

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

July 11, 2021

Know Your Enemy

In today's Old Testament Reading, the prophet Amos, though previously a herdsman and dresser of sycamore figs, must speak, for the Lord has called him. His word of judgment is only part of the message; in other places, he calls people to choose the Lord and live and also announces a great reversal. It is dangerous being a prophet, as John the Baptist learned in the Holy Gospel. But we know the end of the story: before creation, we were destined to salvation, as we read in the Epistle. Whatever we face, our faith tells us to listen to what the Lord has to say before paying attention to any other voice. "He will speak peace to His people" (Psalm 85:8).

+ PREPARATION +

OPENING HYMN: [*Speak, O Lord, Your Servant Listens*](#)

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION *Psalm 85:1-13*

Pastor: Today's psalm has two parts. The first is the plea of the psalmist to God, and the second is his announcement of God's promised salvation. We now use Psalm 85 as we confess our sins and hear God's forgiveness for Jesus' sake.

Pastor: LORD, You were favorable to Your land;

People: **You restored the fortunes of Jacob.**

Pastor: You forgave the iniquity of Your people;

People: **You covered all their sin.**

Pastor: You withdrew all Your wrath;

People: **You turned from Your hot anger.**

Pastor: Restore us again, O God of our salvation,

People: **and put away Your indignation toward us!**

Pastor: Will You be angry with us forever?

People: Will You prolong Your anger to all generations?

Pastor: Will You not revive us again,

People: that Your people may rejoice in You?

Pastor: Show us Your steadfast love, O LORD,

People: and grant us Your salvation.

We confess, Lord our God, that we have listened to the voices of Satan, the world, and our own desires. We have not loved You with all that we are and have, and we have not considered our neighbors' needs as important as our own. We can only throw ourselves on the mercy of Your gracious court and ask for forgiveness, that we may amend our sinful ways.

Pastor: Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,

for He will speak peace to His people, to His saints;

People: but let them not turn back to folly.

Pastor: Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him,

People: that glory may dwell in our land.

Pastor: Steadfast love and faithfulness meet;

People: righteousness and peace kiss each other.

Pastor: Faithfulness springs up from the ground,

People: and righteousness looks down from the sky.

Pastor: Yes, the LORD will give what is good,

People: and our land will yield its increase.

Pastor: Righteousness will go before Him

People: and make His footsteps a way.

Pastor: The steadfast love and faithfulness of our God are endless. For the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ and His sacrifice for all our sins, God declares us to be His own children and has opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, I therefore forgive

you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Thanks be to God. Amen.**

+ WORD +

KYRIE *Ephesians 1:4, 11; 13–14*

Pastor: In peace, "holy and blameless before Him," let us pray to the Lord.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: For peace from God's blessing us in Christ, choosing "us in Him before the foundation of the world," let us pray to the Lord.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: For the peace of the whole world, in which all things work "according to the counsel of His will," let us pray to the Lord.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: For this holy house and all places where people hear "the word of truth, the gospel of Your salvation," let us pray to the Lord.

People: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pastor: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord, until we acquire possession of our inheritance.

People: **Amen.**

SALUTATION and PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Let us pray.

O Lord, You gave such faith to Your prophets that they listened and boldly spoke what they heard You say to them. Grant that we hear what You have to say now and, confident of Your promised salvation, that we speak words of comfort and peace in a world that desperately needs both; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Amos 7:7–15*

(Amos boldly speaks for the Lord against Amaziah and Jeroboam.)

⁷This is what [the Lord God] showed me: behold, the Lord was standing beside a wall built with a plumb line, with a plumb line in his hand. ⁸And the LORD said to me, "Amos, what do you see?" And I said, "A plumb line." Then the Lord said,

"Behold, I am setting a plumb line
in the midst of my people Israel;
I will never again pass by them;

⁹the high places of Isaac shall be made desolate,
and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste,
and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword."

¹⁰Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent to Jeroboam king of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel. The land is not able to bear all his words. ¹¹For thus Amos has said,

"Jeroboam shall die by the sword,
and Israel must go into exile
away from his land."

¹²And Amaziah said to Amos, "O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, and eat bread there, and prophesy there, ¹³but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom."

¹⁴Then Amos answered and said to Amaziah, "I was no prophet, nor a prophet's son, but I was a herdsman and a dresser of sycamore figs. ¹⁵But the LORD took me from following the flock, and the LORD said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.'"

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

GRADUAL *Romans 11:33, 36*

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!

How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

For from him and through him and to him are all things.

To him be glory forever. Amen.

EPISTLE *Ephesians 1:3–14*

(God made our salvation certain before the creation of the world.)

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in

the Beloved. ⁷In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

¹¹In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ¹²so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. ¹³In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

VERSE *Matthew 5:10*

Alleluia. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Alleluia.

HOLY GOSPEL *Mark 6:14–29*

(Herodias gets John the Baptist's head.)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the sixth chapter.

People: Glory to You, O Lord.

¹⁴King Herod heard of it, for Jesus' name had become known. Some said, "John the Baptist has been raised from the dead. That is why these miraculous powers are at work in him." ¹⁵But others said, "He is Elijah." And others said, "He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old." ¹⁶But when Herod heard of it, he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised." ¹⁷For it was Herod who had sent and seized John and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because he had married her. ¹⁸For John had been saying to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." ¹⁹And Herodias had a grudge against him and wanted to put him to death. But she could not, ²⁰for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he kept him safe. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed, and yet he heard him gladly.

²¹But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his nobles and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee. ²²For when Herodias's daughter came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests. And the king said to the girl, "Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it to you." ²³And he vowed to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half of my kingdom." ²⁴And she went out

and said to her mother, "For what should I ask?" And she said, "The head of John the Baptist." ²⁵And she came in immediately with haste to the king and asked, saying, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter." ²⁶And the king was exceedingly sorry, but because of his oaths and his guests he did not want to break his word to her. ²⁷And immediately the king sent an executioner with orders to bring John's head. He went and beheaded him in the prison ²⁸and brought his head on a platter and gave it to the girl, and the girl gave it to her mother. ²⁹When his disciples heard of it, they came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE DAY: [*Hark, the Voice of Jesus Crying*](#)

SERMON: *Know Your Enemy*

NICENE CREED

**I believe in one God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.
And I believe in the Holy Spirit,**

**the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life + of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

After each petition:

Pastor: ... Lord, in Your mercy:

People: hear our prayer.

At conclusion:

Pastor: ... for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER *Matthew 6:9–13*

**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.**

CLOSING PRAYER

Pastor: Let us pray.

O God, Your almighty power is made known chiefly in showing mercy.
Grant us the fullness of Your grace that we may be called to repentance
and made partakers of Your heavenly treasures; through Your Son, Jesus
Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one
God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

BENEDICTION *Numbers 6:24–26*

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

People: Amen.

DISMISSAL

Pastor: Go in peace! Serve the Lord!

People: Thanks be to God.

CLOSING HYMN: [*Sent Forth by God's Blessing*](#)

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