

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

March 20, 2022

Lent: A Season of Repentance and Hope

It seems that much time is spent deciding which sins are worse and which sinners are worst. In the Gospel for today, Jesus is confronted with this question and turns it into a call for all sinners to repent. But this is not only a call to confess your sins, it is a call to turn away from those sins and become the fruitful trees of the Spirit's planting. These fruits are displayed in us when we turn away from our self-interest and benefit and behold our neighbor in need. The call of the day is to repent and live the righteous life that flows from repentance and faith under the power of the Holy Spirit. Repentance always involves turning and this turn is away from sin and to life!

+ PREPARATION +

OPENING HYMN: #809 - [*Great Is Thy Faithfulness*](#)

INVOCATION

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

People: **Amen.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION *Psalm 1:6; 5:4, 7, adapt.*

Pastor: The LORD knows the way of the righteous,

People: **but the way of the wicked will perish.**

Pastor: You are not a God who delights in wickedness; evil may not dwell with You.

People: **Through the abundance of Your steadfast love, I will enter Your house.**

Silence for meditation and reflection.

Pastor: Let us confess our sins to God our Father:

People: **Almighty God, maker of all things and judge of all people, we poor sinners confess to You that we have turned away from You. We have not done the good You desire but have done the evil You forbid. We repent of all our sins of thought, word, and deed and pray for Your mercy for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Turn our hearts away from sin and its temptation and grant us by the Holy Spirit to serve You with all our heart, mind, body, and soul. In the holy name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.**

Pastor: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. To the impenitent and unbelieving I declare that so long as you continue in your impenitence, God will not forgive your sins and will visit your iniquity upon you until you turn from your sinful ways, come to repentance, and trust in the merits of Jesus Christ alone.

People: Amen.

Pastor: May the Lord, who has begun this good work in us, bring it to completion in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

People: Amen.

+ WORD +

PSALM *Psalm 85 (spoken responsively by verse)*
(Surely God's salvation is near to those who hear Him.)

¹LORD, you were favorable to your land;
you restored the fortunes of Jacob.

**²You forgave the iniquity of your people;
you covered all their sin.**

³You withdrew all your wrath;
you turned from your hot anger.

**⁴Restore us again, O God of our salvation,
and put away your indignation toward us!**

⁵Will you be angry with us forever?
Will you prolong your anger to all generations?

**⁶Will you not revive us again,
that your people may rejoice in you?**

⁷Show us your steadfast love, O LORD,
and grant us your salvation.

**⁸Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,
for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints;
but let them not turn back to folly.**

⁹Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him,
that glory may dwell in our land.

**¹⁰Steadfast love and faithfulness meet;
righteousness and peace kiss each other.**

¹¹Faithfulness springs up from the ground,
and righteousness looks down from the sky.

**¹²Yes, the LORD will give what is good,
and our land will yield its increase.**

¹³Righteousness will go before him
and make his footsteps a way.

LITANY

Pastor: Lord, have mercy upon us.

People: Christ, have mercy upon us.

Pastor: Lord, have mercy upon us.

People: Save us, O Lord, for the sake of Your name.

Pastor: That by the Holy Spirit we may hear more clearly the voice of the Lord
calling us to repentance and faith,

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For grace to respond with our whole heart to the voice of God speaking
through His Word,

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For love of God's Word and for the good things His Word makes known,

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For the good fruits of the Spirit at work in us and through us,

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For love of our neighbor and for a kindly heart, which is not quick to judge,

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For grace to forgive others as the Lord has forgiven us,

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For generosity and a willing spirit that we may deny ourselves and support
those in need,

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For the humility of faith, that we not think more highly of ourselves than we ought,

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: Lord, have mercy upon us.

People: Christ, have mercy upon us.

Pastor: Lord, have mercy upon us.

People: Save us, O Lord, for the sake of Your name. Amen.

SALUTATION and PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us pray.

