

Rogate
St. John 16:23b-30
May 6th, 2018
Sts. Peter & Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
Pastor Jerald Dulas

That Your Joy May Be Full

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.

Today is *Rogate* Sunday. Now, *Rogate* has nothing to do with hair growth products. *Rogate* is Latin for “pray ye.” Therefore, today’s theme is all about prayer. If we examine the structure of the last half of the Easter season, we will notice a pattern. The last two Sundays’ Gospels have been from the last recorded discourse of our Lord + Jesus Christ to His Apostles on the night before His trial, suffering, crucifixion and death. Two weeks ago we heard our Lord tell His Apostles that in a little while He was going to be leaving, and He prepared His Apostles for His physical departure from this Earth by sending them the Holy Ghost. Last Sunday our Lord prepared His Apostles for the coming of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, where the Holy Ghost would rule and guide the Church in our Lord’s absence by teaching us all things, and leading us into the way of truth.

Today, our Lord prepares His Apostles for how to live this life after His departure. One’s life is to be a life of prayer—of asking whatever one needs or wants from the Heavenly Father. Therefore, our Lord teaches His Apostles to pray so that both our and the Apostles’ joy may be full. Our Lord is teaching His Apostles to ask from the Heavenly Father what they need and want, in order that they may be full of joy. We have good gifts from our Lord God, so that the trials and tribulations of this life may be lessened.

Therefore, this affords us a perfect time to briefly examine the Lord’s Prayer—even as we sung about it in the Chief Hymn—Martin Luther’s Lord’s Prayer hymn—for it teaches us about prayer and how to pray. The Lord’s Prayer can be divided into three divisions. First, is a section which deals with our relationship with our Heavenly Father, and the benefits that we receive from Him. In the first three petitions we ask our Heavenly Father to hallow His Name, to let His Kingdom come, and that His will be done. These three involve the benefits that we receive from holy Mother Church. Our Lord’s Name is hallowed when the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity and the sacraments are administered according to Christ’s institution, and when all errors and false and pernicious doctrines are expelled from the Church. This is why we say in the Explanation of this petition that the Lord would preserve us from profaning His Name, because it is profaned by false and pernicious doctrine allowing to exist unchecked within the Church. This would include all those who insist on calling good evil and evil good and who continue to mock our Lord’s Name by preaching these lies.

The second petition continues the thought of the first one. For, our Lord's Kingdom comes when He sends us His Holy Ghost. How does the Lord send His Holy Ghost? How do we receive Him? As we have learned before, we receive the Holy Ghost through means, specifically the means of grace, that is, through the preached Word and the Sacraments administered. Therefore, if God's Name is being hallowed among us by pure preaching and pure administration of the Sacraments, then our Lord's Kingdom is coming to us, for He is sending us the Holy Ghost to us through these means. And that means that we are being sanctified, that is, being made holy, having our sins washed away through the preaching of forgiveness and the gifting of forgiveness, life and salvation that we receive through the sacraments.

The third petition completes the thought of the first two. For whenever our Heavenly Father's Name is hallowed, and whenever our Lord's Kingdom is coming to us, His holy will is being done. Many people have asked me, or expressed their desire to know, what the Lord's will was for them. Here we have what our Lord's will is in simple terms: Listen to the Word of God preached in its purity, shut out from your ears and hearts all false and pernicious preaching, which profane God's holy Name. And, come to this holy house and receive often the out-pouring of the Holy Ghost by the pure preaching and right administration of the blessed sacraments, which will serve to make you holy, that is, sinless, and hating sin, just like your Heavenly Father is holy.

The second division of the Lord's Prayer only includes one petition, the fourth, which asks the supply of the daily wants of our bodies, our daily bread. This petition deals with our earthly needs, with what we need to clothe ourselves; with what we need to feed ourselves; what we need to have protection from the elements, that is, having a roof over our heads; and what we need for society and companionship. All our earthly needs are included in this petition.

But, this obviously must be a small thing to ask for, for first, our Heavenly Father already supplies all our needs and wants without our prayer, even to all the evil. Even as he causes nature to sprout and grow, and feeds the birds and animals of the world, even more so does he provide all of our wants and needs. It is just that sometimes we become discontent with what our Lord has given us to the point that we spurn what we have received from Him. We treat what He has given us as if we were the ones that acquired it by our own working and striving, forgetting that everything we have is a gift from the Lord God. Well, in this petition we ask that our Lord would teach us to be content with what He has given us, while at the same time teaching us to ask for whatever good things our sanctified hearts desire. When we are content with what our Lord provides us, then we can be content even when he supplies us with just our basic needs of food, clothing, house, and society.

Secondly, this petition must be a small thing to ask for, for it is surrounded by six other petitions. Three, as we discussed previously that deal with the greatest benefits of Heaven bestowed upon us through the holy Church, and three that deal with our greatest calamities in this life, that is, sin and its consequences. Therefore, there is one petition dealing with daily bread—the physical needs of this life—and six that deal with the needs of our soul—our spiritual life. Therefore, let us look at the last division, which deals with sin and the consequences of sin that we face in this life.

