

REJOICING IN THE PROCLAMATION: YOU ARE FREED FROM SINS

Hear again the Word of God for this seventh Sunday after Trinity:

But now, all of you have been freed from the sins and (have become) slaves to God; all of you have fruit unto holiness, and (its) end -- life eternal.¹

Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ

I bring you greetings from the congregational members of Catalina Lutheran Church, Tucson, AZ; the student and non-student participants in the LCMS U at the University of Arizona; the Advisory Group members of the LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces' Operation Barnabas Chapters throughout the U.S.; and the Board of Regents of Concordia University, Irvine, California. That represents quite a lot of sinner/saints who are praying for, and rejoicing in, the events this day that God is working in Sylvan Grove! All those people, locally, regionally and nationally are served by a congregation that is, according to LCMS statistics reports, about the same size as Bethlehem Lutheran Church. All of our work may be traced to God's working through a long-term pastor-congregation relationship centered upon the proclamation of Christ-crucified for the forgiveness of sins.

Your new pastor was positively exposed to many of Christ's ministries during his year of Vicarage, (Internship) at Catalina Lutheran. There, he learned the value and power of proclaiming the forgiveness of sins that comes through the death of Jesus. Here, he brings that, along with the full equipping done at the Seminary, that you all might be lifted up as the Body of Christ in this place. You should know that God has moved him to choose this God-breathed word as his personal theme text as he begins to serve Christ for you, to you, in you, and among you:

I IAM the Vine, you all are the branches. The one remaining in Me, and I in him, will bear much fruit, because without Me, he may not have power to do anything (John 15:5).

¹ Romans 6:22.

Of course, the Author of those words is Jesus. The first hearers were the men closest to Him. They were the disciples, eleven of whom would be called Apostles. To their number would be added two other men. They would be sent by God through His Church to bear the Good News of Jesus Christ. They would declare His death that covers over all sins, and His resurrection that declares anyone who believes right with the Father.

In Pastor Craig's theme verse, Jesus promises that anyone remaining in Him — that is in His complete Word, proclaimed and visible — would bear much fruit. It is in the fruitful path that those Apostles trod long ago — in life and into death as witnesses of Jesus' Faith — that this man enters fully today. As he remains in the Word of God; as he receives the mutual consolation of his brother pastors; as you all pray for him, support him, love him and hear him as he proclaims our crucified Lord, Jesus will bear much fruit through him. Today, you have heard the certain promise of God that ensures that in our Psalm, which declares:

*For upright (is the) Word of YHWH,
and all His work (is done) in faithfulness.²*

God has given His Word, and He will ever keep it, for He never lies. It is with joy and wonder that we look forward to that which God will do through Pastor Christopher Craig and you, as you all walk together in the upright Word of God. We rejoice that, in God's faithfulness, his work will continue to unite you under one Head, Christ our Lord, over the next years and decades. Catalina Lutheran has a history of helping to raise up long-term, congregationally-minded pastors. All her "sons" have served at least nine years in the parishes calling them (or are still serving Christ in those congregations). They all came, have gone forth, and will continue to go out, (as today you have received one of our adopted congregational sons), fully committed to

² Psalm 33:4.

the proclamation of the pure, inerrant, inspired Word of God, and to the right administration of His Sacraments.

God has called Pastor Christopher Craig through you, and through the Church, to rightly divide God's powerful Word. He is to declare the convicting, killing and condemning Word of God that you might be open to hear the acquitting, atoning and enlivening Word of God. That means when he preaches the Law, you are not going to like it – and maybe him! It also means that when he proclaims the Gospel, you are going to love it – and maybe him! He must proclaim both, because our first parents transgressed the Word of God. Hear, mark, and learn that Word anew:

Then commanded YHWH Elohim to the Adam saying, "From every tree of the Garden (you may) eat for food; but from (the) Tree of (the) Knowledge of Good and Evil not (you are) to eat from it: for in (the) day you eat from (it) death (you) shall die."³

Because Eve was deceived into eating of that tree, and Adam willfully did not redeem her and ate of his own free will, we all must hear God's Word that reminds us of the death we deserve, and the life we do not deserve that comes through the forgiveness of sins that God continues to give. Today, you have heard several times that Word as the Holy Spirit willed to work death and life in you through it. Soon, you will get to receive, from the hand of Pastor Craig as from the Hand of Christ, the pure Good News Word of the Sacrament of the Altar. It is the most ancient practice of Christ's Church that all receive the Body and Blood of Jesus from the same hand. That hand, attached to a man consecrated by the Word of God and the prayers, places the Gospel into mouths hungering for forgiveness and strengthening to life everlasting.

