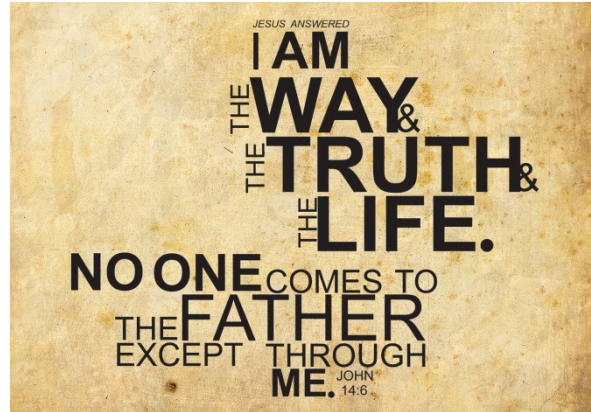


St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Church

Sermon by Pastor A. E. Schultz

5th Sunday of Easter

May 18, 2014 *John 14:1-12* HCSB



14 "Your heart must not be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in Me. ² In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if not, I would have told you. I am going away to prepare a place for you. ³ If I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come back and receive you to Myself, so that where I am you may be also. ⁴ You know the way to where I am going." ⁵ "Lord," Thomas said, "we don't know where You're going. How can we know the way?" ⁶ Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

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

An apartment was on fire in Haverhill, Mass – a 3rd story apartment. A mommy was at the window with her 1 ½ year old son named Cameron. Finally the flames were so close – the heat and choking murderous smoke so thick there was only one thing to do – to jump! Mommy gave her little son a kiss – told him, "I love you!" And holding him tighter than she had ever held him – mommy jumped 30 feet. She landed on her feet – the force of the impact so great – she broke her back. They operated for 6 hours – to place a steel rod in her back. But her son was just fine. Ask the mom and she will say that's all that matters. Ask the mom and she will tell you that if she had it to do over again – *without hesitation* she would do exactly the same thing. She would sacrifice everything – even her life – to save her son! What a pale picture of all that Jesus did to save you and me! Jesus died the torturous death on the \dagger in order to save us from all our sins! The night He was betrayed Jesus comforts us:

Don't Let Your ♥ Be Troubled!

- I. **Jesus is the Way**
- II. **Jesus is the Truth**
- III. **Jesus is the Life**

The Gospel readings for the last 3 Sundays of Easter are from the Gospel of the Disciple Jesus loved. John chapters 14-17 are Jesus' final impassioned words of comfort and encouragement. The final fulfillment of all that Moses and the Law and the Prophets had promised over a period of 4,000 years was about to be completed with Swiss watch precision. Nothing would be missed. Nothing omitted. Nothing was forgotten. In every respect Jesus would do exactly what his Father had promised. Jesus would lay down his life to redeem us! It has been said there is a war on Christianity. This ought not to surprise us. 2,000 years ago – John chapter 17 Jesus prays for his disciples. Jesus prays for you and for me. Jesus prayed, "I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world, but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not

of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.” John 17:13-17

Thursday night – in the dark – in the night – on the night he would be betrayed and denied Jesus said: **14.1 “Your heart must not be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in Me. ²In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if not, I would have told you. I am going away to prepare a place for you. ³If I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come back and receive you to Myself, so that where I am you may be also. Your ♥s must not be troubled...** The Greek word for troubled ταρασσεσθω is the word picture of water churning and seething – like rough seas – rough waves! Do not let your ♥s be troubled – don’t be worried – don’t be scared! Believe in God. Trust in Him. Trust in Jesus – the Son of God made flesh to save you! In Heaven there are many dwellings – many rooms – many mansions. There are mansions on earth. The mansion used in the movie Scarface is for sale for a mere \$35 million. It has 10,000 square foot--this mansion is on a 10 acre site with trees and flowers and a pool. It is being sold by a Russian billionaire. What do you think? Our home in Heaven will be far more wonderful! Homes on earth – with domed ceilings and 24-karat gold leaf plumbing – are sure to age – to crumble and decay. Our home in Heaven will be so wonderful words cannot explain or describe it. On earth **moth and rust corrupt – thieves break in and steal** everything! Our treasure and our ♥ are with Jesus. In Heaven there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain. In Heaven Jesus will make everything new!

⁴You know the way to where I am going.” ⁵“Lord,” Thomas said, “we don’t know where You’re going. How can we know the way?” ⁶Jesus told him, “I am the way... No one comes to the Father except through Me.” There are lots of different world religions. Beside Christianity there are literally millions of people who believe in Islam – millions of people who are Hindu, millions who believe in Buddhism, millions believe in Shinto. You need go no farther than Oak Creek to find a Sikh temple – men wearing turbans – with very carefully trimmed moustaches. People who are extremely gentle and kind and generous and compassionate and caring. My cousin Jodi who grew up in Racine now lives in Israel and practices Judaism. The Baha’i faith is the ultimate spiritual salad bar. The Bah’i religion believes in finding the good in every religion – to pick and choose as you like. Appreciate the insight of wise King Solomon’s Proverbs and Jesus’ sermon on the mount. Add some of the wise sayings of Confucius and the Buddha and a little Hindu Karma. That would all be well and good were it not for the fact that Jesus said, **“No one comes to the Father except through Me!”** Jesus is the only way to Heaven – because Jesus said so! It is not to say we are better or smarter. It is to say without Jesus people – immortal souls are lost for eternity! It is not for us – as muslim extremists to say, “Death to the infidel!” And then to put to death people who do not believe like them. It is to say we need to redouble our efforts to **Make disciples of all nations!** When there are literally billions of people dying eternally without Jesus – we dasn’t sit here in Watertown – so spoiled as we are – with Trinity, and St. Mark’s and St. John’s and St. Paul’s in Ixonia and Lake Mills and St. John’s in Jefferson and St. Matthew’s and Hope in Oconomowoc. It is for us to read our Bible. It is for us to be prepared to give an answer when people ask us in the parking lot at Ace or the Piggly Wiggly or Walmart – about the hope we have in Jesus!

