *“Let us hold fast to our confession”* (Heb. 4:14).
- In the book of Revelation, the voice of the Lord says to the churches that await his final triumph: *“Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.”* (Rev. 3:11).

<http://pastoralmeanderings.blogspot.com/12-20-2010>

Prayer of the Church. Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost. 23 August 2020

Having heard the Word proclaimed, let us pray for ourselves, for all the faithful and for all people as they have need.

For all people, that they may have faith in Christ and heed the voice of God calling by His Word;

For the Church, that the people of God may pursue righteousness with peace and joy in their hearts; and

For all pastors and their ministry of Word and Sacrament and for all vocations to the ministry, that the lives of God's people may redound to His praise and glory, let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For our president, Congress, governor and all civic leaders in their pursuit of peace and unity;

For all judges and magistrates in their pursuit of justice with mercy; and

For those who protect us from violence and preserve order here and everywhere, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For all noble professions, and for the flourishing of the arts and music;

For favorable weather and the fruits of the earth; and

For those unemployed, the poor, the homeless, the hungry and all people in need, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For all families and children, single adults and youth;

For those who teach and those who learn, that they may advance in wisdom and grace; and

For the catechumens and those who teach the faith to them, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For victims of disaster and for those stricken by illness or infirmity;

For the aged and infirm, as well as those in nursing homes and assisted living facilities;

For those who grieve the loss of those whom they love; and

For those who meet with sudden death, *[and especially for those who have requested our prayers _____,]* let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For the work of God's kingdom in this place;

For our faithful support of the Church and the renewal of our parish life through the Means of Grace;

For our communion this day upon the life-giving body and blood of Christ; and

For our growth in grace, that we may attain to the full stature of Christ, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

Be merciful to us, O Lord, and hear our prayers. Grant to us the grace of Your Holy Spirit, that we may be led into all truth and be steadfast in the confession of Christ; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever. **Amen.**