For many Christian centuries, that visible Gospel has been called, and rightly understood according to the Scriptures, the "medicine of immortality." As any medicine, taken with the physician's intent and instructions – this is given in this Sacrament by the Great Physician of Body and Soul – it is received well. Yet, as even

³ Genesis 2:16-17.

with earthly medicines, if it is used with ill intent, or without discernment of one's need, or What, that is Who, is in, with, and under it, this medicine can bring great harm.

Dear ones in Christ, soon by distribution through Pastor Craig's hand, you are about to be touched by the living God. He, Jesus, crucified, risen from the dead, ascended into the heavens, will come to you. He wills to grant forgiveness, life and salvation through His touch. This for your benefit and protection He veils under the earthly means of bread and wine.

These are God's gifts to believers – whenever you may come together to celebrate the Lord's Supper. Jesus means His touch to come to you often. He desires to bring to you, and to remind you every time you so receive Him, that

now, all of you have been freed from the sins and (have become) slaves to God; all of you have fruit unto holiness, and (its) end -- life eternal.⁴

To those who are prepared, examined, repentant and believing, comes the touch of Jesus. That not only reminds us He has freed us from sins, but actually liberates us anew to not sin. That means that you, dear brothers and sisters in Christ, are freed to not sin!

Here, as often as you partake, you are given that which looses the chains. Those bound all mankind as they came with the intimate knowledge of Good and Evil. That came from man's sinful eating in the Paradise now lost.

There, you are fed from the Tree of Life the very fruits which strengthen you into the forever that is in Jesus. Look to the cross as you come forward. Behold the Tree that brought death, remember that which now brings life.

Know that your Savior, Jesus, continues to have compassion on you. Hear His Words concerning the multitudes so long ago, the Word which He still applies to you:

I continue to have compassion upon the crowd, because here, (for) three days, they have remained with Me, and they have nothing to eat; and if I release

⁴ Romans 6:22.

*them hungry into their houses, they may be weary on the way; and some of them are from afar.*⁵

Many of you have been here for more than three days without the food that comes from Jesus' Table. As you waited upon the arrival of your new table-waiter — this soon-to-be steward of the mysteries of God in your midst — your vacancy pastor has faithfully served you Christ. But, that pastor could not be here all the time. He has a primary call elsewhere. Neither did you receive from him weekly the entire complement of God's gifts that come from God's placing a full-time pastor in your midst.

Today, Jesus has willed to not send you away to your homes hungering for the true and only food of immortality. He is placing this man in your midst, that He, Jesus, might use him to feed you often from His table. However often you might receive from this Table — remember the little apostolic band broke such bread daily — you will remember the Lord's death until He comes again. You are free to recall, each time you hear the Word and witness the actions of this new table waiter according to the apostolic tradition, that the same Jesus who fed the 4,000 still feeds you, but in a more rich manner. Hear that Word again:

*Then He commanded to the crowd to recline upon the earth. And, taking the seven loaves, giving thanks, He broke (them) and gave (them) to His disciples that they may continue to distribute (them); and they distributed (them) to the crowd. And they had little fish; and blessing them, He said also that these they may distribute.*⁶

Do you hear in those words, the actions of Jesus, and His called disciples at His Table, His Word and work for you? In His feeding of the multitudes, Jesus foreshadowed that which He would do, in time, on the night in which He was betrayed. How awesome is that?

⁵ Mark 8:2-3.

⁶ Mark 8:6 – 7.

From that time forth, whenever He calls those who are the fruits of His Faith, you, to His table, His words and actions that took on new meaning at His “Last Supper,” are repeated. Wherever His disciples, the men who are attached to Him through the orderly Call, distribute the food He blesses from His Table, His fruitful people of the faith are nourished.

As it was long ago, so it is today. From the distribution of the gifts Jesus hands out through His table-waiters, there is abundance. These things – bread and Body, wine and Blood – are to be consumed in the Faith by the faithful when next they recline in the Presence of the Lord. Today, you will receive from the hand of your new Pastor the same Jesus Who fed the multitudes. In these divine words and actions, we, particularly all of you who are benefitting from God’s gift of this man, Pastor Christopher M. Craig, will be found rejoicing in the proclamation: you are freed from sins!

