

Pentecost #2

6-6-2021

J.V. Trautwein, Pastor

Vicar Karen Pugatch

Celebrate (Introduction)

“A house divided against itself cannot stand. Jesus makes this observation in light of charges that he is possessed. He is possessed, not by a demon, but by the Holy Spirit. We who have received the Holy Spirit through baptism have been joined to Christ’s death and resurrection and knit together in the body of Christ. Those with whom we sing and pray this day are Jesus’ family. Wirth them we go forth in peace to do the will of God.”

We come together in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Opening Hymn: [“As We Gather at Your Table”](#)

Psalm: Psalm 130

“Out of the depths I cry to thee, O Lord!

² Lord, hear my voice!

Let thy ears be attentive

to the voice of my supplications!

³ If thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquities,
Lord, who could stand?

⁴ But there is forgiveness with thee,
that thou mayest be feared.

⁵ I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,
and in his word I hope;

⁶ my soul waits for the Lord
more than watchmen for the morning,
more than watchmen for the morning.

⁷ O Israel, hope in the Lord!
For with the Lord there is steadfast love,
and with him is plenteous redemption.

⁸ And he will redeem Israel
from all his iniquities.”

Hymn of Praise: [“Now We Join in Celebration”](#) (Scroll down for lyrics)

Prayer of the Day

“All-powerful God, in Jesus Christ you turned death into life and defeat into victory. Increase our faith and trust in him, that we may triumph over all evil in the strength of the same Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.”

1st Reading: [Genesis 3:8-15](#)

2nd Reading: [2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1](#)

The Gospel: [Mark 3:20-35](#)

Hymn of the Day: [“For the Bread Which You Have Broken”](#)

The Message: ([Video Link](#))

It has been said that life is a journey of discovering who we are. The problem may be that the answer to this ageless question just may be elusive and ever changing as the experiences of life dictate. Also, the question of ‘Who am I’ so often can be influenced by what others may think who we are and outside influences. This is especially true in our highly divisive society which has undermined any sense of truth which leads many to live a life grounded in what is false. To sort through the process of finding the answer to who we are involves self-honesty and critical judgment which seems to be foreign for all too many. We have been led as a society not only to question each other’s thinking but to question their ability to make logical, truthful, and sane decisions. This is the real danger we face as a society for through it all we are losing any sense of who we are by blindly letting others determine who we are.

This is exactly what was going on with Jesus throughout His ministry. He could answer the question of who am I but nobody else could seem to understand who He was. Even His own family and life-long neighbors didn’t understand. According to our Gospel lesson this morning they had thought that He had lost His mind. The situation was that when Jesus had come home He was surrounded by a large gathering of followers. He had become some kind of itinerant street preacher who performed miracles. “When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying, ‘He has gone out of his mind.’”

Clearly to those who knew Jesus while He was growing up and while he was just one of them as a young adult, he had to have lost His mind. After all He had learned the trade of carpentry and thus a respectable hard working member of society. The trade would not have made Him wealthy but would have given Him a comfortable living. Why in the world would He want to throw all of this down the drain in order to hang out with a tax collector, rough and tumble fishermen, and even a zealot? He left all of his past training and life to become homeless left to wander the streets. This is not how He was raised. Therefore, He must have gone berserk in their sight. He had become a drop-out and a fanatic loser who needed to be restrained until He would come to His rightful mind. Jesus had become an embarrassment to them because they did not really understand who He was. He had been taken over by others’ warped thinking.

The word of Jesus notoriety as a healer and exorcist reached the authorities in Jerusalem. Scribes from that religious center came to discredit Him. They spread the word that, “He has

been taken over by Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons.” In other words, He was a personal representative of Satan. After all, this had to be true since he had command over the satanic world of demons. There was no denial that Jesus healed and cast out demons for after all exorcism was a common practice of that day. But, by what authority was Jesus doing this? They claimed by the power of Satan himself. They tried to define who Jesus was from the mindset of their own agenda to discredit Jesus among His growing number of followers. The Scribes were just another warped mirror trying to tell Jesus who He was. The only problem for the Scribes was that Jesus knew who He was and it wasn't what they wished to believe.

They were denying the truth. Therefore, when He had heard what the Scribes were portraying Him as, He called for them in order to personally set them straight. His answer would be perfectly logical and would deflate the image of Jesus which they were trying to portray. To place Him as a personal representative of Satan was the wrong way to go.

So he spoke to them in the way that not only they could understand but all the others in hearing distance could understand. He spoke to them by way of a parable. “How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand but his end has come.” In other words why would Satan want to have his representative undue or destroy the work that he is doing? This only destroys Satan's own power and authority. Satan is not about to destroy himself. Therefore Jesus was telling them that He could not be a representative of Satan for such a representative would not destroy the very works of Satan.

