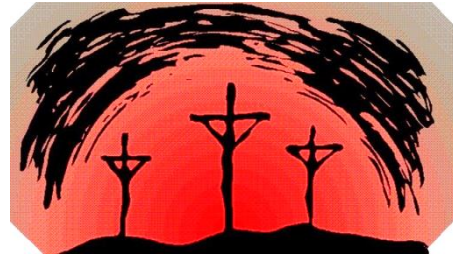


**St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Church
Sermon by Pastor Anthony E.
Schultz**

**6th Sunday of Easter (WELS
B.)**

May 21, 2017

John 15:9-17



⁹“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. ¹¹I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹²My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit – fruit that will last – and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. ¹⁷This is my command: Love each other.

People of God-rescued from the flaming lake of fire in hell by the innocent blood of the very Lamb of God:

I opened my Internet browser the other day and there was an article entitled: “10 Things to do to be happier!” Who – no matter how happy you are – wouldn’t mind being even *happier*? What do I need to do to be happier? Exercise! I can do that – pushing our *Lawnboy* mower around the yard! Sleep *more*. Sounds good – my pillow and my Green Bay Packers blankie – I can fall asleep sitting up! Move closer to work – a shorter commute is better. I’m 3 miles to the 10th from Church – a 10 minute commute. Pastor Gartner’s commute is even shorter! Spend more time with family and friends. An expert calculates – having good friends is worth @ \$100,000! It has been determined – getting a raise – making more money doesn’t mean you are happier. But if you have family and friends and spend more time with them – you won’t be like so many people who on their *death bed* realize they squandered their time – their lifetime racing and

chasing after “things and stuff” – and now – alas *too late* – they would have been much better off to spend their time with their family and friends! What ♥ ache that would be! This world is full of ♥ ache all on account of sin – that infects and flaws just about everything! The solution to sin is found in Jesus and in Him alone! That’s why we come to Church week after week – to be reminded whatever the troubles and temptations and tests we might face – we are eternally safe for Jesus’ sake: Today again God’s Word comforts and encourages us:

Remain In Jesus’ Love!

I. In your attitude, and

II. In your actions.

The part of God’s Word we are concentrating on – comes from the Gospel of the disciple Jesus loved – the Apostle John. John is filled with what Jesus said! As we catch up in spirit with Jesus it’s Maundy Thursday. Jesus has just celebrated Passover with His disciples for the last time. Jesus – their Teacher and their Lord had literally gotten down on His knees and washed their feet – giving them a powerful example to follow. They ate lamb or goat – a male – one year old – as flawless as possible – roasted whole. They ate unleavened bread – no time to let the yeast work to make the bread rise. They drank grape wine. They ate bitter herbs because the slavery in Egypt had been bitter. They remembered the little baby boys thrown into the Nile River! Then Jesus told them, **“One of you will betray me!” And everyone said, “Surely not I Lord!”** Judas Iscariot went out to do exactly that – to sell his soul and his Savior for 30 silver coins. Then Jesus took **the unleavened bread – gave thanks and broke it and gave it to them saying, “Take and eat. This is my body which I given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me.”** Then He took the cup and gave thanks and gave it to them saying, **“Drink from it – all of you. This is My blood of the new covenant which is shed for you for the forgiveness of all of your sins.”** Then the disciples had Lord’s Supper. Now – between Lord’s Supper and the Garden of Gethsemane – where Jesus would know such anguish of soul and spirit that he sweat *blood* – Jesus said, **9 “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. 10 If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love.”**

Love! The ancient Greeks were very precise when it came to their use of the word *love*! English, not so much! Do you love the Brewers? I used to

have a small group of widows who always went down to Brewers' Spring training. When the Brewers came back to Milwaukee they would too. How does it look? They'd always say, "Either we have hitting or pitching – never both. It's gonna be a long year!" We love the Brewers when they win – are they a bunch of bums when they lose? We love Mullen's. We love Schuette's new crab salad. Have you tasted it? We love Glenn's oatmeal raisin cookies! The Greek's had a word *fileo* – like Philadelphia – brotherly love – the love you have for your best friend. They have a word – *eros* – which means "hugs and kisses" kind of love – for your spouse! There is the word *agape* – which is the word Jesus uses here. This is the most powerful and pure love! It's a love that gives with no thought of anything in return! It's a love that gives and gives – even if the one you love is only terrible in return! It's the kind of love that moves our Heavenly Father to sacrifice His One and Only Son – to save wretched sinners like us! As God the Father loves His Son Jesus – in the same way Jesus loves you and me!

Now remain in my love. ¹⁰ **If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in His love.** How do you show someone you love them? By how you treat them! As more and more World War II Veterans go home to Heaven – I wonder how much most of us understand or appreciate what has been called the Greatest Generation. Apparently during WW II the government of the Netherlands was moved to England – to try and be safe from the Nazis. Apparently London wasn't considered safe *enough* for Princess Julianna and her two little daughters so they decided to send them to Canada. The trip across the Atlantic was considered very dangerous what with the German U-boats. But by the grace of God they made it. After the war was over – in order to show gratitude the Netherlands sent some *100,000 tulip bulbs* to Canada. What a wonderful gesture. And after that – the Netherlands has been sending some 20,000 tulip bulbs each year – ever since! That's what you do – when you owe a debt of gratitude you can never repay! Now – if people are that thankful for keeping the Princess safe – what about our Redeemer who died on the cross to save us? What about that debt of gratitude – we can never repay? How do we thank Jesus? By loving Him and serving Him. How can you do that? Again it seems so simple! Read your Bible! Read your Meditations! Read your Forward in Christ! Come to the **Luther Movie**! Come to Church this Summer – all the time!

