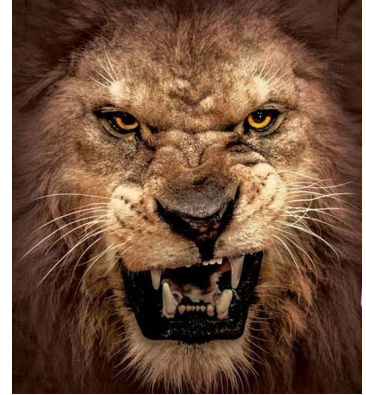


St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Church
Sermon by Pastor Anthony E. Schultz
7th Sunday of Easter (series A.)
1 Peter 5:6-11 NIV 2011 June 1, 2014



To the Elders and the Flock

5.⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. ⁷ Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. ⁸ Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings. ¹⁰ And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. ¹¹ To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

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

I read this week about a man named Arthur. Arthur was having a rough patch in his life. Arthur lost his job. Arthur's baby mom kicked him out of her house. Arthur was living in his car – and not sleeping well there. Arthur was literally painfully jealous that his baby mom had a new boyfriend. So Arthur took their little girl and pitched her – in her car seat – weighed down by a car jack – off a bridge into the cold water below. Then I read about two little baby boys – twins – born so close together that they shared only one ♥ between them. Their parents held them for a few hours – and then they went home by Jesus! How sad is that? You read about sad and tragic things like that – and realize how small and insignificant are my troubles? My coffee maker is clogged by those little white flakes – and sometimes – sometimes in my fruit and oatmeal – there is just the smallest piece of apple core – like a popcorn hull – in my breakfast! Don't you hate when that happens? God's Word this morning talks about all kinds of troubles and problems – not only physical but spiritual! Today God's Word instructs and encourages us:

Attitude Is Everything!



2. Pray without ceasing

3. Jesus will keep you strong

For 6 of the 7 Sundays of Easter we have read from 1 Peter. On Pentecost we will read Acts chapter 2 – that special – that wondrous Thanksgiving Day – we will read about that *Pentecost* – when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the disciples so that it overflowed – tongues of fire on their heads – languages they had never studied coming from their mouths and they proclaimed the wonderful works of God. *Trinity Sunday* – the last 4 verses of 2 Corinthians – Paul’s blessing – **the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God – and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all** – is entirely appropriate. Then we will have 17 Sundays of Paul’s letter to the Romans – 17 Sundays of the law that condemns every failure and flaw. The Gospel – that means **nothing will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord!**

5.⁶ **Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.** Humble yourselves – quite literally – lower yourselves. It’s the exact opposite of being puffed up – proud, arrogant – self-seeking, self-serving, self-indulgent! It’s the opposite of thinking it’s all about me! It’s not! It’s about Jesus. And then it’s about my neighbor. Humility is my friend Mr. John Fairhurst who used to work for Scotland Yard – who could – if I really *really* needed to – could get me in to see Queen Elizabeth. Mr. Fairhurst – when waiting to Lord’s Supper realized the keeper of the gate had let too many people through – instead of elbowing his way forward – immediately stepped back – when everyone else crowded forward. That’s humility. The story is told that Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt – the first lady was at one of many dinner parties at the White House – when between courses – finger bowls with rose petals were offered to the guests. One of the guests thought it was some special kind of soup and with their soup spoon – tasted it. Lest they be embarrassed – Mrs. Roosevelt immediately got her soup spoon and tasted the water, too. This is to place the feelings of someone else far ahead of your own. The other day we went to *Barnes and Nobel* – and there I got a book by Garrison Keillor – about the Lutherans living in Lake Wobegone. He tells the story about someone at the Sidetrack Tap that said something that was pretty obviously wrong. The temptation of course would be to quickly and loudly and publicly cry out, “Hey, that’s wrong! Either you misspoke or you are mis-informed – but make no mistake – you are wrong, wrong, wrong!”

That's the temptation – and to justify it be saying – hey – you don't want them to continue in their ignorance – deep down inside – I'm sure they would want to know the error of their ways! And so? The Lake Woebegone approach would first involve asking yourself – what's at stake here? Is there any harm going to come of this mistake? Is there anything to be gained by pointing out this fine point? And if there is – would it not be better to say, "I'm not sure. I'm probably wrong – but just perhaps – this is how it goes?" You just might be surprised that your friend is in fact correct – and we are the one misinformed! Humility doesn't find fault. And humility doesn't complain. Have you ever been to a wedding? "The music is too loud! You can't hear people when you what to visit." The Church organ is too loud or too slow or too fast or too soft. The narrators – the children don't speak into the microphone for examination or narration at Christmas or Ascension. Part of humility is to do humble and lowly and even distasteful jobs. To do them without being nagged. To do them because you love Jesus and because you love your family!