Jesus went further to condemn those who would try to define Him by denying the truth in order to fulfill their own misguided and selfish agendas. This was the sin of denying God's truth which the Jews thought to be the very essence of God or the Holy Spirit as they called it. Truth was not something to be denied nor manipulated. To do so was the unforgiveable sin. Unforgiveable since to deny the truth of good is to deny God Himself. Evil then takes the place of good so that good becomes evil and evil becomes good. Satan takes the place of God and Satan becomes god in one's life.

To this scenario Jesus states, “Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter; but whoever blasphemies against the Holy Spirit (the very truth of God) can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin – for they had said ‘He has an unclean spirit.’” To say the truth is that God is evil is unforgiveable for there is no hope in that belief. Evil then has corrupted life and is now controlled by what Satan sees as the truth – that is, evil is good. Jesus in no uncertain terms told the Scribes that they could not determine who He was nor evidently were they able to recognize the truth of God's authority. What does this say about us today?

Then his mother and brothers came to where He was, hoping to have Him come home with them. They perhaps wanted to rescue Him from what they saw as self-destruction. They

wanted to remind Him of who He was as they had known Him and not what He turned out to be. “Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, asking for you.” To this He made a puzzling reply. “Who are my mother and my brothers?” Now they were His own flesh and blood. Was He rejecting them or denying that they were his family? The truth is that He was no longer only known as a part of them for He was now of the family of God. They did not recognize Him for who He was and the mission He was now living. His life was now foreign to them and they desired to have Him return to who He was.

This of course would be impossible since His life was now filled with carrying forth the message of God. His family was much broader than his own flesh and blood for it was the family of God. This meant that all those who would follow the message of God’s love were in truth His family. “And looking at those who sat around him, he said, ‘Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.’”

With this Jesus old identity was put aside and His new identity was revealed. Nobody was going to define Him not even his own Mother and brothers. They did not have the power to deny Jesus of His relationship with God and the message of the Good News. There was no turning back His family was far greater for it was those who came to see Him as the Son of God, the very revelation of God.

It is through this understanding and experience of the truth of God’s revelation through Jesus that we too know what it is like to be a member of His family. This morning we affirm this membership as we participate in Holy Communion, the Lord’s Supper. We are the body of Christ and as members of this body we find our true identity, who we are. We are God’s children, brothers and sisters throughout the world who together share this life and witness to the Good News which God extended to us through Jesus. We find our joy in sharing this love of God and the hope of living this love in the everlasting presence of God. This is who we are and this gives us meaning to life even during these troubled times for this is the truth we live.

Antem: [“We are One in the Spirit”](#)

Offering*: ([On-Line giving Link](#))

We give thee but thine own, what e’er the gift may be; all that we have is thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from thee.

The Prayer

Gracious and ever present God, we find ourselves amidst a troubling and even dangerous time. Life among many seems to have lost the value of the very life you have created. Violence has become the norm in our society with little hope for an end in sight. Far too many have denied truth in favor of personal agendas. Open our eyes to see the real truth as to who we are and how we may have had our eyes closed. Help us to be mindful that we are more than what we

have been by realizing the truth of your presence which is within us. May we find the courage to live this truth and be that living witness to the life you have taught us. Lead us in the path of this truth as exemplified in love, compassion and forgiveness so we may become the answer of the problem filled life in which we live.

We pray for all who need your comforting and healing presence especially Bob and Pat Allen, Heidi Brackbill, Parker Brennan, the Cronin family, the Elshafei family, the Fultz family, the Johnson Family, Robert Karner, Donna Mayhew, Wendy Neumann, Elise Oliver, Peter Olsen, David Otto, Dottie Reitz, Robert Reitz, Linda Rigby, Colin Shea, Jerry Shea, Jack Smith, the Spiegler family,, Della , Yongyin Sun, Esther and Buck Trautwein, Linda Williamson, Wyatt Lee Wolf, Pastor Jack.

We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen

The Lord's Prayer

The Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you;

The Lord make His face shine upon you;

The Lord lift up His presence upon you and give you peace. Amen

And now my brothers and sisters

Live on knowing God's love,

The joy of living this life of love,

And the peace which only comes through the power of His presence within you.

So live on in Love, Joy, Peace, and Power.

Closing Hymn: ["Savior Again to Thy Dear Name We Raise"](#)

Announcements

Services will be outdoors unless inclement weather conditions force us indoors. Face masks and social distancing outdoors are not required. An email will be sent late Saturday afternoons stating whether indoors or outdoors

Sunday June 13, 3:00 - Piano recital – All are welcome.

Sunday, June 27, 6:00-8:00 – Jerusalem Mill Outdoor Concert, Kingsville, MD Features popular Celtic Baritone, Charlie Zahn, \$15.00 Bring your own lawn chair.

*Offering to be sent to:

Bob Brackbill

10274 Raleigh Tavern Road

Ellicott City, MD 21042

Epiphany Lutheran Church
9122 Sybert Drive
Columbia Hills
Ellicott City, MD 21043
<https://www.epiphanylutherancolumbia.org>

Please note that you now have the opportunity of online giving with the link found after the offering designation or here: https://tithe.ly/give_new/www/#/tithely/give-one-time/2627291