⁶Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” The truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth! Pontius Pilate cynically asked Jesus, **“What is truth?”** Jesus is the Truth! The truth is in short supply in our world today. Do people in government tell us the truth? Do people who repair anything and everything tell the truth – or do they tell us we need a new “framus” – and it’s going to be very expensive – are they telling us the truth? Did the Apostle Paul tell the people in the city of Berea

the truth about God and heaven and hell and the forgiveness of sins and eternal life? How could they possibly know for sure? By reading their Bible – their Old Testament Scriptures! And that’s why God’s Word says this morning – what did Pastor Gartner read? Acts chapter 17! **Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures – (how often?) every day to see if what Paul said was true! As a result, many of them believed!** Do you see that? Keep the Apostle – keep St. Paul honest – by reading the Old Testament Scriptures? It is not a slight – but the highest compliment – when God’s people read God’s Word – to make sure what we “believe and teach and confess” is faithful to God’s Word. It is a priceless blessing if people newly confirmed – pray all the prayers in their new little red prayer book. It is a priceless blessing if people newly confirmed – read the Bible they got from their Sponsors. A priceless blessing if parents of confirmands set a powerful example by reading their new 2011 NIV or their new Holman Christian Standard Bible or their English Standard Version Bible – and read the notes in their Lutheran Study Bible!

⁶ Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” Jesus is the life! Jenna and Jillian are sisters – identical sisters. They were born just the other day – 4 pounds 2 oz and 3 pounds 13 oz. That means put together – they are just about the size of one average baby. They were born after 33 week – so they had trouble breathing – since – that’s the last part to get ready – ‘cause it’s the last thing you are going to have to do. They were barely born – and they held hands. *Hold hands* – look out for each other. Be like the twin girls – running the 800 meter race – and when one was injured – the other carried her on her back until they crossed the finish line together. Look out for each other. Help each other. That’s the life Jesus lived. That’s the life Jesus encouraged. That same night Jesus was betrayed he said, **“A new commandment I give you; Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my (students, followers, imitators) disciples, if you love one another.”** [John 13:34,35](#) Husbands – love your wives. Wives love and respect your husband. Children – honor and obey your parents and teachers. And when these people sin against you – and we surely will – forgive them. With patient gentle ♥s forgive and forget. No grudges – no bitterness – no envy – no jealousy – forgive us our trespasses – forgive our transgressions – forgive us our iniquities and our failures – as we forgive those who trespass and transgress against us! Love one another – the way Jesus loves us. **That means no bullying!** No pushing people around. No treating people with meanness – teasing them and mocking them. No ignoring people – pushing them away – because they aren’t cool enough – not hot enough – to be in your circle of friends. Don’t make someone’s life miserable – just because you can. Love one another the way Jesus loves us. That means **no gossiping** – no talking trash about people behind their back. Always say something sincerely nice about everyone else. If you stop and think about it – there are so many opportunities to thank people. To build them up and encourage them – who has time to waste – saying painful hurtful things about other people – behind their back? It was a long time ago – the first time I read the story about islanders in the South Pacific – on the Solomon Islands. There are on the islands trees too big to be cut down with an ax. So what the people do is – just when the sun comes up – these especially gifted people sneak up on the tree – and just when the sun comes up – at first light – they scream at the top of their lungs at the tree! They scream at it! The next morning – the same thing – scream at the tree. Do this for one month – 30 days straight – and you kill the spirit of the tree. You don’t have to push it over – it will fall over – dead as a doornail! Oh, you say to yourself – ah, those naïve little islanders. Sounds like a story that ministers make up for a sermon. Really? Have you ever yelled at stuff? Ever yell at

your lawnmower because it won't start? Ever yell at your car – thump the steering wheel? Ever throw a hammer? Ever wipe all the books and papers off your desk? If yelling at a tree can kill it – what do you think happens when you scream – I mean loud enough for the neighbors to hear – through the open Spring and Summer windows – through the walls of the apartment – scream at your wife – scream at your children – scream at your annoying little brother or bossy big sister? What happens when you scream at a student who doesn't get it or a worker who made a mistake? Everyone will know we are Jesus' disciples if we love one another. What will they know if we don't?!

⁶ Jesus told (Thomas) him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." I read on the Internet a story – *apparently fiction* – that in the western province of Xinjiang – there is a coal mine that collapsed some 17 years ago – that would be 1997! A part of the mine collapsed – and some 78 miners died! One man survived – one man all alone survived. For the next year – he buried his fallen co-workers one at a time. Then he watched and waited to be rescued. There was enough of a vent – to have air enough to breathe. He ate the countless rats that lived in the mine. He ate large amounts of a glow in the dark moss – for vitamins. There were stashes of rice and water – stored in the mine – in case there was a disaster – and he ate that, too. 17 years! I bet this little miner man could tell you 17 years, how many months, how many days and more! Can you imagine what that would be like? Can you imagine – can you begin to imagine how happy he must have been – when against all hope – people broke through – not even looking for him – but they found him! That story – *that apparent fiction* – what a pale picture of what Jesus did – the Gospel which is *historical fact*! Jesus came looking for you and for me! Jesus came into this sin infected and sin spoiled world – to die on the cross to rescue us from death and the grave. Jesus came to buy us back from eternal destruction so we could spend eternity with him. And we will for Jesus' sake. Amen!

To God alone all glory!

Rev. Anthony E. Schultz