

Sermon Notes July 9, 2023 6th Sun after Pentecost  
Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church – Dade City, Florida

**“Who Will Deliver?”**

**Memory Verses:**

**Zechariah 9:9** **“<sup>9</sup>Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”**

**Romans 7:24-25,8:1-2** **“<sup>24b</sup> ... Who will deliver me from this body of death? <sup>25</sup>Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!... <sup>8:1</sup>There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup>For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.”**

**Matthew 11:28:** **“<sup>28</sup> Come to me come all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”**

Sixth Sunday after Pentecost. Focus on growing together in the life of the Holy Trinity, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit., John Hus, a precursor of the Reformation remembered July 6 as a martyr for his faith in 1415. July 6, 1415, Hus was sentenced to death by a panel of judges (his enemies) and burned at the stake audibly praying the *Kyrie Elison* (Lord Have Mercy) as he died. Luther admired the life and teachings of “St. John Hus,” as he called him, and he approved the Moravian Confession of 1535.

From Romans 7:25. St. Paul and church Reformers, pointed to question **“Who will deliver?...”** and it’s answer with the proper balance between the Law and the Gospel.

Our prophetic reading from Zechariah points to a Gospel or good news message of deliverance and restoration of God’s people after the Babylonian captivity... humble beginning would hail the coming of a lowly King, who would fulfill the old covenant and establish an unbounded Kingdom wholly consecrated to the Lord.

**Zechariah (9:9) has the King Christ coming into Jerusalem on an ass.**

God's people are called to welcome their coming King with joyful shouts. ...previewing new Jerusalem as the Bride of Christ (Rev.21.2) unique King, one-of-a-kind, the Messiah. Wycliff commented “Christ mounted these animals to condemn the riding of pope and cardinals, and of the inferior bishops too, who are wont to ride in superfluous pomp on war-horses decked out with gold and silk.” Luther commented “Here there is no violence, no armor, no power, no anger, no wrath... Here there are only kindness, justice, salvation, mercy, and every good thing.” (AE 20:94). Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem, gave proof He is promised King (Mt. 21:1-11)

Zechariah 9:12, by grace, the Lord invites sinners to return and in place of despair, the Lord promises a double blessing: a secure stronghold and victory over all enemies.

Have you ever been on the verge of despair, struggling with some sin, bad habit or addiction, overindulgence, struggle with pornography or sexual abuse that seemed too difficult to overcome? Struggled with sins that keep haunting you? Perhaps trusted someone to help you more than God? Ever had things/activities that crowd out time for worship or study of the Scriptures? If any of these has ever plagued you, ... good news from God’s Word

Struggle to overcome sin & power of the law in our lives is not new, but the Apostle Paul, Martin Luther and other reformers faced similar struggles. But thank God that they weren’t left with impossibilities, but the Holy Spirit inspired them to record God’s promise & hope for the future.

Paul’s questions, Romans 7:7 “What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means!...7:13, “Did that which is good, then, bring death to me?” “By no means! It was sin, producing death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure.

Luther’s explanation, “Then he depicts more fully the nature of sin and of the law, how by means of the law sin now stirs and becomes mighty. The old man comes to hate the law all the more because he cannot pay what the law demands. Sin is his nature and of himself he can do nothing but

sin; Therefore the law to him is death and torment. Not that the law is bad, but the old man's evil nature cannot endure the good, and the law demands good of him; just as a sick man cannot stand it when he is required to run and jump and do the works of a well man.

Therefore Saint Paul here concludes that the law, correctly understood and thoroughly grasped, does nothing more than to remind us of our sin, and to slay us by it, making us liable to eternal wrath. All this is fully learned and experienced by our conscience, when it is really struck by the law. Therefore a person must have something other than the law, something more than the law, to make him righteous and save him. But they who do not correctly understand the law are blind. They go ahead in their presumption, thinking to satisfy the law by means of their deeds, not knowing how much the law demands, namely, a willing and happy heart.

...

“Then he shows how spirit and flesh struggle with one another in a man. He uses himself as an example in order that we may learn how properly to understand the work of slaying sin within us. He calls both the spirit & the flesh’ laws’; for just as it is in the nature of the divine law to drive men & make demands of them, so the flesh drives men & makes demands. It rages against the spirit, & will have its own way. The spirit, in turn, drives men & makes demands contrary to the flesh, & will have its own way. This tension last in us as long as we live; though in one person it is greater, & another less, according as the spirit or the flesh is stronger. Nevertheless the whole man is himself both spirit & flesh, & he fights with himself until he becomes wholly spiritual.”

