

The Feast of Whitsunday
St. John 14:23-31
May 20th, 2018
Sts. Peter & Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
Pastor Jerald Dulas

Peace I Leave with You

In Nomine Iesu!

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

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.

On this Feast of Whitsunday, we get one final reading from the Evangelist St. John on the night of our Lord's betrayal. Our Lord + Jesus over the last few Sundays has been comforting His Apostles after telling them that He is going away. The comfort that they receive, and that we also receive, is the Helper—the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost will bring peace to the Apostles, for they will be shown and reminded of the promises that our Lord + Jesus Christ made while living on this Earth. He will bring peace for He will remind them, as He even reminds us, that even though we may be poor, miserable sinners, our sins have been paid for by the Lord + Jesus on the tree of the holy cross. The Holy Ghost reminds us that through the faith that He has gifted us with, we receive the righteousness of Christ—the righteousness that He won by His works and merits on this Earth.

This righteousness of our Lord + Jesus the Holy Ghost spreads to the four corners of the world; to all the Earth. In the Epistle from the Acts of the Apostles we see the Holy Ghost proclaiming the good things that our Lord did to the multitudes that had gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate Pentecost—the celebration that occurred fifty days after the Passover to commemorate the receiving of the Law of God on Mount Sinai. There in Jerusalem on that day were gathered men from all parts of the known world at that time: *“Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs.”* Already on the first Christian Pentecost the Holy Ghost was proclaiming the righteousness of Christ to all the world.

The Church's Pentecost would now no longer celebrate the receiving of the Law but would celebrate the receiving of the Holy Ghost. No longer would there be a list of rules to obey to gain favor with the Lord God, but now the righteousness that our Lord + Jesus won by His fulfilling of the Law would be received by all those who believe on His Name. Now they would receive the favor of the Lord God through faith, on account of what the Lord + Jesus has done for them. Since we now have His works and His merits and His righteousness through the faith that the Holy Ghost creates and sustains in us, we now have peace with God. The Lord's promise to His Apostles is fulfilled: He has left us with peace.

We celebrate on this day the Holy Ghost. He creates faith in us through the means of grace; through the preaching of the Word and the participation in the Blessed Sacraments. Through those

same means He sustains our faith; keeps us in the one, true faith until we are called to our eternal home in Heaven. Faith clings to the promises of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Faith clings to what He has done for us: He fulfilled the Law of God perfectly for us, so that the penalty of the Law death, now has no more power over us. We have an eternal life given to us because of what our Lord + Jesus has done. He even suffered the punishment that we deserved for our breaking of the Law of God. He suffered beatings, mockings, crucifixion and death all for us.

He bursts open the gates of death and the grave so that we have life. And on His ascension, He bursts open the gates of Heaven, so that we may enter in and enjoy His blessings for all eternity. He has gone to Heaven to prepare a mansion for us. When we enter eternal life through our death, we have a mansion in Heaven; we have a place set aside for us in Heaven. And it is the work of the Holy Ghost throughout our lives to remind us of this fact. He is always pointing us to the *“wonderful works of God.”* Just as He did on that first Christian Pentecost in Jerusalem for all the people from all over the world.

This message of our Lord’s wonderful works may have started in Jerusalem, but that message has been preached throughout the world. We are living proof of the power of the Holy Ghost, for we are several thousand miles from Jerusalem and Israel, but the Word of God has been preached in our midst and continues to be preached in our midst. Every Sunday, and on certain Festivals, and on Wednesday evenings in Advent and Lent, the Word of God is preached into our ears. That means that when we gather together in the Lord’s Name, the Holy Ghost is preaching the Lord’s promises into our ears. He is proclaiming the *“wonderful works of God”* to us when we gather in this house of God. He is proclaiming to us today that our sins are forgiven on account of the Christ, and that we have an eternal home in Heaven waiting for us, since our Lord + Jesus redeemed us from sin, death and the power of the devil.

By this message we are given peace. Peace that our sins are forgiven. Peace that our souls will live forever in a new and glorious body given to us, in Heaven. Peace that after this life of sorrow is over, we will have eternal joy in Heaven.

Our Lord + Jesus did not leave us alone when He ascended into Heaven, but He sent to us His Holy Ghost. He left us with the peace that the Holy Ghost proclaims to us through the means of grace. And He does not just do it in our midst, but He does it wherever two or three are gathered together in the Name of our Lord + Jesus throughout the world. Think about that! We may be a small band of brothers in Christ, but we have brothers and sisters throughout the world, who cling to our Lord + Jesus Christ in faith. Not only in our own diocese, but there are others throughout the world who know and cling to the truth of the Word of God in faith. This is the promise of our Lord, and it is the work of the Holy Ghost.

Therefore, let us celebrate today the great gift that our Lord + Jesus left to us—the Holy Ghost. Let us celebrate that the pure preaching of the Word exists in our midst, and that the Sacraments are being celebrated according to our Lord’s institution. For, by these things the Holy Ghost is creating and sustaining in us faith. Faith which knows that even though we are poor, miserable sinners, our sins are not credited to us, but are placed on the cross for our Lord to suffer and die for. Faith which knows that even though we may die, we are not bound to stay in the grave, but our souls will go to Heaven, and be given new and glorious bodies on the Last Day. Faith which knows that when we come to this place of worship we are receiving the Holy Ghost through preaching and the Sacraments and He is sustaining our faith once again, and will continue to do it throughout our lives, until we are called to our eternal home in Heaven. Where the Holy Ghost is at work, we have faith that He is granting us peace; peace that will last for all eternity. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give glory! I will extol Thee, O Lord, and I will praise Thy Name forever and ever. Amen.

The Votum:

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria!