

SERVICE INFORMATION: October 1, 2023
17th Sunday after Trinity
Pastor Tom Olson; Minnesota Valley Free Lutheran Church

PRAISE AND WORSHIP SONGS: Ruth Antal-send them to Marretta for PowerPoint

ACCOMPANY HYMNS: Ruth Antal (Osthus Sing)

READER: Bob Hawksford

COMMUNION LEADER: Dave Fischer (He can choose a helper)

THEME: The Lordship of Christ

PRELUDE: Ruth Antal

CALL TO WORSHIP: *Psalm 8*

LEADER: O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens.

ALL: From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger.

LEADER: When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,

ALL: what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?

LEADER: You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor.

ALL: You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet:

LEADER: all flocks and herds, and the beasts of the field, 8 the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas.

ALL: O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

HYMN #205 “Give to Our God Immortal Praise”

CONFESSION OF SIN: *Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess to You that we are by nature sinful and unclean, and that we have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed. Therefore, we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy and ask You for Christ’s sake, grant us forgiveness of all our sins, and by Your Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of You and of Your will and true*

obedience to Your Word, to the end that by Your grace we may come to eternal life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

Reader: Bob Hawksford

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: *Proverbs 25:6-14 Do not exalt yourself in the king's presence, and do not claim a place among great men; 7 it is better for him to say to you, "Come up here, "than for him to humiliate you before a nobleman. What you have seen with your eyes 8 do not bring hastily to court, for what will you do in the end if your neighbor puts you to shame?9 If you argue your case with a neighbor, do not betray another man's confidence, 10 or he who hears it may shame you and you will never lose your bad reputation. 11 A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver. 12 Like an earring of gold or an ornament of fine gold is a wise man's rebuke to a listening ear. 13 Like the coolness of snow at harvest time is a trustworthy messenger to those who send him; he refreshes the spirit of his masters. 14 Like clouds and wind without rain is a man who boasts of gifts he does not give.*

GOSPEL LESSON: *Luke 14:1-11 One Sabbath, when Jesus went to eat in the house of a prominent Pharisee, he was being carefully watched. 2 There in front of him was a man suffering from dropsy (edema, fluid retention, congestive heart failure). 3 Jesus asked the Pharisees and experts in the law, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not?" 4 But they remained silent. So taking hold of the man, he healed him and sent him away. 5 Then he asked them, "If one of you has a son or an ox that falls into a well on the Sabbath day, will you not immediately pull him out?" 6 And they had nothing to say. 7 When he noticed how the guests picked the places of honor at the table, he told them this parable: 8 "When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, for a person more distinguished than you may have been invited. 9 If so, the host who invited both of you will come and say to you, 'Give this man your seat.' Then, humiliated, you will have to take the least important place. 10 But when you are invited, take the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he will say to you, 'Friend, move up to a better place.' Then you will be honored in the presence of all your fellow guests. 11*

For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

CONFESSION OF FAITH: *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, 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 is seated on the right hand of the Father, And He shall come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead; Whose kingdom shall 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 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

GLORIA PATRI: Ambassador Hymnal p. 4 (please put on screen)
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRAYER FOR OFFERING

PRAISE SONGS: songs chosen by Ruth Antal ("He is Lord" would be a possibility)

SERMON TITLE: "Conspiracy Theories"

Psalm 2; Pastor Tom Olson; October 1, 2023

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

QUESTION: One question that many people are asking today is this: Is there a behind the scenes conspiracy going on? And the

answer to that is an absolute yes. It is a conspiracy against God himself that has been going on from ancient times.

MESSIAH: The "Hallelujah Chorus" from Handel's "Messiah" has these words from Scripture: "For the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, and He shall reign forever and ever and ever. Amen" The last book of the Bible, "The Revelation" has the same theme: Jesus is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and he reigns forever and ever. It can be summarized by three words, "Jesus is Lord."

In that same book of Revelation and also in Psalm 2, today's text, affirms this message that Jesus is Lord, but it also includes the other part of the story. It reminds us that there is an age-old conspiracy against the Lordship of Christ. It started when the arch-angel Lucifer conspired to overthrow the Lord and rise above Him. He and one third of the angels rebelled against God. God kicked them out of heaven and threw them down to earth. Their conspiracy against Christ and His people continues as Lucifer works through nations, leaders and people in general to go against our good heavenly Father. That is why the Psalmist writes these words as he considers the battle for the hearts of men that he sees on earth. You and I read about these issues in the news every day.

I. THERE IS A CONSPIRACY

Psalm 2:1 Why do the nations conspire, and the peoples plot in vain? 2 The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the LORD and against his Anointed One.

