

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Wisdom calls out to everyone. She has built her glorious house, she has slaughtered the choice animals, baked the bread, and prepared a feast. Wisdom calls out, “Whoever is simple, let him turn in here! To him who lacks sense she says, ‘Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine I have mixed. Leave your simple ways, and live, and walk in the way of insight.’” Wisdom calls out and she calls out to all.

“When one of those who reclined at table with him [Jesus] heard these things, he said to him, ‘Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!’ But he [Jesus] said to him, ‘A man once gave a great banquet and invited many. And at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, ‘Come, for everything is now ready.’ But they all alike began to make excuses.’”

That’s the thing, isn’t it? All is ready, all has been done. All is prepared and Wisdom cries out. Yet the response to this invitation to sit and feast is excuse. Wisdom from on high is met with simplicity, foolishness. “The first said to him, ‘I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it. Please have me excused.’ And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them. Please have me excused.’ And another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’”

The eternal and heavenly things are excused away with things that are here for a moment and gone the next. This is the way of sinful men. It’s the way of the fool, the unbeliever, who thinks he is wise and right in his thoughts and actions, but his very words and deeds are utter foolishness when compared with what Wisdom has prepared. Yet, the fool sees no difference. He’s too simple, too foolish to even realize how ridiculous he appears and the words which come out of his mouth echo his lack. The Lord is merciful beyond knowing and it is met with rejection. “The fool delights in expressing his own opinion.” His way is the way which he has deemed right in his own eyes, and he finds his security and comfort in these things. He goes off, carries about his business ignorant to Wisdom and lacks any insight. The fool walks happily only the path of death. Wisdom calls out and it met with excuses, Wisdom is met with foolishness.

“So the servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house became angry and said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and crippled and blind and lame.’ And the servant said, ‘Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.’ And the master said to the servant, ‘Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.’”

Wisdom calls out and burns with anger at the fool who will die in his foolishness. Wisdom rebukes in order to crush the fool in his foolishness lest he perish. It calls out to him and to all to look to the one who is Wisdom and alone gives insight. It teaches, “Whoever corrects a scoffer gets himself abuse, and he who reproves a wicked man incurs injury. Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you; reprove a wise man, and he will love you. Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; teach a righteous man, and he will increase in learning.”

Wisdom calls out to all. Wisdom calls out to you. Wisdom is before you this day and makes you wise unto salvation. Listen to Wisdom and do not be a fool. You who stand in your sin see that you lack and are not wise. You who sit here this day and think about and are concerned with a false wisdom receive correction and be wise and love the one who has rebuked you. Hear your Lord this day and know, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.”

Dear Christian, fear the Lord, know this One, trust this One, for this One is your Wisdom. This is your place and what you are revealed to have in him who makes foolish the wisdom of the world. Behold the one who opens your eyes and gives you graciously this insight. What is this? See the crucified one and know your Redeemer

and your redemption. God knows you and he has called you to himself with the saving words of “your sin is forgiven.” You stand at peace with God by the blood of Christ shed for you and no longer are you outside of his kingdom. He has even given you the gift of faith to believe and desire what he has done and have the benefits. God preaches this to you today. The Lord is your master who is gracious and merciful. He is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He is your rock, fortress, and deliverer in Christ. Having a place at the feast is a wonderful thing and nothing short of God’s great mercy. He has paid the cost in order that you may sit and eat with him on this side of the grave and into eternity.

The Gospel reading today shows you the great mercy of God. Listen to Wisdom. In some ways, then, there’s a great connection to the Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard. There is, though, a stern warning to you to take seriously the call of God and not to insult his mercy. Still, it’s the proper work of God to save you in Christ, which is what he has done and feeds you with this salvation in his Holy Supper now and at the eternal feast in the life to come.

Jesus makes it clear that this master has a great love for the people. “When one of those who reclined at table with him heard these things, he said to him, ‘Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!’ But he said to him, ‘A man once gave a great banquet and invited many. And at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, “Come, for everything is now ready.”’” There’s an emphasis here on the banquet being great in both size and quality. It’s an impressive feast the man has prepared beyond some daily meal. His desire in all of this is for the people to eat and have what he has prepared.

When Jesus is speaking this to the people he is teaching them about himself coming into the world to save them. Jesus was promised to Israel, he showed them mercy as he called them out of the nations of the world as his own possession, a special people. Yet when Jesus did come, the people rejected him. All had been prepared for them and they excused him and rejected him and his word. The God of all mercy, though, desires not the death of the sinner but that he is saved and feasts with him at the banquet. Christ sent the apostles out to make disciples of all nations by baptizing and teaching them.

There’s a twofold warning in this for you. The first is for those who refuse to come and eat at the feast prepared by the master. The Lord is very clear about these people who insult him and his gifts. He will give them what they want, “For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.” It’s not that hard to see what Jesus is saying. Refuse to eat what the Lord gives, refuse his gifts, his invitation, and know what happens. It doesn’t matter how nice the people are or what excuses they may have given or give now, the judgment is the same for all of them, they will not have a taste. This is the first warning, don’t neglect God’s word and sacraments for there are eternal consequences if you do so.

