

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

People: Lord Jesus, you are the True Vine and we are the branches. Apart from you we can do nothing. Yet we are a stiff-necked people. We want to stand on our own and make our own decisions. We want your power and grace when it is convenient for us. But we need you to shape us and guide us. We wither and die when we try to stand on our own. Our sins haunt us and separate us from you. Forgive us O Lord and draw us back to you. Amen.

Scripture Readings

July 25, 2010

Isaiah 29:13-19

The Lord says:

"These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is made up only of rules taught by men.

Therefore once more I will astound these people with wonder upon wonder; the wisdom of the wise will perish, the intelligence of the intelligent will vanish."

Woe to those who go to great depths to hide their plans from the LORD, who do their work in darkness and think,

"Who sees us? Who will know?"

You turn things upside down, as if the potter were thought to be like the clay! Shall what is formed say to him who formed it,

"He did not make me"?

Can the pot say of the potter,

"He knows nothing"?

In a very short time, will not Lebanon be turned into a fertile field and the fertile field seem like a forest? In that day the deaf will hear the words of the scroll, and out of gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind will see. Once more the humble will rejoice in the LORD; the needy will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God!

Galatians 5:16-26

Life by the Spirit

So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.

The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God!

John 15:1-8

The Vine and the Branches

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

Leader: This is the Gospel of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God!

STATEMENT OF FAITH:

The Third Article of the Apostles' Creed and its Explanation

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

What does this it mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers. On the last day He will raise up me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ. This is most certainly true.

Sermon Outline • July 25, 2010 The Apostle's Creed • The Holy Spirit "Gift Upon Gift" *Galatians 5:16-26*

Introduction: Manipulation?!?

Grace Upon Grace: Our response to God's Gifts.

Response 1: _____.

"But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved." Ephesians 2:4-5

Response 2: " _____."

"We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited." 2 Corinthians 6:3

"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them..." Mark 10:14

Response 3: _____...

"Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me--put it into practice." Philipians 4:9

Response 4: _____.

"We all live off his generous bounty, gift after gift after gift."

John 1:16 (The Message)

"For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance..." 1 Corinthians 15:3

"I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings."

1 Corinthians 9:22-23

Answers to Sermon Outline: passive, "get out of the way." Practice, practice, practice. Pay it forward.

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

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!