

**Sermon for
Third Sunday after Pentecost
70 Year Anniversary of Radio Broadcast**

Date: June 3, 2018

Location: St. John's Lutheran Church, Austin, MN

Old Testament: Deuteronomy 11:18-22

Epistle Reading: 1 Corinthians 3:1-16

Gospel Reading: Matthew 28:16-20

Sermon Text: 1 Corinthians 3:1-16

Sermon Title: That's What We Do Here

Introit: Psalm 62:5–8; Antiphon: Psalm 62:1

Hymns:

LSB 837 – Lift High the Cross

LSB 507 – Holy, Holy, Holy

LSB 644 – The Church is One Foundation (v.1,2,5)

Distribution:

LSB 465 – Now All the Vaults of Heaven Resounds

LSB 790 – Praise to the Lord the Almighty

Liturgy:

Divine Service I, p, 151



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Text: 1 Corinthians 3:1-16

¹ Brothers and sisters, I couldn't talk to you as spiritual people but as people still influenced by your corrupt nature. You were infants in your faith in Christ. ² I gave you milk to drink. I didn't give you solid food because you weren't ready for it. Even now you aren't ready for it ³ because you're still influenced by your corrupt nature.

When you are jealous and quarrel among yourselves, aren't you influenced by your corrupt nature and living by human standards? ⁴ When some of you say, "I follow Paul" and others say, "I follow Apollos," aren't you acting like sinful humans?

⁵ Who is Apollos? Who is Paul? They are servants who helped you come to faith. Each did what the Lord gave him to do. ⁶ I planted, and Apollos watered, but God made it grow. ⁷ So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is important because only God makes it grow. ⁸ The one who plants and the one who waters have the same goal, and each will receive a reward for his own work. ⁹ We are God's coworkers. You are God's field.

You are God's building. ¹⁰ As a skilled and experienced builder, I used the gift that God gave me to lay the foundation for that building. However, someone else is building on it. Each person must be careful how he builds on it. ¹¹ After all, no one can lay any other foundation than the one that is already laid, and that foundation is Jesus Christ. ¹² People may build on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw. ¹³ The day will make what each one does clearly visible because fire will reveal it. That fire will determine what kind of work each person has done. ¹⁴ If what a person has built survives, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If his work is burned up, he will suffer the loss. However, he will be saved, though it will be like going through a fire. ¹⁶ Don't you know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?

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Grace to you, and peace, in Jesus' name.

What a privilege. What a wonder. Here today we are gathered to remember the glorious blessings that Christ our Lord has bestowed upon His Church and this congregation. For the past 70 years this congregation has taken up the task of proclaiming over the airways the Gospel Good News of Christ crucified for the salvation for all who call upon His name.

Way back when the disciples were still alive and spreading the truths of God throughout the world, in the city of Corinth a division broke out. Some people said, 'we are the ones Apollos himself taught. We are better Christians than all of you little people.'

Other said, 'we are the ones the very Saint Paul taught. The one whom Christ Jesus our Lord Himself called to teach us the truth. We are the elite Christians of our age. We are the best, the chosen! We are the real Christians!!'

Aren't we just like that? Isn't it human nature that we want to be the best, the first, the greatest? That's what Jesus taught us to do, right?¹ Did He?

Paul, who knew a little something about being humbled,² writes to those people in Corinth to set the record straight. He is going to tell them who the best is, and who the real Christians are. He scolds them as he writes:

When you are jealous, and quarrel among yourselves, aren't you influenced by your corrupt nature, and living by human standards? When some of you say, "I follow Paul" and others say, "I follow Apollos," aren't you acting like sinful people?

Who is Apollos? Who is Paul? They are servants who helped you come to faith. Each did what the Lord gave him to do. I planted, and Apollos watered, but God made it grow.^{3x}

1 Matthew 20:16

2 Acts 9:1-9

3 1 Corinthians 3:3-7

You are God's field, you sitting here, and you listening by radio and Internet. This congregation has taken upon itself the task of calling workers to the labor of caring for that field. To plant the seeds of faith. To fertilize and grow that faith by feeding it with the Means of Grace: God's Holy Word, Holy Baptism, and Holy Communion – The Lord's Supper. We are to tend to the crop of faith. To care for it. To nurture it. To protect it from the enemy. To use the cultivating tools of the trade, which Christ has given to us to grow a full, ripe, strong crop of faithful Christian men and women.

That is what we do here.

As parents you do that with your children when you: teach them the Bible lessons, take them to Sunday School, and sit with them in church. You are indoctrinating them. You are indoctrinating them in the doctrines, teachings, and confession of the Holy Christian Church. In doing so you are securing them in the only faith that will save them. You are cultivating a crop that is ready for harvest.⁴

That is what we do here.

As family and friends come to our homes, or spend time with us, and they see us pray, giving thanks to God for all His bountiful gifts, when they see us place God where He belongs, in a place of honor and respect in our homes we are bearing witness to our faith. In doing so you are not only nurturing your own faith, but the faith of those around you as well. You are cultivating a crop that is ready for harvest.

That is what we do here.

