

5th Sunday after Pentecost
July 5th , 2020

“Rest and healing for the soul by what Jesus’ lips reveal” (Matthew 11:27-30)
By Rev. Ed Weber

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

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Today’s text is from our Gospel reading, Matthew 11:27-30

27 All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. 28 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

Here ends our text.

What an invitation! What an invitation for the soul...an invitation of rest, and an invitation to be healed! As we just sang in the Hymn of the day in verse 3 of “Thee Will I Love, My Strength and Tower”,

“I thank Thee, Jesus, Sun from heaven, whose radiance hath brought light to me; I thank Thee, who has richly given all that could make me glad and free; I thank Thee that my soul is healed by what Thy lips revealed.”

On this 4th of July weekend when we celebrate freedom from political tyranny and especially the freedom of religion in our great country, it is the freedom that is revealed from the lips of Jesus that matters most!

“Learn from Me...”

1. First, we learn what Jesus revealed from His lips - the Gospel of the salvation – true freedom!!

This freedom cannot be known unless it is revealed by our Triune God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is through His holy word that Jesus reveals the greatest of freedoms...freedom from the power of sin, death and the devil.

Oh, it's so good to pause and remember always that had it not been but for Jesus gracious revealing of the Gospel through the Holy Spirit to you and me, His gracious invitation and gift of faith to believe in Him, the Sun of heaven, you and I would be absolutely, impossibly, heavy laden with guilt, shame and hopelessness!

On Tuesday, Cameron County Judge Trevino began his press conference with a Bible passage from Matthew 19...

“With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

What a joy it was to hear one of our local elected leaders express his faith and trust in God! Judge Trevino was of course using Scripture to shine hope on the present Covid-19 crisis that only the Almighty God can help us weak and frail sinners get through. Only God can do the impossible of leading doctors to find treatments and a vaccine for this terrible disease. Yes, we pray, according to God's good will that He would relieve us of this temporal burden and this weight of this crisis.

But most importantly, the context of this passage from Matthew 19 speaks beyond our reliance on God for our earthly needs. For the question from one of His disciples which prompted Jesus to respond was, “who can be saved?”

The answer to this question is indeed...

“With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

For it is utterly impossible for sinful man, including you and me to save ourselves. We are born into the tyranny of Satan, enslaved under his reign, without any spiritual freedom and eternally condemned.

But, the words which flow from Jesus lips, the Gospel of salvation, are His Declaration of Independence for the soul! It is a declaration of rest for the soul. For Jesus liberates the sinner, liberates you and me and free us eternally! Jesus did the impossible by laying down His life on the cross for the sins of the world! And for this reason, Jesus can say...

“Come to Me ... and I will give you rest.”

For Jesus' has cancelled mankind's greatest burden, his debt of sin and its punishment eternal death! Where there is no punishment or condemnation, there is only rest and peace for the soul. **"All things have been delivered to Me by My Father."**

2. Secondly, we learn from Jesus that this invitation of rest is revealed for all

Jesus wants all to be saved! It's an open invitation to believe in Him! **"Come!"** Jesus says. He doesn't limit this invitation to any particular people, race or gender. He simply says **"Come!"**

How refreshing it is to hear that word when we have been hearing these past four months "stay away"! Stay away from gatherings of 10 or more. Stay away from stores unless it is essential. And stay away from each other... at least 6 feet away. Don't come near me especially if you're not wearing a mask. Well, we know that these rules have been temporarily made for our good, for our protection to help slow the spread of the Covid-19 virus.

But there is One who never will tell us to stay away. There is no circumstance where His invitation to come does not stand. For Jesus is the Great Healer of body and soul. There is no disease that He cannot heal. There is no life that He cannot raise from the dead. He invites all people to believe that He is the Son of God in the flesh, and that believing in Him you will have healing of your soul and your Creator helping you through each and every crisis.

In the verses immediately preceding our Gospel, Jesus laments that His invitation was given to many who rejected it. He performed miracles of healing in their midst and still they didn't believe Him.

He began to rebuke the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done, because they did not repent: 21 "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. 22 But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. 23 And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. 24 But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you."

If Jesus' invitation is refused, unrepentant sinners are left to go through this life without rest for the soul and relief of a guilty conscience. And most terribly will have to stand on

the judgement day without the righteousness of Jesus to give them entrance into heaven. They will be brought down to Hades where it is anything but tolerable!

Oh, how Jesus **“desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” 1 Timothy 2:4**

Yet, when His gracious invitation is rejected, it is withdrawn and given to others. So Jesus says in the verse right before our Gospel.

“I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes. (Matthew 11:25)

“I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes.

3. Thirdly, we learn from Jesus that these hidden things of salvation which He reveals also include a light cross and easy yoke to bear.

“Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

He who bore all the burden of our sin to give rest for all souls, tells us that His yoke is easy, and the burden is light. For we don't have to bear the burden of our sins, nor could we. We don't have to drink the cup that Jesus drank, nor could we. We learn from the cross that Jesus is gracious, humble, merciful, patient, full of absolute love for all sinners. How could He give us a yoke that we couldn't bear? He can't nor will He for He loves us. Any test that we face in this life, any cross He gives us to bear, He does so for our eternal good, to strengthen our faith and trust in Him.

So Paul concludes that the thorn that he bears is for his good!

“Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.” (2 Corinthians 12:10)

And again, we know from 1 Corinthians 10:13, that God gives us this promise:

“No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”

Therefore, brothers and sisters and Christ, receive the invitation of Christ to come to Him with gladness in your hearts! For it is the greatest of all invitations! He gives you rest for your soul and a life with an easy yoke to bear. As we enter now the 5th month of this Covid-19 epidemic in the United States of America, we live with this peace of Christ in our hearts. We know that we are in the Good Shepherd’s loving and gentle hands! We live with freedom for our souls from the powers of evil!

And we declare this freedom daily of Christ Crucified for the sins of all people. As the lips of Jesus have revealed this Good News to our ears and hearts, so we also proclaim this freedom to all repentant sinners that there is rest in Jesus. Let freedom ring! He did the impossible and He alone bestows all perfect gifts to me and all believers.

So, we sing in the next hymn, “O God, My Faithful God” of our absolute confidence that He is the ...

“True fountain ever flowing, without whom nothing is, all perfect gifts bestowing: Give me a healthy frame, and may I have within a conscience from blame, a soul unstained by sin.”

Rest indeed...freedom, liberty and an easy yoke! All glory to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit! Amen

“The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Amen. (Galatians 4:7)