Apology (Defense) of the Augsburg Confession Article IV on Justification

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All Scriptures should be divided into these two main topics: the law & the promises. “law”... mean(s) the decalogue, (10 commandments)

Excerpts from Article IV section on *Love and the Fulfilling of the Law*.

After stating “we are debating about an important matter, namely, about the honor of Christ and the source from which the faithful might seek a sure and certain consolation--whether we should place our confidence in Christ or in our own works. But if we put it in our works, Christ will be

robbed of his honor as our mediator and propitiatory. And, faced with God's judgment, we will discover that such confidence was futile, and consciences will then plunge into despair. For if the forgiveness of sins and reconciliation take place not freely on account of Christ but on account of our love, then no one will have the forgiveness of sins until he or she has kept the entire law, because the law does not justify as long as it can accuse us. Thus it is clear that, since justification is reconciliation on account of Christ, we are justified by faith, because it is most certain that the forgiveness of sins is received by faith alone. ...

... The gospel calls us back from the law to the promises, and it teaches that we are not regarded as righteous on account of obedience to the law for we do not live up to the law. But we are regarded as righteous for the very reason that reconciliation is given us on account of Christ, and we receive this reconciliation only by faith. Before we keep the law, therefore, we must receive by faith the forgiveness of sins and reconciliation. ...

Second, the very fulfillment of the law, which follows our renewal, is scanty and impure...Therefore the fulfillment of the law is not accepted on its own account but on account of faith....

Third, only that which brings peace to consciences justifies before God. .... Faith alone brings peace to consciences according to the passage (Rom 5:1), "since we are justified by faith we have peace."...

4th, Christ does not stop being our mediator after we are reborn. ... Christ remains the mediator, and we must always affirm that because of him we have a gracious God, even though we are unworthy. This is just as Paul says (Rom. 5:2). "Through whom we have obtained access to God through faith."... Therefore we need the forgiveness of sins even when we have good works. ... Therefore the fulfillment of the law pleases God not on account of itself, but because by faith we grasp Christ and believe that we have a gracious God, not on account of the law but on account of Christ.

5th, if we had to believe that after our renewal we must become acceptable not by faith on account of Christ but on account of our keeping of the law, our conscience would never find rest. Instead it

would be driven to despair for the law always accuses since we never satisfy the law. .... For Paul says (Rom 7:19), **“For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do.”** likewise (7:25), **“With my mind I am a slave to the law of God, but with my flesh I am a slave to the law of sin.”** For who loves or fears God enough? Who endures patiently enough the afflictions imposed by God? Who does not often doubt whether human affairs are ruled by the council of God? Who does not often doubt whether one is heard by God? Who is not often angry that the wicked enjoy a better lot than the pious and that the godly are oppressed by the wicked? Who is not often enraged by the judgment of God when he seems to abandon us? How many live up to their calling? How many love their neighbor as themselves? Who is not incited by concupiscence? (evil desires, or evil lust). About these sins the Psalm says. (32:6), **“Therefore let all who are faithful offer prayer to you.”** ... Paul (Gal. 5:17) says about these things, **“For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit”** & vice versa. The flesh distrusts God, trusts the things around it, seeks human help in calamities, and, contrary to the will of God, flees from afflictions that, according to God's command, it ought to bear, and doubts the mercy of God. The Holy Spirit contends with such desires in our hearts in order to restrain and mortify them and in order to implement new spiritual impulses.

Our struggle with sin is present reality, not a past event; We know God's will and desire to serve him, but we cannot overcome sin. Even if we try, we fail. We cry out, **“who will deliver me from this body of death?”** there is only one answer: **“Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!”** Jesus rescues us. Though we sin daily, he continues to forgive and restore us.

In our struggles, remember Jesus' invitation, **“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”** (Mt. 11:28) When devil torment us with guilt, turn to Jesus with repentant hearts & remember His promise May God grant it by his grace. Amen.

Let's Pray:

Lord Jesus, I love you. Lead me in daily repentance. Forgive my sin and strengthen my faith. By Your Spirit, deliver me. Amen.