The peace which passes all understanding (that) guard(s) your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Trinity VII (*LSB* One-year series)
Rev. Christopher Craig, Ordination/Installation Sermon
Psalm 33:1-11 Genesis 2:7-17; Romans 6:19-23; Mark 8:1-9
July 10, 2016

Pastor Michael A. Morehouse

Solí Deo Glória

TRANSLATION, Second Draft: *Genesis 2*

Then formed YHWH Elohim the Adam from dust from the ground, and breathed in his nostrils breath of the life, and he was, the Adam, for soul to be.⁷

And YHWH Elohim planted Garden in Eden, from East, and He put there the Adam which He formed.⁸

And He caused to grow, YHWH Elohim, from the ground every tree pleasant for seeing, and good for eating, and Tree of Life in midst of the Garden, and Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.⁹

And River flowed from Eden to cause to water the Garden, and it divided there to be four heads.¹⁰

The name of the Pishon was, the one flowing to all the land of Havilah, where there was gold,¹¹

and gold of the land there good, there the bedellum and onyx stone.¹²

And the name of the River, the second, was Gihon, was the one flowing to all the land of Cush.¹³

And the name of the River, the third, was Hidekel, was the one flowing East of Assyria, and the River the fourth, was Euphrates.¹⁴

And took YHWH Elohim the Adam and caused to put him in Garden of Eden to till it and to guard it.¹⁵

And commanded YHWH Elohim upon the Adam saying, "From all tree of the Garden eat into eat;¹⁶

but from Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil not to eat from it: for in day you eat from death into death."¹⁷

⁷ *Genesis 2:7.*

⁸ *Genesis 2:8.*

⁹ *Genesis 2:9.*

¹⁰ *Genesis 2:10.*

¹¹ *Genesis 2:11.*

¹² *Genesis 2:12.*

¹³ *Genesis 2:13.*

¹⁴ *Genesis 2:14.*

¹⁵ *Genesis 2:15.*

¹⁶ *Genesis 2:16.*

¹⁷ *Genesis 2:17.*

Psalm 33:1-11

All of you rejoice, O righteous ones, in YHWH,

O upright ones, befits praise.¹⁸

All of you cause to praise YHWH with lyre,

with harp of ten strings all of you make melody to Him.¹⁹

All of you sing to Him new song,

all of you cause to play skillfully on strings with loud shouts.²⁰

For (is) upright, Word of YHWH,

and all His work in faithfulness.²¹

He loves righteousness and justice,

He'sed of YHWH is full the earth.²²

With Word of YHWH, heavens were made;

and in Spirit of His Mouth, all their host.²³

He gathers as in pile waters of the sea,

He is putting in storehouses, deeps.²⁴

Let all of you fear YHWH, all the earth;

from Him all of you stand in awe all inhabitants of the world.²⁵

For He says, and it was;

He commanded and it stood forth.²⁶

YHWH causes to bring to naught, counsel of nations;

He causes to frustrate plans of peoples.²⁷

Counsel of YHWH to forever stands;

thoughts of His heart from generation to generation.²⁸

Mark 8

I continue to have compassion upon the crowd, because here, (for) three days, they have remained with Me, and they have nothing to eat; and if I release them hungry into their houses, they may be weary on the way; and some of them are from afar.²⁹

Then He commanded to the crowd to recline upon the earth. And, taking the seven loaves, giving thanks, He broke (them) and gave (them) to His disciples that they may continue to distribute (them); and they distributed (them)

¹⁸ Psalm 33:1.

¹⁹ Psalm 33:2.

²⁰ Psalm 33:3.

²¹ Psalm 33:4.

²² Psalm 33:5.

²³ Psalm 33:6.

²⁴ Psalm 33:7.

²⁵ Psalm 33:8.

²⁶ Psalm 33:9.

²⁷ Psalm 33:10.

²⁸ Psalm 33:11.

²⁹ Mark 8:2-3.

to the crowd. And they had little fish; and blessing them, He said also that these they may distribute.³⁰

Romans 6

“Humanly I continue to speak on account of the weakness of the flesh of all of you. For, just as all of you presented your members as slaves to uncleanness and to lawlessness into lawlessness, thus now all of you have presented your members as slaves to righteousness into holiness.”³¹

*“For when all of you were slaves of sin, you all were free to righteousness.”³²
“What fruit then did you all have? For (those were) the things of which all of you are now ashamed, for the end of those things (is) death.”³³*

But now, all of you have been freed from the sins and (have become) slaves to God; all of you have fruit unto holiness, and (its) end -- life eternal.³⁴

“The wages of sin (is) death, but the gift of God (is) life eternal in Christ Jesus our Lord.”³⁵

Small Catechism

God certainly gives daily bread to everyone without our prayers, even to all evil people, but we pray in this petition that God would lead us to realize this and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.

“We beseech You, graciously abide among us with Your blessing, and keep us from covetousness and the cares of this life...” (Dietrich Collect for Trinity VII).

³⁰ Mark 8:6 – 7.

³¹ Romans 6:19.

³² Romans 6:20.

³³ Romans 6:21.

³⁴ Romans 6:22.

³⁵ Romans 6:23.