

July 2nd, 2023
Fifth Sunday after Pentecost



Evangelical Lutheran Church

8470 Landen Drive Maineville, Ohio

*At Abiding Word
We gather around the Word (worship)
We grow in the Word (education)
And we share the Word with the world (outreach).*



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Welcome!

To all who have gathered here this morning we welcome you in the name of Christ our Lord. Through him we have access to God in boldness and confidence. (Ephesians 3:12) Please join us for coffee after the service.

DEFINE CHRISTIAN

Ask ten different people to define Christian and you may get ten different answers. One might say, “A Christian is someone who believes in Jesus.” Okay. But the demons believe that Jesus exists and is the Son of God. So is that definition adequate? Another person might have a more negative view. He says, “A Christian is someone who believes he is better than others.” Is that completely false? And if you aren’t humble, does that mean you aren’t Christian?

In our next worship series Christ himself defines the term Christian and describes what Christians do. We will be struck by how often we do not do all those things. There likely are times when people could look at our behavior and assume we were unbelievers. Yet throughout this series Jesus will demonstrate that ultimately a Christian is one who runs to Christ for forgiveness precisely because he has failed to live like what he is—a Christian. As we receive the mercy of Christ, it moves us to strive with all our being to better fit Christ’s beautiful definition, doing all the things Jesus says that Christians do. Our worship follows this path:

THE CHRISTIAN LOVES GOD ABOVE ALL

Not all love is good. It is self-destructive to love bad things. However, it is just as harmful to love good things in a bad order. For example, it would seem to be a good thing that a man loves his dog. But if he loves his dog more than he loves his wife, his “love” for both is disordered. That is not in the best interests of the man, his wife, or even his dog. For love to be healthy, it needs to be properly ordered.

The Christian loves God above all things. For the Christian understands that everything in this present world is transitory. Relationships fail. Empires fall. Accomplishments are quickly forgotten. But nothing about God is transitory. God’s love is eternal. He promises the Christian everlasting life. And so the Christian struggles not simply to avoid loving bad things. The Christian struggles to love God above all other good things too. Because the Christian understands that God is of ultimate value.

Stand

M: The grace of our Lord + Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

CONFESSION OF SINS

M: We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children. But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.

C: **Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.**

M: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.

C: **Amen.**

PRAYER AND PRAISE

M: In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.



C: Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good. Bless - ed are



they who take ref - uge in him. Your Word, O Lord, is e -



ter - nal; it stands firm in the heav -



ens. Your faith - ful - ness con - tin - ues for -



ev - er. Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good.



Bless - ed are they who take ref - uge in him.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

M: God of all power and might, you are the giver of all that is good. Help us love you with all our heart, strengthen us in true faith, provide us with all we need, and keep us safe in your care; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



C: A - men.

Be seated

FIRST READING

EXODUS 32:15–29

Aaron's feeble excuses for why the Israelites fell into idolatry remind us of our own shallow rationalizations for failing to love God above all things

¹⁵Moses turned and went down the mountain with the two tablets of the covenant law in his hands. They were inscribed on both sides, front and back. ¹⁶The tablets were the work of God; the writing was the writing of God, engraved on the tablets.

¹⁷When Joshua heard the noise of the people shouting, he said to Moses, “There is the sound of war in the camp.”

¹⁸Moses replied: “It is not the sound of victory, it is not the sound of defeat; it is the sound of singing that I hear.”

¹⁹When Moses approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, his anger burned and he threw the tablets out of his hands, breaking them to pieces at the foot of the mountain. ²⁰And he took the calf the people had made and burned it in the fire; then he ground it to powder, scattered it on the water and made the Israelites drink it.

²¹He said to Aaron, “What did these people do to you, that you led them into such great sin?”

²²“Do not be angry, my lord,” Aaron answered. “You know how prone these people are to evil. ²³They said to me, ‘Make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don’t know what has happened to him.’ ²⁴So I told them, ‘Whoever has any gold jewelry, take it off.’ Then they gave me the gold, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf!”

²⁵Moses saw that the people were running wild and that Aaron had let them get out of control and so become a laughingstock to their enemies. ²⁶So he stood at the entrance to the camp and said, “Whoever is for the Lord, come to me.” And all the Levites rallied to him.

²⁷Then he said to them, “This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: ‘Each man strap a sword to his side. Go back and forth through the camp from one end to the other, each killing his brother and friend and neighbor.’ ” ²⁸The Levites did as Moses commanded, and that day about three thousand of the people died. ²⁹Then Moses said, “You have been set apart to the Lord today, for you were against your own sons and brothers, and he has blessed you this day.”

PSALM 27B: O LORD, YOU ARE MY LIGHT

page 134 in Psalter

SECOND READING

1 TIMOTHY 6:11–16

St. Paul describes the man of God in action, struggling to love God above all things.

¹¹But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. ¹²Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you ¹⁴to keep this command without spot or blame until

the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

VERSE OF THE DAY

M: Alleluia. Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. Alleluia.

Stand

GOSPEL

MATTHEW 10:34–42

Jesus calls us to love him above all—more than family or friends, more than personal safety or even life itself.

³⁴“Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵For I have come to turn “ ‘a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—³⁶a man’s enemies will be the members of his own household.’

³⁷“Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. ³⁸Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.

⁴⁰“Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. ⁴¹Whoever welcomes a prophet as a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person as a righteous person will receive a righteous person’s reward. ⁴²And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward.”

M: This is the gospel of our Lord.

C: Praise be to you, O Christ!

The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody consists of the following notes: C4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), and C5 (quarter). A slur is placed under the first four notes (C, D, E, F#). Below the staff, the lyrics "C: Praise be to you, O Christ!" are written.

HYMN OF THE DAY: COME, FOLLOW ME, THE SAVIOR SPAKE

702

SERMON

1 TIMOTHY 6:11–16

APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Stand

M: O Lord God, our heavenly Father, pour out the Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep us strong in your grace and truth, protect and comfort us in all temptation, and bestow on us your saving peace, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



C: A - men.

BLESSING

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace.
Live in harmony with one another.
Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.



C: A - men. A - men. A - men.