The feast on earth, which happens in the Divine Service, is connected to the eternal feast. Rejecting what the Lord offers and gives now in his word and Supper and the day will come when the banquet is closed. It’s a serious thing and we do well to heed what God says. The reason is because this is unbelief. Not desiring the gifts of God in his means of grace is rejecting Christ. Don’t insult him and sin against him. Apart from this faith in Christ, there is no mercy because it’s a life of looking to yourself and wanting to stand before God on your own merits. That will never end well and will be your damnation. There is no excuse for refusing what God gives, nothing is more important or more pressing in this life. The response of God toward those who make excuses in the reading is more than what the English translation says of “anger.” It’s the word for wrath. God’s wrath burns against those people no matter how nice they are to the servant or how much they think in their minds they have a reason for turning down the invitation. God’s wrath is against them, and they stand outside of his kingdom.

The terrifying thing which warns you is how the master gives them what they want. They don’t want to eat at the feast he throws, fine, then they will not taste his banquet. The same thing is said about those who want to

remain in their sin and be proud of it instead of repenting. In Romans 1 God speaks of giving people over to their sins. He in a sense says, “you want this stuff which separates us and which rightly deserves eternal punishment then go ahead and have it.” That’s a terrible thing for us to have and the end is hell. The call for Christians is a call to see the Day of Judgment drawing near and to see that now is the favorable day, now is the day of salvation. Now is the day when the feast and invitation is still going out and it won’t be forever.

God warns all of you as the whole body of Christ in Hebrews 10, “Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries.”

The tough thing is that when you’re honest with yourselves, you know this. You know this is where you should be and this is where your family and friends should be as well. You know that God uses as a Christian husbands, wives, parents, friends, and neighbors to speak these words to one another. Andrew told his brother Simon/Peter that he had seen the Lord and he told, “come and see.” He invited him to come and listen to where the Christ and his salvation was found. The Lord is the one who has accomplished salvation and he is the one who gives it out through the means of grace. God gives and calls you to receive what he gives. This is how he does it and woe to you when we refuse it. Faith is created, nourished, and sustained by God. No parent wants his child to starve to death. Jesus warns you to come and feast lest you starve and perish. This is why God’s word is so important in your lives and comes before everything else.

Every year, though, you hear this reading and we think, “yep, that’s right.” You hear this wisdom of God and know those who aren’t here with us are missing out. Still, the second warning is for you who are here now. Clearly those who don’t come to church are sinning against God but when you do come and you sit here what is to be your mind and heart? God warns you to listen to him. For those of you sitting here he warns you to avoid hypocrisy. Outside of the church there is no faith, no salvation. Within the church, though, there is a danger still to the same unbelief. What does this mean, then, for you? God warns you to pay attention to him and listen to his wisdom. Listen to the rebuke of your sin and repent. Listen to what the Lord commands and desire it. Cling to the saving words of Christ and receive what he gives you.

For you sitting at the feast, consider who you are. “The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.” You are the blind, lame, and poor beggars. That’s the mind and heart you are to have. You are beggar who sits here and doesn’t deserve what the Lord has prepared. Come here in repentance. Come here in humility. Come as one who is starving and doesn’t presume to dictate to the Lord what he gives or how he does it. Confess your sin. “Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit. Turn away from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.” The Lord has no obligation to have done what he accomplished in Christ nor does he have any obligation to give it to you. This, then, is where God’s mercy shines through in the reading and it shines through in your life. In Christ, the Lord shows you mercy, brings you near and welcomes you into his feast now and into eternity. Wisdom calls out to you.

Be wise and no fool. Listen to God’s word this day. This is wisdom that no fool knows in the workings of the world or think he may have everything figured out. Without Christ and rejecting him he knows nothing. For you dear saints you have been called out and into the Lord’s Kingdom. Christ is your substitute who endured the shame of the cross, suffering wrath against your sin in your place out of his abundant mercy toward you which the devil and the world, and fallen flesh find foolish yet he overcomes death by death and even as the fool says death is the end Jesus makes foolish the wisdom of the world rising from the grave for your justification. This is the wisdom which has been given to you. Wisdom calls out and you are made wise in him, Christ.

2nd Sunday after Trinity—June 18, 2023

Now you are one in the world who has the wisdom to walk this path of life and see your glory in the one who laid aside his. You look around you with new insight that truly sees things for what they are, and Wisdom continues to call out to you and to all. You delight in his words and ways for being wise is knowing that you are not wise in yourself, but he alone is the one in whom you live, breath, move, and have your being. In wisdom you speak wise words to a foolish world which mocks Wisdom and wise things, but you know that Wisdom still cries out to the very world which hates because the Lord has had mercy on all in Christ and all has been accomplished and the banquet is prepared for all. All is ready and you have a place.

You have access to God himself and yours is his Kingdom which knows no end even as you pray on earth that his Kingdom would come and his will be done for, he hears and answers your prayers. You are his holy people who once were far off but who have been called, gathered, enlightened, and sanctified together by the Holy Spirit who alone has made you a wise people. You are not the people of excuses, the simple people who are foolish, but you are a household whose foundation is immovable, unwavering, and whose cornerstone is the one the builders rejected so that not even hell itself will overcome you, his Church. This is who you are; this is your insight.

Dear Christian, Wisdom calls out and says, “Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine I have mixed. Leave your simple ways, and live, and walk in the way of insight.” This is what Jesus has done for you and he says, ‘Come, for everything is now ready.’”

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.