

Sermon, May 1, 2022, Third Sunday of Easter—Trinity Lutheran Church—Pastor Peter Saie

Text: Acts 9:1-22; Psalm 30; Revelation 5:8-14; John 21:1-14.

Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed, alleluia!

Theme: “The miracle of our calling.

Introduction: It is apparent that everyone chooses his or her own path in life, but each path in life leads to an end, and so, everything that a person has chosen in this earthly life—riches, power, wealth, etc., will all eventually come to an empty dream when life itself shall end. And just as the prophet Job once said, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked will I return.” But let the name of the Lord be praised, Job 1:21.” In other words, Job is saying that his entire earthly life is but an empty dream and meaningless without the praise of the Lord God, who has called him by grace and has given him the true purpose of life. And that the name of the Lord will not depart from his mouth in any given situation—in poverty, disease, rejection, mourning, etc. For this is the greatest miracle which the Lord God has performed through the death and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ; the miracle which comes by grace alone, faith alone, Scripture alone, and through Christ alone, Eph. 2:8-9.

We see this grace been made clear in the conversion of Saul, the Judaism enthusiast and in his brutal persecution of the Church; and on his way to Damascus, Saul met the risen Lord, who turned his life around for the true purpose of Christ’s mission to the Gentiles. The bright light from heaven struck Saul’s eyes and blinded him, and the voice spoke to him, “**Saul! Saul, why do you persecute me?**” Then Saul asked, “Who are you, Lord? Here, we see that Saul had already confessed Christ as his Lord before Jesus could introduce Himself.

In this lesson, we see that whenever people persecute Christians, the Church, for Christ's sake, they are not only persecuting the people but Christ Himself. And that the Lord does not only fight for His people, but he also has the power to change those who persecute Christians for His own good.

In our Gospel lesson, we see how the frustrated disciples of the risen Lord went back to their old career, fishing, after Jesus was resurrected; maybe thinking that the whole mission for their calling was over, because Jesus was now appearing and disappearing to them in His new resurrected body like a ghost.

And Peter said, **"I am going out to fish."** What this means is because Peter, the key-player of the team, decided to go back fishing, and his decision affected some of the disciples who followed him. They all laid down their honorable titles as Jesus' disciples (fishers of men) to become mere fishermen again, but during that night, they caught nothing at all.

But when Jesus found them in the morning, he said to them, "Friends, have you caught any fish?" And they said no! But Jesus said to them, **"Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some."** And when they did, they were not able to haul the net from the water for the great catch. Then John said to Peter, **"It's the Lord!"** For John had remembered the very miracle of their first calling by the Lord, according to Luke 5:4-11; Matthew 4:19; Mark 1:19.

And when Peter heard John saying, **"It's the Lord,"** he wrapped his outer garment around him, for he had taken it off and jumped into the water, leaving the other disciples behind....And Jesus said to them, **"Bring some of the fish you have just caught—come have breakfast."**

In this lesson, we see that our own nets of life are empty in spite of our hard works, and unless we listen to the words of our own calling by Christ, our nets remain empty as Christ's disciples. We also see the guilt of Peter in reclaiming his position by wrapping his outer around garment himself, for he was already dressed in his old faction fishermen clothes. And by Jesus having breakfast with his disciples, he shows them that his resurrected body was real; that it could eat and drink; the glorious body that awaits every believer in Jesus Christ.

For our own resurrected body will be like Christ's glorious body which victoriously overcame death, sin, the grave, and the devil, our greatest enemy. **For the Apostle John writes, "Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure."**

And although, we Christians, may sometimes grow weak and weary in our calling, like the disciples of Christ, but Christ has given us the hope in His death and resurrection; the hope which strengthens and purifies our faith in being like Christ Himself one day.

Therefore, we are assured that we have hope in every situation of life and even in death, because everything works for the good for those who are in Christ Jesus. Not every good things, but everything, good or things which may appear bad to us.

And for those watching this preaching from afar via social media, you may think that life is over for you, because you have found yourself in a hopeless situation such as disease, family breakup, drug addiction, poverty, homelessness or even on your death bed, and etc.. But the only reason you are hearing this message is that

Christ, our risen Lord, wants you to know that it's not over for you; there is an eternal hope in Him. There is a new song for you to sing at last, just as the Apostle John mentioned in the vision of Revelation, **"The Lamb went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne. And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of God's people. ⁹ And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation."**

Therefore, we have hope in the blood of Christ which has purchased us from sin and death and has given us the new song of everlasting life by grace through faith in Him. This is the "Miracle of our calling.

Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

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