

St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Church-WELS

Sermon by Pastor Anthony E. Schultz

Pentecost 5 July 17, 2011 Matthew 10:24-33 ESV



²⁴ "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. ²⁵It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household. ²⁶"So have no fear of them, for nothing is covered that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. ²⁷What I tell you in the dark, say in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops. ²⁸And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. ³⁰But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. ³² So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, ³³but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.

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

Prince William and his wife Catherine – visited the United States of America the other day. They did what royal people do. The Prince played polo. Did you ever do that? Ride a very powerful horse and have one of those really long handled polo mallets and whack that polo ball? They went to a very fancy/schmancy (sp?) dinner out in Hollywood with people like Tom Hanks, Nicole Kidman and Barbra Streisand. The gentlemen all wore tuxedos and the ladies all wore designer dresses. And they talked about supporting really talented people from England who want to be in movies. They drank snooty wine and very fancy little horsdoerves – hard boiled eggs with little pieces of ripe olives – so they look like penguins – and fish eggs spread with little wooden spreaders or scooped with little plastic spoons – nothing metal – on very fancy little crackers! Stuff like that! But before they went back to England – they went to Los Angeles – to the really

bad part of downtown – to Skid Row – for one hour. They went to an activity center where children of homeless people paint and draw and make things out of clay. They spent time with people who literally live on the street – literally eating out of dumpsters – literally standing outside McDonald’s looking pathetic – asking people if they could have a few dollars – so they could go inside and buy a *Happy Meal*? Then they do what? They fly back to England – to literally live in a palace – sleep in their royal jammies – wake up to their royal bacon – how thick – how crispy – their royal eggs – prepared how this morning? Jesus is the King of kings and Lord of lords. I think it’s easy to forget the wondrous grace and goodness of Jesus – that he should leave the goodness and glory and peace and safety of Heaven – to become one of us. Jesus didn’t just look like a person. Jesus took upon himself our flesh. Jesus became our brother – in order to take away all our sins. This 5th Sunday after Pentecost – half way to Christmas – Jesus says:

Do Not Be Afraid!

- 1. Earthly enemies can only hurt bodies***
- 2. Jesus will protect our soul!***

Context! This year – ILCW Series A – we are reading from the Gospel of Matthew some 46 times – 46 Sundays out of 52 – we are reading from Matthew. Starting with Holy Trinity Sunday – we are with Jesus’ permission going to read from Matthew from now until the start of Advent – the new Church Year – the Sunday after Thanksgiving – the last Sunday in November! Every week we are reading through Matthew. Remember Matthew is the Gospel with Jesus’ family tree – mentioning the women – Tamar – who was widowed twice – then had “hugs and kisses” with her father-in-law Judah! Rahab, Ruth and the wife of Urriah – that would be Bathsheba – who had “hugs and kisses” with King David! Matthew is the Gospel that says, **“Thus was fulfilled what was spoken through the prophets”** – again and again. Jesus fulfilled every promise our Heavenly Father made to save us. Matthew is the Gospel with the Sermon on the Grassy Hillside. **“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be**

comforted. Blessed are the meek for they will inherit the earth.” Matthew 5:3-5 “You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world.” Matthew 5:13,14 You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not murder’,...but I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment... You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart... If anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also... Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you... Matthew 6 Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven... Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear... Look at the birds of the air... See how the littlies of the field grow... Matthew 7 Do not judge, or you will be judged... Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you...

A couple of weeks ago Pastor Gartner talked about the Amazin’ Walter – about the wise builder who built on the rock and the foolish builder who built on the sand. Remember? Matthew tells of the powerful faith of the Roman Centurion – Matthew 8 “Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and that one, ‘Come,’ and he comes. I say to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.” Remember? Matthew 9 Jesus even raised the dead. Jairus’ daughter – she is not dead – but sleeping! And they laughed at him – they laughed at him that bitter mocking scorn! Jesus sent the professional mourners outside – with their screaming and wailing. Then Jesus woke the dead more easily that you can wake a little child from a nap! **Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life!**

Last Sunday we read from Matthew chapter 9 and chapter 10. “**The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.**” Mt. 9:37,38 Today we continue from chapter 10. The work is not going to be easy! Jesus wanted his disciples to have no illusions about that. Jesus said, ²⁴ “**A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. ²⁵It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his**

