

***Risen Christ Lutheran Church  
Arvada, Colorado  
Sunday Family Devotion in Absence  
Eighth Sunday after Trinity - August 2, 2020  
The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH)***

**OPENING HYMN** *TLH 526 "In God, My Faithful God"*

**INVOCATION**

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen!

**INTROIT** *Psalm 48:1a, 3, 9-11, 14*

We have thought on your steadfast love, O God,  
in the midst of your temple.

As your name, O God, so your praise reaches to the ends of the earth.

Your right hand is filled with righteousness.

Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised  
in the city of our God, His holy mountain.

Within her citadels

God has made himself known as a fortress.

Let Mount Zion be glad!

Let the daughters of Judah rejoice because of your judgments!

This is God, our God forever and ever.

He will guide us forever.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son

and to the Holy Spirit;

as it was in the beginning,

is now, and will be forever. Amen.

**COLLECT OF THE DAY**

Grant to us, Lord, the Spirit to think and do always such things as are right, that we, who cannot do anything that is good without You, may be enabled by You to live according to Your will; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**OLD TESTAMENT** *Jeremiah 23:16-29*

<sup>16</sup> Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you, filling you with vain hopes. They speak visions of their own minds, not from the mouth of the LORD. <sup>17</sup> They say continually to those who despise the word of the LORD, 'It shall be well with you'; and to everyone who stubbornly follows his own heart, they say, 'No disaster shall come upon you.'" <sup>18</sup> For who among them has stood in the council of the LORD to see and to hear his word, or who has paid attention to his word and listened? <sup>19</sup> Behold, the storm of the LORD! Wrath has gone forth, a whirling tempest; it will burst upon the head of the wicked. <sup>20</sup> The anger of the LORD will not turn back until he has executed and accomplished the intents of his heart. In the latter days you will understand it clearly. <sup>21</sup> "I did not send the prophets, yet they ran; I did

not speak to them, yet they prophesied. <sup>22</sup> But if they had stood in my council, then they would have proclaimed my words to my people, and they would have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their deeds. <sup>23</sup> “Am I a God at hand, declares the LORD, and not a God far away? <sup>24</sup> Can a man hide himself in secret places so that I cannot see him? declares the LORD. Do I not fill heaven and earth? declares the LORD. <sup>25</sup> I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy lies in my name, saying, ‘I have dreamed, I have dreamed!’ <sup>26</sup> How long shall there be lies in the heart of the prophets who prophesy lies, and who prophesy the deceit of their own heart, <sup>27</sup> who think to make my people forget my name by their dreams that they tell one another, even as their fathers forgot my name for Baal? <sup>28</sup> Let the prophet who has a dream tell the dream, but let him who has my word speak my word faithfully. What has straw in common with wheat? declares the LORD. <sup>29</sup> Is not my word like fire, declares the LORD, and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces? (ESV)

**GRADUAL** *Psalm 31:2b, 1a*

Be a rock of refuge for me,  
a strong fortress to save me!  
In you, O LORD, do I take refuge;  
let me never be put to shame.

**EPISTLE** *Romans 8:12-17*

<sup>12</sup> So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. <sup>13</sup> For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. <sup>14</sup> For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. <sup>15</sup> For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” <sup>16</sup> The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, <sup>17</sup> and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. (ESV)

**HOLY GOSPEL** *Matthew 7:15-23*

<sup>15</sup> “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. <sup>16</sup> You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? <sup>17</sup> So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. <sup>18</sup> A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. <sup>19</sup> Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>20</sup> Thus you will recognize them by their fruits. <sup>21</sup> “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. <sup>22</sup> On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ <sup>23</sup> And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’ (ESV)

