

seriously prove thereby that their hearts are still unclean and separated from God. The sin that begins in the heart will not agree to stay there; it will look for ways to get out and express itself. The Pharisees should have recognized that happening in their own hearts: their hearts harbored hatred for Jesus which yearned for expression in acts that ended in murder during Holy Week.

¹The Pharisees and some of the teachers of the law who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus and ²saw some of his disciples eating food with hands that were “unclean,” that is, unwashed. ³(The Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they give their hands a ceremonial washing, holding to the tradition of the elders. ⁴When they come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they wash. And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles.)

⁵So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, “Why don’t your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with ‘unclean’ hands?”

⁶He replied, “Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written:” “These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. ⁷They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.” ⁸You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men.”

¹⁴Again Jesus called the crowd to him and said, “Listen to me, everyone, and understand this. ¹⁵Nothing outside a man can make him ‘unclean’ by going into him. Rather, it is what comes out of a man that makes him ‘unclean.’” ²¹For from within, out of men’s hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, ²²greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. ²³All these evils come from inside and make a man ‘unclean.’”

Sermon Hymn: 459 O God, My Faithful God

Sermon: A Condition of the Heart

Offering: *(Please remember to sign the Friendship Register.)*

3rd Hymn: 498 Though I May Speak With Bravest Fire

Benediction

Closing Hymn: 474 Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus - v. 1, 4
Please Stand

Ushers:

This Week – Zack Vogel & Alex Vogel

Next Week – Hunter Boettcher & Jeremy Foltz

Greeters:

This Week – Richard & Elaine Englehart

Next Week – Sharon Waldmann

St. Peter's Ev. Lutheran Church

15th Sunday after Pentecost – September 2nd, 2018



P.O. Box 86, Helenville, Wisconsin

Pastor: Mark Swanson Church Tel: 920-674-3307

Principal: Craig Winkler School Tel: 262-582-3010

Organist: Judy Acker

We Welcome You!

Order of Worship: pg. 38

Opening Hymn: 472 Rise, My Soul, to Watch and Pray

Prayer of the Day:

M: O Lord Jesus Christ, preserve the congregation of believers with your never-failing mercy. Help us avoid whatever is wicked and harmful, and guide us in the way that leads to our salvation; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

First Lesson - Deuteronomy 4:1, 2, 6-8

God is serious about all of his Word, both the law and the gospel. As the verses left out of the reading (3-5) make clear, those who only take God's gifts seriously soon lose those gifts as a consequence of despising his commands. His commands are good because he who gave them is good. And because he is good, his abundant blessing through a peaceful and orderly life rests on those who follow his Word. That blessing brings forth a still greater blessing and honor: those who do not know his Word may be moved to hear it by the evidence of God's blessings on the godly lives of Christians.

¹ Hear now, O Israel, the decrees and laws I am about to teach you. Follow them so that you may live and may go in and take possession of the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, is giving you. ² Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the LORD your God that I give you.

⁶ Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people." ⁷ What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the LORD our God is near us whenever we pray to him? ⁸ And what other nation is so great as to have such righteous decrees and laws as this body of laws I am setting before you today?

Psalm of the Day - Psalm 119c p. 111

Sunday Only: First Half – Pulpit

Second Half – Lectern

Second Lesson - Ephesians 6:10-20

Faithfulness and obedience to the Word of God are not merely one aspect of life out of many. They are the all-important matters of life that should be reflected in all of the rest of life. There is a life-and-death struggle going on

with us, as Satan strives with all his might to pull us back into sin and unbelief. The only help that avails in that life-and-death struggle is the help of God's own Word, the covering of the gospel and the confidence of faith which comes from it. Armed with the promises of God, we storm the gates of heaven with our prayers for assistance, in the certainty that God will hear us and in his Word answer us. May our awareness of the battle and of the victory Christ gives permeate all that we do at work and at play, at home and away, in our lives with family, with friends, with foes as well.

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ¹³ Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ⁵ and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸ And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

¹⁹ Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

Verse of the Day: Alleluia. Your words became a joy to me, and the delight of my heart. Alleluia. (Jeremiah 15:15 cf. RSV)

Gospel - Mark 7:1-8, 14, 15, 21-23

Adding to God's Word is just as bad as subtracting from it. In both cases man sets aside what God has said in favor of what he wants in order to justify himself apart from God's Word and Christ's work. Precisely because the Word of both the law and the gospel is addressed to the heart, it allows for no additions, no subtractions. For to the extent that the heart is cleansed by the gospel, to that extent what flows from it will be clean and in accord with the law. An unclean heart can produce only unclean works, no matter how clean those works may appear on the outside. Those who take the law seriously need first and always the cleansing power of the gospel, lest their outward works be only outward and ultimately a mask for hypocrisy. (Pietism and self-righteousness are often the last refuge of a guilty conscience!) On the other hand, those who refuse to take God's law