master.” We are Jesus’ disciples – his students, followers, imitators. To be a teacher – is to have a profound responsibility. To be a teacher is to bend the twig – to have a powerful influence on how small trees will grow. The ultimate Rabbi – the ultimate Teacher was Jesus. Jesus – the Good Shepherd – who loves his sheep so much – he is willing to lay down his life for his sheep! That’s a powerful determined unwavering love! The best teachers I ever had – were not necessarily the greatest intellects. The best teachers I ever had were not necessarily those with the highest IQ. The best teachers love their students so much they will do anything and everything – to teach them. The best teachers have a love for what they are teaching – that is absolutely contagious! I had teachers who loved reading – loved books – loved stories and story-telling. I had teachers with a powerful sense of imagination. Had teachers with a fierce determination to do better – to do more – to redeem God’s wondrous gift of time! Had teachers who practiced what they preached! Teachers who found Jesus in everything around them. Teachers who rightly divided law and gospel – but were not so quick to pound their students with the law – but to nurture fruits of faith through the Gospel. It is a distortion of law and gospel – to criticize and complain and find fault and tear down – forever pointing out saw dust in our neighbor’s eye – while remaining painfully oblivious to the barn boards – the planks and timbers of sin in our own eyes! The Pharisees saw all the mistakes other people make. The tax collector struck his own chest and prayed with humility – **God be merciful to me a sinner.** Jesus took all my sins away. Living in the warm forgiving light and love of the Gospel – we will forgive anyone and everyone who sins against us!

²⁸And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. There are – again – no ducks or Canada Geese in the pond at the bottom of the hill in front of the hospital. No ducks and no geese – because my friend the grey fox – not a real fox – but the picture of a grey fox – 17” across the chest and 27 “ from his front paws to the top of his ears – on a piece of 1/16th of an inch of tack board is out there, again! He moves, too! Every other day or so – somebody comes – pulls him up to mow under him – or just moves him – from between the pine trees – to one end of the pond or the other. I

would like to see just one mommy Canada Goose go up to that fox and punch the stuffings out of him – with her wings or with her big black beak or with her big black webbed feet! She could literally tear him to shreds. But she doesn't – because everyone is afraid! Are we afraid? Again just look around! I read on the Internet just today that I am in terrible danger if I listen to music – little ear-buds in my ears – while walking or jogging. There is danger that I won't hear traffic approaching. There is danger that some mugger might be sneaking up on me. I never thought about being mugged somewhere between Mary Rose Park and the Piggly Wiggly or Dr. Turke's office or the Hospital. I read on the front of the latest Readers Digest that I should be concerned about what might be in the water I drink. How safe is our water? There could be rocket fuel, thrown away medications, arsenic and more shocking ingredients. That warning is printed on the cover! I'm afraid to read the article! I used to think the train was pretty safe but there was a train wreck in India and a whole bunch of people were killed. A train hit a gravel dump truck and there was a fire ball higher than the peak of the church roof! The train from Milwaukee to Chicago was forced to stop in its tracks also today – because of the rain and wind! Trees are down and the power is out to thousands. Stay far far away from downed wires the news guy warned! And you know what? That's just physical danger. That's not the really dangerous stuff. Do you know what's really dangerous? Things that hurt and harm your faith and soul! Real danger is whatever can do harm to your faith! The ultimate danger is not from people who can harm our body. The ultimate danger is from our Holy Heavenly Father. He and he alone can cast people into the flaming lake of fire in hell. Because of his amazing grace – he rescues us from hell – and brings us safely home to heaven forever – because Jesus' blood washes away all our sins!

³² So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, ³³but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven. How do you acknowledge your Heavenly Father before people? By how you live and by what you say. It's a day to day thing. You acknowledge your Heavenly Father by getting up on Sunday morning and coming to Church. That's pretty simple. Sunday morning – when it's tempting to stay up very

late Saturday night and get up very late Sunday morning – to go to McDonalds for hotcakes and sausage and to read the Sunday paper – instead to get up and cleaned up and come to God’s House! We acknowledge our Heavenly Father – when we are in the real world – pumping gas at *Kwik Trip* and work hard in the factory and stand in line at the *Pig* and *Pick n’Save* and do not curse and swear. We acknowledge our Heavenly Father – when we do projects like work in the garden or clean the garage or change the oil in the car – where there needs to be cooperation and helping each other – and encourage each other with patience – instead of yelling at each other – embarrassing yourself and your whole family! We acknowledge God – by the video games we play. Not playing *Resident Evil* and not playing *Grand Theft Auto* and not playing games where the whole idea is to blow parts of people off – paying for “hugs and kisses” – shooting police officers – and stealing cars! We show we love Jesus by dressing modestly. We show love for Jesus by loving and forgiving one another. When Prince William and Catherine went to Skid Row – to the art class for little people – they left literal hand-prints in putty – in clay. I wonder if Prince William has rough hands – hands with callouses or scars. Perhaps – being as he has served in the Royal Army. On the other hand – when you are an heir to the throne – chances are you don’t do a lot of scrubbing or dirty work. And Catherine – the picture of her pressing her hands into the putty – she’s wearing Princess Diana’s engagement ring – the one with the huge blue stone – surrounded by all those diamonds! Hers are the hands of a literal Princess! Jesus’ hands are Carpenter hands – marked by the nails pounded through his hands when he was crucified! Jesus’ hands are engraved with the forever marks of his forgiving love. Jesus loves you very much – enough to die to save you. There is no reason for us to ever be afraid. Amen!

To God alone all glory!
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