**SERMON HYMN** *TLH 267 “If God Had Not Been on Our Side”*

**SERMON**

In the Gospel reading for today, Jesus says, “Beware of false prophets...” And in the Old Testament reading, the Lord spoke through Jeremiah to warn about the false prophets in his day. False prophets are not merely those who tell the future wrongly, they are those who proclaim

false words. They preach false doctrine and teach false teachings that are against the Word of the Lord. They encourage people to keep sinning and doing things that are contrary to the will and Word of God, as if it doesn't matter what they do. The worst kind of false prophets today are the ones who claim to be Christian but then give permission to sin "because Jesus forgave all sins when he died on the cross." Actually, to be completely accurate, Jesus did not forgive all sins when he died on the cross. He *paid for* all sins by his suffering and death. He atoned for the sins of all people of all time; he made the payment to God for our transgressions. But he did not forgive all sins on the cross! False preachers do not warn their hearers about the punishment of God for persistent, high-handed, sin and rebellion against God. They proclaim to unrepentant sinners, "no harm will come to you." That is the false message of false prophets, of whom Jesus says to beware.

Someone may ask, then how do we get forgiveness of sins? That's a very good question! Yes, Jesus paid for all sins on the cross and the benefits of that payment are given to those who truly repent. The Biblical teaching of repentance brings about a change in the life of the penitent. In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word for repentance means to "turn around" with the notion that a person is heading in the wrong direction but then they turn around and start going in the right direction. The Old Testament concept of repentance envisions a walk, a way of life that changes, from one of sin to a life of righteousness, purity, and holiness with God. The Greek word in the New Testament has to do with a "change of mind" with the idea that if a person's mind (and heart) is changed, then the whole person will change and live a new life of faith and love in Christ. Luther and the reformers talked about three aspects of repentance. First, the preaching of the law of God drives a sinner to contrition and sorrow for their sins. They feel guilty for what they have done. Second, the preaching about Christ and his payment for sins on the cross creates and sustains faith, which looks to Christ to receive from him forgiveness of their sins. This lifts the burden of their guilt and feelings of despair. Through faith in Christ's atonement, the Christian receives the forgiveness and absolution from God in the sacrament of Holy Absolution. In this divine absolution, God takes away the sins of the penitent, removing them as far as the East is from the West, and God remembers their sins no more! Third, and finally, the reformers speak of the new repentant life that follows contrition and faith in Christ. This new life of the Christian fights against the attacks of the devil, the temptations of the world, and the lusts of the sinful flesh. The truly repentant Christian life is one that continues to look to Christ in faith and also lives in selfless, self-giving love toward God and our fellow human beings. The new Christian life is a life that loves others because God first loves us; we forgive others because God forgives us. We get the forgiveness that Christ won for us by his atonement on the cross, by receiving the forgiveness of our sins in Holy Absolution.

Through Holy Absolution, and also through Holy Baptism and Holy Communion, as well as through the proclamation of the Holy Word of God, the Lord gives us his Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the one who works through God's law to convict us of our sins, who works through the Gospel of Christ's payment for our sins on the cross to create and sustain faith in us, and who brings about in us a new life as God's children through the new birth of Baptism and the life-giving, life-sustaining nourishment in the Body and Blood of Christ. Dear friends, the only way that we can have God's forgiveness and new life in Christ is by receiving the Word and these Sacraments in the divine service. False prophets will tell you that you do not need to receive these saving gifts or that you do not need to go to church or that your sins are already forgiven. No! Forgiveness is not automatic. It must be received the way that Christ instituted it to be received, through the preached Word, through Baptism and its daily use, through Absolution

spoken by your pastor, and through eating the Body of Christ and drinking his Blood for your Communion with God and your fellow Christians. What great eternal blessings we receive by the power of the Holy Spirit through these saving gifts in the Holy Son from our forgiving, merciful, gracious, loving Heavenly Holy Father! Amen!

### **NICENE CREED**

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

### **PRAYER HYMN TLH 293 “O Holy Spirit, Grant Us Grace”**

### **COLLECT FOR THE WORD**

Blessed Lord, You have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning. Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them that, by patience and comfort of Your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

### **LORD’S PRAYER**

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

### **BENEDICTION**

The Lord bless us and keep us.

The Lord make his face shine on us and be gracious to us.

The Lord look upon us with favor and give us peace. Amen.

### **CLOSING HYMN TLH 240 “Father Most Holy, Merciful, and Tender”**

**SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY:** 2 Samuel 22:26-34;  
1 Corinthians 10:6-13; Luke 16:1-13.

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