¹¹ **I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.** *Xapa'* is the Greek word for joy – for happiness and gladness! Do you remember when you were young – and there was the last day of school – the start of Summer vacation? When we had little people living in the Schultz household – when it was the first day of Summer Vacation – little people would ask, “How long is vacation?” And we used to say, “For 100 days!” That was the longest amount of time little people could begin to understand-- 100 days! And so when we write birthday cards and anniversary cards and sweetest day cards and such we always say, “I love you for 100 days!” We have joy in our ♥ because of Jesus’ unconditional forgiving love! It is only when Jesus’ love overflows your ♥ that you can begin to appreciate that! About this time each year – there are quotes by people who speak at University Commencement Ceremonies. Sheryl Sandberg said when you bump into adversity you need to dig deep – have an anchor in being resilient. That means, “Never give up! Never surrender!” The fact is – more often than not – what you get is **humanism**. If we were just smart enough and strong enough and brave enough – and worked hard enough – we could all become rich and famous. All you have to do is keep on getting up when this world knocks you down! Beth Brooke says, “Think outside the box! Be creative and innovative. Make a better world for *everyone!*” Again – there’s nothing wrong with trying new and different things – at the same time remembering Wise King Solomon writing, “**There is nothing new under the sun!**” What we think is all innovative – is ultimately a reworking of something already done in the past and soon forgotten! Like the Tower of Babel – the point of life is not to build monuments to our self – but to give all glory to Jesus!

¹³ **Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.** It happened back in 2006 that Petty Officer 2nd Class Michael A. Monsoon was fighting for his country in Ramadi – some 25 miles west of Bagdad in Iraq. He was on a rooftop when a grenade literally hit him in the chest then landed on the roof beside him! In a moment Michael threw himself on top of the grenade. Two other Navy Seals near him were still wounded – shrapnel in their legs. Michael without hesitation gave up his life – to save his friends! There are among us – those who have risked their life – been wounded and injured – in order to protect those around them. Those who have served tour after tour in harm’s way – to save people

around them! The ultimate sacrifice again is the Lord Jesus – the Good Shepherd who laid down His life to save wretched sinners like us! There is no greater love than Jesus’ love for us.

¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit – fruit that will last – and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. How much does Jesus love me? A lot! There is no other way to explain all the blessings I have had in my life – apart from the grace and goodness of God. I didn’t pick Jesus when on July 6, 1952, Pastor Harold F. Backer baptized me in Mt. Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church, LaCrosse, putting water on my tiny head in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost! A guy named Steve Harvey gave a commencement speech last year. He pointed out the difference between success and greatness! Many people calculate success in terms of a good education so you get a good job – make a good wage – and are able to buy more than average amounts of “things and stuff”! Greatness in the Kingdom of God is to love one another and then to serve one another for Jesus’ sake. Greatness is the ♥ and attitude of John the Baptist who said, **“I must decrease – Jesus must increase!”** To do everything we can – to give glory to our Savior and Redeemer!

Things to do to be happier: practice smiling. It sounds like when they first opened McDonald’s in Russia – and they told the workers – just before you say, “Welcome to McDonald’s. Can I take your order please?” It’s good to smile – that means both of the corners of your mouth go up. It’s best if they go up at the same time! This article said – practice smiling – *with your eyes!* Do you understand that – smile with your *eyes*? It’s not just that the corners of your mouth go up. When you really smile – my eyes almost close! That’s why I have what they call laugh wrinkles beside my eyes! I think that’s a *good* thing! Happiness increases when you help others. This isn’t hard to do either! All you have to do is look around – and you will see people you can help! You can hold the door for people. You can pick up trash – which is everywhere! You can mend and repair things that are broken! You can clean things that are dirty! You can help people that are obviously in distress! And finally practice gratitude! That means write thank you notes! That means be like my piano teacher Mrs. Verona Pendell who used to make time to write thank you notes for your thank you note! Be like the lady who brought one of our shut-ins a McRib sandwich when he said, “I could really go for a McRib!” Who brought fresh Kaemer

squeaky cheese curds because he said, “I could really go for some cheese curds!” Who said, “I owe a debt of gratitude I can never repay!” Be like my friend **Janice** who says all the time – “by the grace of God!” *Think about it!* We woke up today by the grace of God. We had breakfast by the grace of God. We brushed our teeth by the grace of God – came to church – had coffee and a donut and prayed and heard God’s Word – and are surrounded by people who love us – all by the grace of God – for Jesus’ sake. So we say again with ♥s even more full of faith – Thank you, Jesus! Amen!

To God alone all glory!