

4/17/2011

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY Almighty God, You sent Your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, to take our flesh upon Him and to suffer death on a cross. Grant that we may share in His obedience to your will. Help us to pick up our cross. We pray especially for our Confirmation Students who sing your praise today with those of the first Palm Sunday. We pray through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

THE EPISTLE LESSON Philippians 2:5-13

(Jesus was obedient to death on a cross. God calls us to work on our faith.)

5 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, 7 but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!

9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

12 Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed-- not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence-- **continue** to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

THE GOSPEL LESSON Matthew 21:1-17 (read responsively)

(Jesus enters Jerusalem triumphantly. The children praise Him, and religious leaders scold Him.)

1 As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, 2 saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. 3 If anyone says anything to you, tell him that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away."

4 This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: 5 "Say to the Daughter of Zion, 'See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'"

The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. 7 They brought the donkey and the colt, placed their cloaks on them, and Jesus sat on them.

8 A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 9 The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Hosanna in the highest!"

10 When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?"

11 The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in

Galilee."

12 Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves.

13 "It is written," he said to them, "'My house will be called a house of prayer,' but you are making it a 'den of robbers.'"

14 The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them. 15 But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple area, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they were indignant.

16 "Do you hear what these children are saying?" they asked him. "Yes," replied Jesus, "have you never read, "'From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise'?" 17 And he left them and went out of the city to Bethany, where he spent the night.

THE SERMON "Continue to Work out Your Salvation" Philippians 2

5 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, 7 but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!

9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

12 Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed-- not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence-- **continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.**

INTRO - Yesterday morning I had an appointment to talk about a baptism with a young child. But, about an hour early I got a phone call. The young child had come down with a cold or a the flu and was not feeling well. So we rescheduled. You know what it is like to get sick, and you know why it happens. When germs and viruses attack our body we get sick as our bodies fight off the invaders. For the most part these germs are not part of our body, but come from someone else who is sick, or from food, or some other source outside our bodies.

I. Now I'm going to get personal, hopefully not too personal. There are forces more dangerous than germs. The germs of a disease kept the little boy away. He'll get better and he'll be back. But, many young people who are confirmed drift away. If it is drifting from our church to another, well, that hurts. But, if it is a Christian church hopefully they are being taught about Jesus. However, many drift from the church and from God. When we drift from God we can drift from His love and grace and even His salvation. It's not that God ever stops loving us, but, we can forget and stop loving Him.

I will stay personal, because you see everyone is important. You are important to us. We have pictures from the beginning of this Church. Mrs. Pedersen keeps those pictures. We have pictures of confirmation classes and students. Each person is important to the church. Even more you are important to God. Do you know how important? God let His son die, to bring you into His family.

But, There are forces worse than germs outside us that seek to hurt us a children created by God, saved and loved by Him. It might be friend or acquaintances that tempt us to turn to our flesh, rather than God. It might be movies or TV shows or magazines that cause us to think God is not cool. It might be a sense of rebellion that lives in us now, but was not there when God created the world. There is a constant battle going on in the life of a Christian to keep trusting in God, to keep living for Him.

II. But, today's lesson gives us hope. Not all germs are found outside ourselves. There are some germs that are natural and part of our bodies and work for our good. For example, some of these are in our intestines. Our verse for today tells us there is someone living in us that works for our good. **13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.** So, God is in His people, He is in us by His Spirit, by the Scriptures, by baptism and the Lord's Supper. God is in us **to accomplish His good purpose.** He wants to keep us as His beloved children. God works in us to keep us in His family, not drifting.

III. Sometimes the good bacteria in us are killed off, to our loss. This can happen when people have a infection and take anti-biotics. But, when the good bacteria are killed, it hurts our digestion. So, people who have killed off the good bacteria eat yogurt and acidophilus to put the bacteria back that had been there. It takes effort, but it is worth it to have those good bacteria working again.

It is worth it to work to keep God and His love in our lives. With today being Confirmation Day, the advice of God in our epistle lesson for today is especially meaningful. - **continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling,** This is something for our Confirmation Class. Don't think that because you have finished 3 years of Confirmation that you are done with learning about God, or working to live for Him. **Continue** to worship. **Continue** to read your Bible. **Continue** to take the Lord's Supper for your forgiveness. **Continue** to seek ways to serve God and grow in him.

This is also true for long time Christians. Maybe you know this better than this Confirmation Class. There are many attacks on our faith. We all need to - **continue to work out our salvation with fear and trembling,** We need regular worship, regular devotions, regular prayer, regular fellowship and service. Exercising and feeding our faith keeps in strong.

And, it is not like we have to save ourselves or do this all on our own. It is God who sent Jesus to die for us. And, it is **God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.** Since God is in us to work His good purposes, we feed our faith, and feed the blessings and love and strength of God who is already in us.

CONCLUSION - There's an old joke about Confirmation. There was a theater that had a family of skunks living under the foundation. They paid exterminators and tried everything, but couldn't get rid of the skunks. The theater owner was saying this over a cup of coffee to some friends. One of those friends was the local pastor. He said, 'Don't worry, I'll have it taken care of by tomorrow.' The next day the theater owner went and the skunks were gone. He called the pastor and said, what did you do. "O nothing really. I just confirmed them. They left." That would be funny if it weren't somewhat true. Confirmation Class. You are important to us. We love you. You are even more important to God who sent His Son to die and rise and save You. Please remember the words of God in today's lesson. . . . **continue to work out our salvation with fear and trembling,**

THANKS

- Confirmation Class
 - Adam, Cole, Tierra, Tommy, Emily, Layne, Lynn, Kyler, Rebecca, and Chantel

GRIEVING

- Charlie
-

ILL

- Carol Moorman
- Bryce Jacobson
- Ed Guhl
- Joseph Maddry
- Sharon Kern
- **LeRoy Jenson**
- Anna Mae Shackelford
- Others . . . on our hearts and minds

Country

Serving in Harm's Way

Garon Bishop
Tyler Svedin
Cole Jacobson

Church