WORLDWIDE: The scope of this conspiracy is worldwide. This text states that the day would come when the nations and rulers of the world will gather to rebel against Almighty God and the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Even now rulers and leaders practically go into hysterics when you pray and use the blessed Name of Jesus. Why is that? I suppose that they have demonic spirits in their lives that react to the blessed Name of Jesus.

Philippians 2:10-11...that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

There are two sides to this conflict...good and evil, life and death, God and Satan. Now is the time to get on the Lord's side because it is the side that is good and will ultimately prevail. Satan knows his time is short and that is why he is getting so extreme in his tactics to deceive people into following him. Don't be deceived. Keep focused on Jesus and the eternal perspective...even if it costs you all you have on earth.

II. THE ISSUE IS THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST

Psalm 1:3-9 "Let us break their chains," they say, "and throw off their fetters." 4 The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them. 5 Then he rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying, 6 "I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill." 7 I will proclaim the decree of the LORD: He said to me, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father. 8 Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. 9 You will rule them with an iron scepter; you will dash them to pieces like pottery."

ISSUE: Notice the issue they have with God when they say, ***"Let us break their chains and throw off their fetters."*** People are utterly rejecting what God says about the sanctity of life, the holy estate of marriage between a man and a woman, the respect for personal property, the sin of stealing from stores. Target just closed down many stores in major cities because of the rampant stealing going on and others are following. Our culture is becoming more and more violent. Police cannot restrain them at times.

LAUGHS: Notice that Almighty God laughs at their attempts to overthrow him. The Father tells the Son of God that he will give these nations to him to rule with justice, forever. I look forward to that day when Jesus returns to rule and reign. Until then, we want His reign in our hearts and homes and congregation. We want to be led by the Holy Spirit and not the spirit of this age. That means that in times like these you are swimming against the tide.

FUNERAL: Sharon and I went to a large funeral this week in Rochester of a friend who was a very well-known contractor and businessman. His son told us that his father told him to do what is right and keep your good name. God honored this man with amazing success as he attempted to do what is right and honor God with his life and business. Becky Kruse's mom has her memorial service here tomorrow and she was the same way. She never quit telling her children to do things in their life God's way. That way you die with few regrets and your life produces much good fruit. Jesus is Lord, live life with that in view and don't join the rebellion.

III. A WARNING AND A PROMISE

Psalm 1:10-12 Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth. 11 Serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling. 12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and you be destroyed in your way, for his wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

TEMPORARY: The Psalmist, possibly King David, calls upon all who are wise to join God's team, the winning team. He calls on us to come under the Lordship of Christ. He calls it a place of blessing: ***"Blessed are all who take refuge in Him."*** There is a certain short-term pleasure in following Lucifer. He gives a certain pleasure in drug addiction, sexual immorality, focus on wealth, lavish living, extravagant food and clothes and possessions. But it is all very temporary.

LOWELL: My friend in Rochester was undoubtedly a multi-millionaire, but he couldn't take it with him. He used his wealth to support the Lord's work. He helped us build our little country church in 1994 as he served as the general contractor. A couple months ago, he and his wife came to our little country church. He was so weak and frail I didn't recognize him. He wanted to see that place one last time. It was one of the smallest projects he ever did, but he never forgot how those farmers built their church in 27 days of hard work. He worked right alongside of us and kept the ball rolling. He didn't have to use his wealth and talents all over the world for God. He could have retired in his 50's and lived 30 years in the lap of luxury. But I am sure that now that he with his Lord and Savior in heaven, he has no regrets that he stayed under the Lordship of Christ. He once talked to me about investing in God's work and said, "I want to see as many souls saved for every dollar I invest, as possible." Jesus changed his life, and his passion was for others to hear the gospel.

APPLICATION: Are any of you being tempted to reject God's ways and join in the world's ways? There is a worldwide conspiracy against God. But we can come to the Lord's table and say today, "God, I may be hated for following Jesus, my family may reject me, I may lose my job, but I know that Jesus is Lord and I will be blessed forever if I stay on Your team." Amen

Now may the peace of God that passes all understanding guard your hearts and minds through faith in Christ Jesus. Amen

HYMN #512 "Not What My Hands Have Done"

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 that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, The power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen*

HOLY COMMUNION

CHORAL BENEDICTION: Tune "Edelweiss" *May the Lord, Mighty Lord, Bless and keep you forever-- Grant you peace, Perfect peace, Strength in every endeavor. Lift up your eyes and see His face, Feel His grace forever. May the Lord, Mighty Lord, Bless and keep you forever.*

POSTLUDE: Ruth Antal