

TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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(A member of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod)

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"Praise in the Park"

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God brings people to faith through His word or the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. Human nature thinks otherwise, that it would make more "sense" to be able to debate people into faith through human logic or reason, or even have God convert people with some flashy miracle. But God in His pure grace uses His means of grace (the gospel in word and sacraments), and that's why it's eternally important to stay connected to the word which preserves saving faith.

Several weeks ago in the gospel reading, we heard our Savior state, *"Amen I tell you: Everything will be forgiven people, their sins and whatever blasphemies they may speak. But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"* (Mark 3:28-29). But aren't all sins forgiven in Jesus? Yes. But why then is this sin a seeming exception? That's because the verb is an ongoing, present tense meaning, "...whoever keeps blaspheming against the Holy Spirit." The reason this sin is "unforgivable" is because the person refuses to listen to God's word, the means by which the Holy Spirit works to call people to repentance, forgiveness and faith for eternal life.

We recognize that truth in God's Third Commandment where He instructs us: "Remember the Sabbath Day by keeping it holy." God's point remains that it's spiritually necessary to keep in the word. As the writer to the Hebrews attests, *"Let us not neglect meeting together [be in the word, church, etc.], as some are in the habit of doing. But let us encourage each other, and all the more as you see the Day approaching"* (Hebrews 10:25).

HYMN: What A Friend We Have In Jesus

1. What a friend we have in Jesus, All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry Ev'rything to God in prayer!
Oh, what peace we often forfeit, Oh, what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry Ev'rything to God in prayer!
2. Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged—Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our ev'ry weakness—Take it to the Lord in prayer.

INVOCATION

Pastor: We begin in the name of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen.

CONFESSION OF SINS AND ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Pastor: Dearly loved in Jesus: let us come to our Lord with sincerely sorrowful hearts and confess our sins, pleading to God our heavenly Father to forgive us for the sake of His Son Jesus, who lived, died and rose for us.

All: Gracious Father in heaven, I admit how I am a sinner from the time of conception. I confess that I have broken Your divine law by not loving You most of all and loving others as myself. Truly I have sinned against You and others by sinful actions, thoughts and words. As a sinner, I deserve nothing except Your just punishment presently and for eternity. Please forgive all my wrong doing, not because of anything worthy about me, but because of Your grace in Jesus, my Savior.

Pastor: God, our heavenly Father, by His grace forgives us because of His only-begotten Son, who died to pay for our sins on the cross. Therefore, according to His promise and authority in His word, you are forgiven all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen.

CONFESSION OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH - APOSTLES' CREED (all)

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 is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there He will come to judge the living and the dead. I also 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.

GOD'S WORD (readings are from Evangelical Heritage Translation) [EVH™]

Points to ponder from Mark's gospel reading:

- Why did the people take "offense" at Jesus?
- What is Jesus' point when He says, *"A prophet is without honor in his hometown and among his own relatives and in his own house?"*

Mark 6:1-9 – Jesus left there and went to his hometown. His disciples followed him. When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue. Many who heard him were amazed. They asked, "Where did this man learn these things? What is this wisdom that has been given to this man? How is it that miracles such as these are performed by his hands? Isn't this the carpenter, the son of Mary and the brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And aren't his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him. Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown

and among his own relatives and in his own house.” He could not do any miracles there except to lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. He was amazed at their unbelief. Then he went around the villages teaching.

Points to ponder from St. Paul’s epistle reading:

- Epistle: Why did God allow Paul’s “thorn in the flesh?”
- Epistle: Where did Paul’s strength lay?

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 – Therefore, to keep me from becoming arrogant due to the extraordinary nature of these revelations, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me, so that I would not become arrogant. Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that he would take it away from me. And he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, because my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore, I will be glad to boast all the more in my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may shelter me. That is why I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties, for the sake of Christ. For whenever I am weak, then am I strong.

HYMN: *Amazing Grace – How Sweet The Sound*

1. Amazing grace—how sweet the sound—That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost but now am found, Was blind but now I see.
2. The Lord has promised good to me; His Word my hope secures.
He will my shield and portion be As long as life endures.

Sermon: 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

Theme - “Find Strength In God’s Grace”

LORD’S PRAYER (All)

HYMN: What A Friend We Have In Jesus

3. Are we weak and heavy laden, Cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge—Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do your friends despise, forsake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer.
In his arms he’ll take and shield you; You will find a solace there.

CLOSING PRAYER

HYMN: *Amazing Grace – How Sweet The Sound*

3. Through many dangers, toils, and snares I have already come.
‘Tis grace has brought me safe thus far, And grace will lead me home.

CLOSING BLESSING

Announcements:

+ **Thank You...**to Mr. Bruce Gratz for joining us today with his important information regarding our Bethany Lutheran College.

+ **Thank You...**to ALL joining us to give glory to our Jesus in worship, and to hear His word of free forgiveness and salvation. If you would like to know more about our beliefs as a group of Christians, or have other questions, please reach out to Pastor Luplow. Jesus bless you all!