

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost: 1 Kings 19:9-18



TWELFTH SUNDAY after PENTECOST

The Christian answers doubt with faith. Doubt is the unfortunate companion of faith. Wherever faith clings to the promises of God, doubt is always right there lingering in the back of our mind, constantly asking the serpent's Garden question, "Did God really say?"

How striking to think that we must have faith in God before we can doubt him! Today's lessons show us believers who had faith in God and his abilities to save them, but yet doubted when his plans or purpose failed to match theirs. In each case, it is adversity that fights against faith and allows its unfortunate companion to rear its ugly head. And in each case, the true answer to doubt is not found in the great miracle that removes adversity, but in the still small voice of our Savior God whispering in his Word. Today we hear our Savior God ask us, "Why did you doubt?", and we see that the Christian answers doubt with faith.

9:00AM Sunday, August 23, 2020

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All of today's hymns are found in the pew hymnal
"Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal" (CW). © 1993 NPH

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Greeting by the minister

OPENING DIALOGUE:

Minister: God, our Father, each day is a gift of your grace.

Congregation: Your mercies are new every morning.

M: Guide our steps by the light of your Word.

C: Shield us from harm and keep us from evil.

M: Better than life is your love.

C: Put joy in our hearts and praise on our lips.

CONFESSION and ABSOLUTION

M: Let us confess our sins to God and ask for his forgiveness.

C: Almighty God, merciful Father,

I confess to you that I have not loved you with all my heart.

In what I have done and left undone,

I have pursued my ways instead of your ways.

I have not loved my brothers and sisters as myself.

For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity.

I am truly sorry for my sins.

I repent of them.

I beg for your mercy, O Lord.

Silence for meditation.

M: Forgive us for the sake of Jesus Christ who suffered and died for us.

C: Cleanse me from my sins. Release me from my guilt. Grant me your Holy Spirit to amend my sinful life.

M: The almighty God has been merciful to us and has sent his Son to die for all. For his sake, God forgives our sins and calls us from darkness to his marvelous light. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

M: Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray, and to give more than we either desire or deserve. Pour upon us the abundance of your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things for which we are not worthy to ask, except through the merits and mediation of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Romans 9:1-5

Paul explains the roots of the Christian Church. He speaks of his brothers, the children of Israel, and asks them, "Why did you doubt? Why did you doubt that salvation is by grace, not by works? Why did you doubt the Messiah long promised was fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth?" The unbroken line of God's acts of grace left Israel no reason to doubt. Yet they did. And God's answer to that doubt? He chose a remnant by grace and spoke to them in the gentle whisper of God made man.

¹ I speak the truth in Christ—I am not lying, my conscience confirms it through the Holy Spirit—

² I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart.

³ For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my people, those of my own race,

⁴ the people of Israel. theirs is the adoption to sonship; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises.

⁵ theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of the Messiah, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY: CW Hymn 379

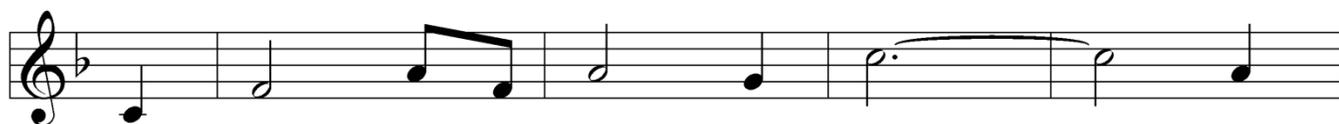
"Amazing Grace-How Sweet the Sound"

JUSTIFICATION

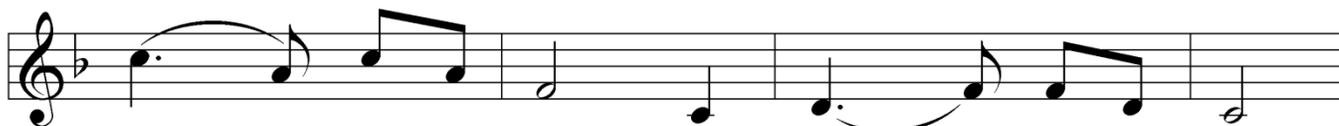
379 Amazing Grace—How Sweet the Sound



1 A - maz - ing grace— how sweet the sound—
 2 The Lord has prom - ised good to me;
 3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares
 4 When we've been there ten thou - sand years,



That saved a wretch like me! I
 His Word my hope se - cures. He
 I have al - read - y come; 'Tis
 Bright shin - ing as the sun, We've



once was lost but now am found,
 will my shield and por - tion be
 grace has brought me safe thus far,
 no less days to sing God's praise



Was blind but now I see.
 As long as life en - dures.
 And grace will lead me home.
 Than when we'd first be - gun.

Text: John Newton, 1725–1807, st. 1-3, abr.; John P. Rees, 19th century, st. 4.
 Tune: NEW BRITAIN (CM) *Columbian Harmony*, Cincinnati, 1829, alt.

SERMON: based on 1 Kings 19:9-18
“What Are You Doing Here?”