The fifth petition deals with forgiveness, both our own, and the forgiveness that we are to offer to our neighbors who sin against us. Our Lord forgives us our sins on account of our Lord + Jesus Christ, Who suffered and died for us. He obediently fulfilled the Law which we were unable to because of the inborn sin that exists in all of us since the Fall of Adam. And He offered up His perfect life as a sacrifice to redeem us from sin, death, and the devil. We did not deserve this gift of redemption, that is why we refer to it as our Lord's grace, for grace is receiving a gift we did not deserve. What we did deserve is our Lord's eternal wrath and condemnation, but He chose not to treat us the way that we deserve, but instead offered up His very own Son, our Lord + Jesus, as a ransom for our sins, even though His Son perfectly obeyed His will. This is what we refer to as "mercy," for mercy is not being

treated the way that we deserve to be treated. Therefore, we see that grace and mercy are two sides of the same coin, on one side we do not get treated the way we deserve to be treated, and on the other we receive what we do not deserve to receive. This is how our Lord shows us His great love for us for He gives gifts to those who do not deserve it.

The same is to be true of those who sin against us. We are to show them grace and mercy. That is, we are to forgive them, even though they may not deserve it, and we are to treat them in a way that they do not deserve, that is, with mercy, when they sin against us. Make note here that this applies to the sins of our neighbors against us, not their sins against the Heavenly Father, to which the Church holds the keys to either forgive the repentant or to retain the sins of those who are impenitent. But, when our neighbor sins against us, we are to let it go, to show the same mercy and grace that our Heavenly Father shows us, for a heart that is full of the love and forgiveness that our Heavenly Father has shown us gladly forgives the sins committed against him, for he knows, having received the forgiveness of his own sins, how much it hurts to have one's sins hanging over him. And in this way, we gain our neighbor and draw him closer to our Lord, which is what the intent of this petition is: to draw us and our neighbor closer to the Lord through the belief that our sins are forgiven by God in Heaven.

The sixth petition also deals with sin, but this petition deals with the sin before it happens. For in this petition we pray that our Lord would deliver us in the hour of trial from the temptation to sin. This petition does not mean that our Lord leads us into temptation, or that He tempts us, for the Lord tempts no one into sin, that is what the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh do. But we pray in this petition that our Lord would not abandon us to the wiles of the devil, the world, and our flesh, which we do deserve for our manifold transgressions. We pray that He would guard us from temptation or keep us safe when temptations do come.

Our Lord certainly tries and tests us, but when we speak of our Lord testing us we are only speaking of His tempting us to do good, that is, not sin. He is testing us so that we are led to a greater obedience of His Word and will. And even in these cases, He does not test and try us beyond what we are able to bear, even if it may seem like that at the time of our trial and testing. This should give us a reason to rejoice when we are being tested by the Lord, for it means that He is bringing us to a greater relationship with Him, by a strengthened faith in Him and a greater love for Him.

Lastly, the seventh petition sums up all the rest, for we are blessed in all respects, when we are heard by our Lord in this petition. For in this petition we pray that our Lord would deliver us from evil, or the Evil One, that is, the devil. This ultimately has to do with being delivered from the consequences of sin in this world, and in our life. For the Evil One, has a claim to us on account of our manifold transgressions. Therefore, when we pray for the Lord to deliver us from evil, we are praying that the Lord would remember the sacrifice of His Only-Begotten Son + Jesus Christ for our redemption; that He would remember that He has placed His holy Name upon our foreheads and hearts in Holy Baptism, and that we are His dear children, who are begging their dear Father in Heaven to rescue them from every evil of body and soul, property and honor that could come about because of sin in this world and in our flesh.

This is why we make the sign of the holy Cross at the words "deliver us from evil" when we pray this petition, for it is by our Holy Baptism; by the holy Cross into which we are baptized, that we are delivered from the Evil One, and are rescued from the greatest of all evils, eternal death. This is why this petition is especially important for those who are near death, for it embodies the last cry of the sinner that our Heavenly Father would deliver us from eternal death and carry us to our eternal home in Heaven through His grace.

Therefore, our Lord prepares His Apostles for His departure by teaching them to petition the Heavenly Father, and He taught them previously how to petition the Heavenly Father by giving them the Lord's Prayer. And by virtue of its continued existence and use in the holy Church He teaches us to pray for all of our spiritual and physical needs; to pray for our Lord to bless us and protect us from sin and its consequences, and to give us our daily wants and needs. Therefore, our Lord desires that we pray to Him; that we petition Him to give us that which is good for both our bodies and our souls, in order that our joy may be full. And having prayed thus, we cannot but say anything other than "Amen." For we know that when we pray as our Lord desires us to pray, He cannot but do anything than grant our petitions. Therefore, we conclude our prayer by saying, "Yes, this will be granted" by saying that familiar word, "Amen." And as we continue to pray the Lord's Prayer throughout our lives, we grow in appreciation for its simplicity and its depth of meaning, for in it our Lord left us this prayer that truly teaches us all that we need to pray for in this earthly life, and sustains us till we are taken from this valley of tears to our home in Heaven. Grant this Lord unto us all! 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!