Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

**What Did They Want to See and Hear?**

**Luke 10:23-37**

Trinity XIII – 9.6.2020

Our text begins with: *Then turning to the disciples, he said privately, “Blessed are the eyes that see what you see! For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.”*

What was it that the prophets and kings wanted to see? What did they want to hear? Jesus tells us that they did not see it, nor did they hear it. So, what was it they wanted to see and hear?

Were you paying attention to the Old Testament lesson from 2nd Chronicles? It begins with these words: *The men of Israel took captive 200,000 of their relatives, women, sons, and daughters. They also took much spoil from them and brought the spoil to Samaria.* Who did this? Men of Israel! Who did they do it too? Their relatives! These were all *JEWS*. These were all descendants of Abraham. This is taking place about 730 years after they had come out of exile in Egypt. It is also approximately 730 years before the coming of God’s Christ.

What our Old Testament lesson does not say, is that they: *killed 120,000 from Judah in one day, all of them men of valor, because they had forsaken the Lord, the God of their fathers.*

This is where the hatred of Samaritans arose. God saw all the descendants of Abraham as one people. But those who were Judeans considered themselves as true Jews, they were closer to the temple. But as you can see, proximity to the temple did not help too much, “they had forsaken the Lord, the God of their fathers.”

As I have said before, I love the Old Testament. I can read the Old Testament and have hope. If God could love and care for the rebellious people whom He had called His own, even when they wandered from Him, there is hope for me. If God could forgive murderers, adulterers, polygamists, and thieves – AND – use them as leaders of His people, then who am I to question if He can forgive and use even a worm such as me as His pastor.

What did prophets and kings desire to see? God’s Christ! They desired to see the coming of the Lord! They desired to see the days of the promised One of God walking the earth, fulfilling God’s Law, and making of Himself the sacrifice to redeem them from sin and death. They wanted to see the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

After Adam and Eve covered themselves with fig leaves, they were terrified and hid themselves from God. Do you understand that before they ate of the fruit, they had no terror to be in the presence of God? There was no sin! Without sin, there is no need to be terrified of God. One bite of forbidden fruit changed that. God gave them garments of skin to cloth them – God killed animals – blood was shed – to cover their sinfulness. This pointed forward to the sacrifice of Christ, His blood shed to wash away and cover the guilt of sin, just as promised to them.

When Eve gives birth to her firstborn child, she said, “I have begotten a man, the Lord.” She thought that her firstborn was the one promised by God to fix the mess they had made by eating the fruit. She and Adam wanted to see and hear what those in our Gospel saw and heard – the Word of God made flesh.

Abraham wanted to see all the nations of the earth be blessed in His offspring.

David was the king after the Lord’s own heart, who desired to see God’s Christ, even writing one of the most vivid descriptions of the Suffering Servant, God’s Christ, in Psalm 22. David, a king *AND* a prophet did as did all the prophets – He pointed forward to the coming salvation of Israel, the redemption of Israel, in God’s Christ.

After David, the prophet Isaiah gives the most graphic depiction of what Christ endured on the cross, writing almost 700 years before the event took place.

God used descendants of Abraham, to discipline descendants of Abraham, for forsaking the Lord. They failed to keep both the 1st and 2nd tables of God’s Law.

Forsaking the Lord is so easy to do. We think to forsake the Lord we would have to fall down and worship Baal, or some other God.

God declared that even worshipping Him in a place where worship of Baal had taken place in the past, was idolatry.

It was not long after God had given His commands to Aaron and his sons about what His priests were to do, including explicit commands about the use of incense in the tabernacle, that the sons of Aaron (Nadab & Abihu) decided they wanted to make their own recipe for incense. As they offered it, fire came out from the Lord and consumed them. Yes, they were killed by God for simply tweaking a recipe a bit to meet their desires. (Leviticus 10)

I know that we think it is no big deal. We should be able to worship God however we want. But God finds some things offensive, so offensive He will not tolerate them.