Gracious Father, You have shown patience with us sinners who deserved Your wrath; turn our hearts away from sin and to the Lord Jesus Christ, that we may know the power of His life in us and bear the good fruits of Your kingdom in our daily lives; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, we pray.

People: Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE DAY

Pastor: Though the Readings for the Third Sunday in Lent bring warnings to those who refuse the Spirit and remain impenitent, they also promise that God will work in us the healthful Spirit of His grace, forgive our sins, and equip us to bear the good fruits of His kingdom in our lives. From the prophet Ezekiel, we learn that God finds no pleasure in judging the wicked but rejoices in their repentance and faith. From 1 Corinthians, we are warned by Paul against the pride that goes before the fall and assured that in Christ temptation cannot overcome us. In the Gospel, Jesus is confronted with a tragedy from the news and points the hearers to their own repentance and faith, that they may bear the good fruit of His Kingdom.

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Ezekiel 33:7–20*

(The Lord seeks not the death of the sinner but that he turn from his wickedness and live.)

⁷“So you, son of man, I have made a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. ⁸If I say to the wicked, O wicked one, you shall surely die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from his way, that wicked person shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require

at your hand. ⁹But if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, that person shall die in his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul.

¹⁰"And you, son of man, say to the house of Israel, Thus have you said: 'Surely our transgressions and our sins are upon us, and we rot away because of them. How then can we live?' ¹¹Say to them, As I live, declares the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel?

¹²"And you, son of man, say to your people, The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him when he transgresses, and as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall by it when he turns from his wickedness, and the righteous shall not be able to live by his righteousness when he sins. ¹³Though I say to the righteous that he shall surely live, yet if he trusts in his righteousness and does injustice, none of his righteous deeds shall be remembered, but in his injustice that he has done he shall die.

¹⁴Again, though I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' yet if he turns from his sin and does what is just and right, ¹⁵if the wicked restores the pledge, gives back what he has taken by robbery, and walks in the statutes of life, not doing injustice, he shall surely live; he shall not die. ¹⁶None of the sins that he has committed shall be remembered against him. He has done what is just and right; he shall surely live.

¹⁷"Yet your people say, 'The way of the Lord is not just,' when it is their own way that is not just. ¹⁸When the righteous turns from his righteousness and does injustice, he shall die for it. ¹⁹And when the wicked turns from his wickedness and does what is just and right, he shall live by them. ²⁰Yet you say, 'The way of the Lord is not just.' O house of Israel, I will judge each of you according to his ways."

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE 1 Corinthians 10:1–13

(God is faithful; He will not allow you to be tempted beyond your ability.)

¹I want you to know, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ²and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³and all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ.

⁵Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

⁶Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did. ⁷Do not be idolaters as some of them were; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play." ⁸We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. ⁹We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents, ¹⁰nor grumble,

as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. ¹¹Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. ¹²Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. ¹³No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

VERSE *2 Peter 3:9b, c (spoken together)*

The Lord is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

HOLY GOSPEL *Luke 13:1–9*

(Unless you repent, you also will perish.)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the thirteenth chapter.

People: Glory to You, O Lord.

¹There were some present at that very time who told [Jesus] about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. ²And he answered them, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? ³No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. ⁴Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? ⁵No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."

⁶And he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. ⁷And he said to the vinedresser, 'Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?' ⁸And he answered him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure. ⁹Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE DAY: #614 – [*"As Surely as I Live," God Said*](#)

SERMON: *Lent: A Season of Repentance and Hope*

APOSTLES' CREED

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

**And 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 sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence 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

After each petition:

Pastor: ... Lord, in Your mercy:

People: hear our prayer.

At conclusion:

Pastor: ... through Jesus Christ, our Lord, we pray.

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, whose glory it is always to have mercy, be gracious to all who have gone astray from Your ways and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of Your Word; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

BENEDICAMUS and 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: #918 – [Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer](#)

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