God's Word says, " ⁷ Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you." Remember the sermon on the grassy hillside – on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee. To his disciples – his students, followers, imitators – people who believed the Gospel promises of God. Pray all the time – remembering your Heavenly Father's power and goodness and love. The NASB entitles this section: *The Cure for Anxiety* ²⁵ **"For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? ²⁷ And who of you by being worried can add a *single* hour to his life? ²⁸ And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, ²⁹ yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. ³⁰ But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is *alive* today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more *clothe* you? You of little faith! ³¹ Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' ³² For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³ But seek first His kingdom and His**



righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. ³⁴ “So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own. Matthew 6 NASB.

⁸ **Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.** The older you get – it seems – the more you hear people say, “Life is short!” I have heard over and over again this past week – if you knew you only had few days to live – what would you do differently? Grandpa Detjen sent me an e-mail the other day. It said, “Imagine when you woke up this morning someone gave you \$86,000+ dollars for today – to do with whatever you chose. At the end of the day – whatever was leftover would be gone. But with the morning light – you again had a fresh \$86,000+ what would you do? The point of this parable is – every morning Jesus gives you 86,000+ seconds – time to use in almost whatever way you want! Whatever is leftover – whatever you squander is lost – gone forever. But tomorrow morning – there is a new day – a day of grace. Do you give careful thought to how you will spend your time – or not? I heard more than once last week – husbands should take their wife to Paris! I like that, too! There is the left bank of the Seine River. There are baguettes – French roast coffee – croissants – mousse du chocolate – onion soup – the Louvre – street performers and so much more! Don’t waste a moment of time on envy, bitterness, anger and grudges. Don’t waste a moment of time fighting and arguing over things that have no lasting worth. Redeem the little time you have – to do the things that spread the Gospel and give glory to God. Don’t let Sundays go by – where you don’t go to church – because you stayed up Saturday night – drinking too much. **Be alert and sober minded!**

Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. This morning on the radio they talked about Faustus. Do you know that story? Faustus sold his soul to the devil in exchange for wisdom and for a long life. *Mephistopheles* was the demon who shared with Faustus the wisdom, the insight, the lies of the father of lies! Faustus was able to use that knowledge to gather to himself great earthly riches and fame and power and influence and all the sinful delights of this world. The day his soul was due to the flames of hell finally came. By then Faustus had hoped to find an escape – to save his soul. But in the end he dies and is lost to eternal destruction in ultimate despair and unspeakable grief. The story of Faustus is the ultimate tragedy. What can a person give in exchange for



their soul? Jesus died and rose again – crushing the serpent’s head – paying for all our sins and mistakes – setting us eternally free from the grave and from hell. We will not fall victim to the lion who comes out of the filthy stinking pit of hell because the Risen Christ has redeemed us!

¹⁰ **And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.** Death is all around us! Mommies are very breakable. It was about this time – 7 years ago – that someone just 37 years ago went to Heaven. I will never forget the physician who sat on the lectern side – with his head bowed – feeling responsible. I will never forget Benny – on his way to the hen house. He stumbled and fell and got back up in Heaven. Levi – as big and strong a man as I have ever known. Bowed his head at the dinner table and lifted his head in heaven. I will never forget Uncle Lawrence – not my Uncle – but I knew him so well I called him that – spun out on the ice – into the median – snapped his neck. The angels who came to carry his soul home to heaven didn’t have to unhook his seatbelt. I will never forget Keith Allen – the car he was riding in spun on the ice too – and he bumped his temple on the post between the front and back seat – and got out of the car into heaven. I will never forget little Kelli Roehl – not even 3 – baptized by Pastor Schneider – ran into the ditch – across the gravel shoulder onto the blacktop. The little boy that rode a sled down the hill just before Christmas – was supposed to jump off before going onto the highway – but he didn’t – and the car spun around – and hit him on the way back around him. The young high school football player who was out in the Kettle Moraine – with a keg of beer. They heard a car coming – hurried to get away – the keg was airborne – and literally broke his ♥! There is danger all around us. People are very breakable. Our enemy **the devil prowls around like a roaring lion – looking for someone to devour.** Only Jesus can keep us safe – and he does – until we are home in heaven by grace alone – faith alone – scripture alone. Amen

To God alone all glory!

