

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

People: Lord God, Heavenly Father, we confess that we struggle daily with following your will. We have lived so long with the rules of men. We are so often fearful and jealous. We are burdened by our pride. We know these things lead us away from you. Forgive us, O Lord. Renew in us, like those first disciples, a joy in commitment; a freedom from fear, and a delight in the truth. Help us to rejoice again in the full message of the Good News of our Risen Savior and lead us so that we might follow You faithfully. Amen.

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

THE 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.

Scripture Readings

April 11, 2010

Acts 5:17-32 *The Apostles Persecuted*

Then the high priest and all his associates, who were members of the party of the Sadducees, were filled with jealousy. They arrested the apostles and put them in the public jail. But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the jail and brought them out. "Go, stand in the temple courts," he said, "and tell the people the full message of this new life." At daybreak they entered the temple courts, as they had been told, and began to teach the people.

When the high priest and his associates arrived, they called together the Sanhedrin—the full assembly of the elders of Israel—and sent to the jail for the apostles. But on arriving at the jail, the officers did not find them there. So they went back and reported, "We found the jail securely locked, with the guards standing at the doors; but when we opened them, we found no one inside." On hearing this report, the captain of the temple guard and the chief priests were puzzled, wondering what would come of this.

Then someone came and said, "Look! The men you put in jail are standing in the temple courts teaching the people." At that, the captain went with his officers and brought the apostles. They did not use force, because they feared that the people would stone them.

Having brought the apostles, they made them appear before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by the high priest. "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name," he said. "Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man's blood."

Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than men! The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead—whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel. We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him."

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God!

Revelation 1:4-8

John,

To the seven churches in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

"Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen. I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God!

John 20:19-31

Jesus appears to the disciples.

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it."

A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Leader: This is the Gospel of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God!

Sermon Outline • April 11, 2010
"Obeying God rather than men"
Acts 5:12-32

Introduction: Whose rules are we playing by?

God rather than men...

1. _____.

"No one else dared join them, even though they were highly regarded by the people. Nevertheless, more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number." v.13-14

- Nevertheless...

2. _____.

"Then the high priest and all his associates, who were members of the party of the Sadducees, were filled with jealousy. They arrested the apostles..." v.17-18

- Who's really in jail here?

3. Now that you're free, _____.

"Go, stand in the temple courts," he said, "and tell the people the full message of this new life." v.20

- A message of sin and grace in the Risen Christ.

4. " _____!"

"We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name," he said. "Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man's blood." v.28

- Truth shatters pride.

5. " _____."

Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than men!" v.29

Answers to Sermon Outline: Afraid to commit. Driven by jealousy. Tell the FULL message. "Stop making us feel bad!" "We MUST obey God."

THE BENEDICTION

Leader: The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

People: And the people took the blessing and held it in their hearts.

Leader: Go in peace, serve the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!