Jonah went to Nineveh and the whole city was moved by God’s Word from His mouth that they repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes – they took off their regular clothes and sat in something like old burlap seed bags, covering themselves with ashes, to show their repentance. And God relented of His anger against the city and did not destroy it.

Do we have the same reverence and fear of God? Or have we lost that? Look at how we treat the things of God? His Word? His holy place – this church? Is it a place to which we come in reverence, respect, and awe? Is our worship done with hearts fully attuned to what we are saying and doing?

What about our daily lives lived before our neighbors who may, or may not, believe in Christ? Do they know what we believe and confess? Do we treat God’s name with reverence and awe, or do we bandy it about, dragging it through the mud in thoughtlessness, in some cases, using it in a downright crass manner?

We are some of the worst idolaters ever – and we claim to bear His name – Christians!

We won’t even talk about how we treat our neighbors. How many times have we spoken ill of our neighbor? We “knew” the story was true, we knew it would trash their reputation, but we still passed it on. Forget about what God says in the 8th Commandment, it was true – and it was the latest, tastiest, morsel of news!

We did not stab them in the heart with a knife, or shoot them with our hunting rifles, but we committed murder according to God’s Word by hating them.

Maybe we did not sleep with them in their bed, in fact we’ve never been to their house nor have they been to ours, but as we undressed them in our mind we *HAVE* committed adultery with them.

In our Gospel lesson, the lawyer wanted to justify himself before Jesus. If Jesus the rabbi said he was OK, then his conscience would be clear before God. But Jesus knew there was an issue in the man’s heart, an unwillingness to love others unconditionally – perfectly – and told the parable to show it.

Kings and prophets wanted to see God’s Christ come. Kings and prophets wanted to hear the incarnate Word of God come to them and pronounce them forgiven. They did not trust in themselves, they knew only too well their sinfulness and frailty before God. And they knew of God’s grace, it was enacted in the Passover – remembered in every eating of it.

A perfect lamb – Jesus Christ.

A year old – young and full of life.

Was taken into their homes for four days – He lived an earthly life, they got to know Him.

At twilight they killed the Lamb – the exact hour that Christ died upon the cross, killed at the hands of the Jewish people, by the actions of the Romans.

Blood on the doorpost and lintel – Christ’s blood on the crossbeam and post of the cross.

 - Christ’s blood marks the door of the believer’s heart, so marked at baptism.

The angel of death passes over – eternal death has no hold on those who are in Christ.

They eat the flesh of the lamb with unleavened bread, dressed and ready to travel to the promised land – we eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Lamb, and sing that we are ready to depart this life, our slavery to sin, and enter our eternal promised land of rest.

What did they want to see and hear?

They wanted to see and hear what you are seeing and hearing this day! Here is God’s Christ, come to you. Do you see Him? Here is God’s Christ, speaking to you. Do you hear Him!

“It looks only like water,” you declare. But is it?

Do you hear the Christ? “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” (Matt. 28:19-20)

Christ inundates your senses so that you see and hear – water and Word – so, a miracle takes place. You are united to Christ’s death and resurrection, clothed with His righteousness. Each day you live in your baptism. You rise and drown the Old Adam in contrition and repentance, and daily the New Man emerges forgiven and redeemed to live before God in righteousness and purity.

Jesus declared about those who go out proclaiming His word in His name, “The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me.” (Luke 10:16)

They desired to hear what you hear, the Word proclaimed to you as Christ commanded. “Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you.” (Luke 24:46-49)

You hear, and the Holy Spirit works in that Word of Christ proclaimed, you repent into the forgiveness of sins. You are those who have been declared righteous by God, forgiven and blessed by God to be His children.

They desired to see Christ! They desired to hear Christ! You do both today!

You come to His table He set with holy food. Here is His body – given for you. Here is His blood – shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. You eat Christ! You drink Christ! Christ speaks and with eyes of faith you see what He declares. You receive forgiveness and life. What you see and hear, the true body and blood of Christ, *will* strengthen and preserve you unto life everlasting.

Blessed are your eyes to see what you see! Blessed are your ears to hear what you hear! Blessed are you in Christ Jesus. Amen.