

Sermon, Feb. 6, 2022, Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany—Trinity Lutheran Church—Pastor Peter Saie

Isaiah 6:1-13; Psalm 138; 1Cor. 14:12b-20; Luke 5:1-11.

Grace, Mercy and Peace through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior, Amen.

Theme: “The election of God by grace through faith.”

Introduction: The election or the favor of the Lord God is divine, because he is the righteous God who never makes mistake but is always right in choosing His servants. For His grace comes with the gift of faith for those whom he calls. God’s grace came upon Noah and his family, and they were saved from the destructive flood, because Noah had faith in the Lord. God’s grace came upon Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and they were faithful to the Lord. Moses, Joshua, and all the other prophets of God were given the faith to serve Him according to His will. Our Lord Jesus also calls His twelve disciples and gives them the faith to follow Him. For grace must accompany faith to accomplish its result—salvation. Therefore, the apostle writes, ***“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast, Eph. 2:8.”***

In other words, that it is through God’s grace he sent His only Son into the world to save the entire mankind from sin, but only those who believe in him will be saved. ***Jesus Himself said in the last chapter of Mark, “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, Mark 16:16.”***

In our Gospel lesson, we see that Jesus was preaching the good news of the kingdom of God along the lake Gennesaret, and the crowd came to listen to him, so he got into the boat belonging to Simon Peter and asked him to go little farther into the lake for the crowd to see and hear him speak. Let’s remember that there were two fishermen boats

left at the edge of the lake, but by Jesus' divine election, he chose the boat belonging to Simon. And after he got through preaching, he told Simon to go a later farther into the lake and instructed him to "let down" his net for a catch.

But Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. ***But because you say so, I will let down the net.***"

We see here that grace and faith work together to accomplish one goal; Peter is saying, in other words, that he had tried all his human strength working all night with no good result, but because Jesus said it, he has the faith that it would happen. The grace of Jesus Christ chooses Simon's boat, but the faith of Peter in the Lord, filled his empty boat to overflowing. And Jesus can do the same for you what he did for Peter by faith, regardless how empty your life may be.

Faith is not knowing or understanding with our minds how things work, but it is what we trust with our whole heart in the Lord without our own understanding. King Solomon declares, ***"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight, Prov.3:5-6."***

We too were called by the Gospel message of Christ by the Holy Spirit, and we are going through the wickedness of this world, brought upon us by sin, and though we may not understand this in our lives, we are given the faith to believe the grace of God through Christ Jesus, who suffered bitterly and died on the cross for our sins.

And because we are His elects, we are not afraid of the arrows of the enemy that fly by day and the pestilence that comes by night; for we have the Word of God which is powerful to extinguish every arrow of the devil.

Therefore, the Psalm writer trusting in the Lord with his whole heart declares, ***“I will praise you, O Lord, with all my heart; before the “gods” I will sing your praise. I will bow down toward your holy temple and will praise your name for your love and your faithfulness, for you have exalted above all thing your name and your word...”***

For God is gracious and faithful to the world by giving His Son, Jesus Christ to be the Savior of the whole world, but His grace can only be received by faith alone, through Scripture alone and in Christ alone. And today you too can become the elected child of God by grace through faith in His Son by believing in Him and baptizing in His name.

May the peace of God which passes all human understanding guide your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior, Amen.