Elijah’s great victory of faith was followed closely by great adversity. From the heights of Mt. Carmel, Elijah fell into the depths of frustration. Even after such a great display of God’s glory, this evil queen issued her death threats. Even after such a powerful display of God’s might, a general spiritual renewal did not occur. Elijah had faith in God’s power, but he doubted when God’s plans and purpose did not match his own. Hadn’t the people broken the covenant? Why didn’t God come and make things right with earthquake, wind, and the fire of judgment? Elijah went to the site where the covenant had been made, to the mountain of God where God had come once before in fire and wind and earthquake. There Elijah brought his case against the people of Israel. God answered his prophet not with great acts of power, but rather with quiet words of promise. God displayed all of his power, so that his display of grace might be all the more astounding. He would not come in judgment, but in grace for his elect. The still small voice of his message would accomplish all that he desired. It would tear down kingdoms and establish dynasties. It would bring judgment on his enemies and reserve a people for himself. Elijah heard the Word of God and had to wonder, “Why did I doubt?”

⁹ There he went into a cave and spent the night.

And the word of the Lord came to him: “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

¹⁰ He replied, “I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, torn down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too.”

¹¹ The Lord said, “Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.”

Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake.

¹² After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper.

¹³ When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave.

Then a voice said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

¹⁴ He replied, “I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, torn down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too.”

¹⁵ The Lord said to him, “Go back the way you came, and go to the Desert of Damascus. When you get there, anoint Hazael king over Aram.

¹⁶ Also, anoint Jehu son of Nimshi king over Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah to succeed you as prophet.

¹⁷ Jehu will put to death any who escape the sword of Hazael, and Elisha will put to death any who escape the sword of Jehu.

¹⁸ Yet I reserve seven thousand in Israel—all whose knees have not bowed down to Baal and whose mouths have not kissed him.”

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH and THE LORD’S PRAYER:

M: Lord God heavenly Father, we give you hearty thanks that you have called us out of the darkness of spiritual ignorance through the light of your gospel, that you have called us out of the darkness of sin and eternal death to the light of eternal life through Christ, and that you have called us forth from a life of sin to a life of service freely given to you.

C: Endow us richly with the Holy Spirit, dispelling our doubts and confusion and keeping us faithful and true to your Word.

M: Do not permit us to stray from your Word in the slightest, and help us through diligent use of the Scriptures to grow in knowledge, to abound in faith, and to be strengthened in our inner man. Enable us both by word and deed to make a good profession of our faith before the world. Direct our footsteps along the path of righteousness.

C: Help us subdue our sinful flesh and prevent us from being dazzled by the attractions of this world. Restrain the devil and his wicked angels lest they threaten our faith and strike terror in our hearts.

M: Create in us humble hearts so that we daily make confession of our sins.

For Jesus’ sake forgive our sins and put our consciences to rest.

C: Fill our hearts with such gratitude for your salvation that we gladly set about to bring the light of the gospel to those who are without Christ and without hope.

M: Keep us from all thoughts, all speech, all desires, all deeds, which do not glorify the precious name of our Savior. Cause every Christian virtue to flourish in our lives. Teach us to pray without ceasing. Through the Spirit put into our minds and hearts the things we ought to ask of you and the names of those for whom our prayers are needed.

C: Father, be our Strength, our Hope, and our Light. Guide and keep us through the years that remain until by grace in Christ we come to eternal life.

Special Prayers and Intercessions (optional, read by the minister)

M: Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

Silent Prayer

M: God is the source of all wisdom and knowledge. Let us pray for students and teachers. For all students as they begin this new school year, that the Spirit of God may give them the gifts of wisdom and understanding. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

M: For teachers, that they may share their knowledge with gentleness, patience, and concern for their students. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

M: For those who seek knowledge of the things of this world, that they may always pursue God's wisdom. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

M: For parents, the first teachers of their children, that their faith and love may be an example to us always. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

M: Lord our God, in your wisdom and love you surround us with the mysteries of the universe. In the past you sent your prophets to teach your Word and to bear witness to your undying love. During this school year send your Spirit on our students and teachers, and fill them with your wisdom and blessings. Give them devotion to their studies. Lead them to share with others what they have learned about your great love to our world, through Jesus Christ our Lord in whose name we pray:

C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

THE PRAYER FOR GRACE:

M: O Lord, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, you have brought us safely to this new day. Defend us with your mighty power, and grant that this day we neither fall into sin nor run into any kind of danger; and in all we do, direct us to what is right in your sight, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

C: Amen.

BLESSING:

M: May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God our Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all.

C: Amen

CLOSING HYMN: CW Hymn 416

"How Firm a Foundation"

How Firm a Foundation



1 How firm a foun - da - tion, O saints of the Lord,
 2 In ev - 'ry con - di - tion, in sick - ness, in health,
 3 "Fear not, I am with you. Oh, be not dis - mayed,
 4 "When through the deep wa - ters I call you to go,
 5 "Through-out all their life - time my peo - ple shall prove



Is laid for your faith in his ex - cel - lent Word!
 In pov - er - ty's vale, or a - bound - ing in wealth,
 For I am your God and will still give you aid;
 The riv - ers of sor - row shall not o - ver - flow,
 My sov - 'reign, e - ter - nal, un - change - a - ble love,



What more can he say than to you he has said
 At home and a - broad, on the land, on the sea—
 I'll strength - en you, help you, and cause you to stand,
 For I will be with you your trou - bles to bless
 And then, when gray hair shall their tem - ples a - dorn,



Who un - to the Sav - ior for ref - uge have fled?
 The Lord, the Al - might - y, your strength e'er shall be.
 Up - held by my right - eous, om - nip - o - tent hand.
 And sanc - ti - fy to you your deep - est dis - tress.
 Like lambs they shall still on my shoul - ders be borne."

Text: *A Selection of Hymns*, London, 1787, abr., alt.

Tune: FIRM FOUNDATION (11 11 11 11) Bernhard Schumacher, 1886–1978.