As a Church, when we faithfully teach the truths and promises of God's Holy Word, bring the new-borns-in-the-faith to Holy Baptism, and through faithful obedience teach the miracle of the Lord's Supper, and administer it faithfully to feed them with the life giving body and blood of our Lord, we are cultivating a crop that is ready for harvest.

4 Matthew 9:38

Listen to God's Word. Listen to it! It will teach you wisdom beyond measure and the faith that has been passed down through the ages.⁵ The rest of the world will tell you it's all foolish. The rest of the world will tell you your pastors don't know, or understand, reality. The reality is there is a Truth that stands above all truth. It is a Truth that remains true even no one believes it. That truth is this: salvation comes by faith.⁶ Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the words of Jesus Christ.⁷

Those words of Jesus have been passed down to you as an heritage, an inheritance, that surpasses any collection of wealth you can imagine. To that you might say, "I don't know pastor, I've got a really good imagination."

To that I say, "an inheritance that surpasses any collection of wealth you can imagine."

Reject that Truth and you will never know real peace. Cherish that Truth, cling to that Truth, and the truth is you will know the wonders of a place where sin, and sins affect, will never touch you again.

In a field there are always two things. There is the crop that was planted. It is placed there with care, and cared for. There are also weeds. Weeds are ultimately pulled up and thrown away.⁸ Don't be weeds. Don't rail against the Holy Spirit and the faith that He bestows through the Means of Grace.⁹ Be eager to join the harvest that will take us home. Home to a place called Heaven where pain is, at its very worst, only a distant memory of something long past.

While we wait the work is to be done.¹⁰ That work for us is to read God's Word, study His promises, and learn of His love. Jesus' own words tell us what to do.

Go and make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy

5 Hebrews 13:17

6 Ephesians 2:8

7 Romans 10:17

8 Matthew 13:24-30

9 The three Means of Grace are: Holy Scripture, Holy Baptism, Holy Communion

10 Matthew 22:39; Mathew 25:31-46

Spirit, and teach them to do everything I have commanded you.¹¹

That is why Peter, the disciple of Jesus, wrote:

Desire God's pure word, as newborn infants crave milk.¹²

Have you ever been around a baby? What do they do when they want their milk? They cry. If they don't get their milk they cry louder. They want their milk. Their milk is the only thing they want and they are going to make sure that getting their milk is the only thing you want because they will not stop crying until they get what they crave. We should crave God's Word with such desperation. I wish I had the skills to smith words proficiently enough to teach everyone to desire God's Word the way newborn babies crave milk.

The reason Peter told that to us is because God comes to us through His Word. God feeds us through His Word. God strengthens our faith through His Word. The reason I love this job is not because of the great working hours and expensive benefits package. At least not the one this side of Heaven's gates. I love this job because you are God's holy precious children and I get to bring God's grace for your soul to you. I get to bring these Words of God's presence, strength, and faith-infusing-power to you.

John the disciples of Jesus wrote these words:

To everyone who believed in him he gave the right to be called children of God.¹³

We should heed the word of the LORD:

Take these words of mine to heart and keep them in mind. Write them down, tie them around your wrist, and wear them as headbands as a reminder.

Teach them to your children, and talk about them when you are at home or away, when you lie down or get up.

11 Matthew 28:19-20

12 1 Peter 2:2

13 John 1:12

Write them on the door frames of your house and on your gates.

Then you and your children will live for a long time in this land.¹⁴

Why do we teach all of this stuff? I once saw a t-shirt that read:

LIVE YOUR LIFE
SO YOUR PASTOR DOESN'T HAVE TO LIE AT YOUR FUNERAL

We teach this stuff so that on the day of your funeral we can be at peace. We teach this stuff so that we can be sure. We teach this stuff so that we can have the comfort of God's Word, and can share that peace and comfort, that unmovable assurance of salvation, with those who follow after you. We teach this so that we can know that you are a Christian as God defines Christianity, and that you are held in that one true Christian faith by the Word of God that leads you to eternal life.

We teach this stuff so that we, with all confidence and full assurance, can know that you did know and profess Jesus of Nazareth as the Holy Christ of God, and as you breathe your last, it is Jesus' face that welcomes you home. Home to a place where life is no longer that thing that defeats us, but is that precious gift that never end.

That is what we want you to know here. We want you to know that peace that surpasses all human understanding, that does keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus our Lord,¹⁵ and in His promise. The promise that for those who believe and are Baptized they will be saved.¹⁶

That is what we do here.

That is what has been proclaimed across the airways from this congregation since June of 1948, and by God's good grace will continue for years to come. It is faithful adherence to that Truth that brought this congregation to this day, to

14 Deuteronomy 11:18-21

15 Philippians 4:7

16 Mark 16:16

this time, and why you are here to hear that same ancient Truth proclaimed to you right now.

That is what we do here.

Take this day, this moment in your life, to remember. Use this day to teach the younger generations. When they ask, ‘Why do you build a building like this? Why do you invest so much into this place, and in this ministry?’¹⁷ You can tell them, ‘because God is good and faithful.’ You can tell them, “Christ is arisen! He is risen in deed, Alleluia!” Salvation is yours!

That is what we do here.

That is what we will continue to do here for generations to come until Christ comes.

Amen.

¹⁷ Joshua 4:21