

Ninth Sunday After Pentecost (Proper 12)
Sunday, July 25, 2025

No matter the storms that come, nothing in all of creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ. We hear these words, but do we take comfort in the reality of what the Lord has done and is doing? He, who knows our every need, has provided for all of our needs. He supplies for our needs, but we live in an age that encourages us to think in terms of what we want.

We live in an adulterous and sinful generation. I refer to this age of rebellion in which we find ourselves. David was king and he had all that one could hope for in his time. But covetousness and lust overtook him and he wanted what was not his. He was in a position to take what he wanted. He took advantage and the story of David and Bathsheba unfolded.

Sin, when it gives birth in our hearts, leads us astray. We might think in terms of big and small, but regardless the small seed of sin planted in our heart, it grows until what we want is more important than the relationship we have with the Lord. It is as if we say, "Lord, You are not important, but what I want is the most important thing." We follow the lust of our hearts and chase after another god. It does not matter whether it is small, for is this not what we often say to ourselves? A little white lie. An untruth that compounds, for we then have to cover our tracks and become so busy in the coverup that we are no longer paying attention to the truth. This simple trail is what brought down a president. The act itself was small enough, wrong in every way, but the truth would have brought about repentance and that would have been the end of it. But the coverup destroyed him

So it would be with David too. He saw and he conquered. He had to cover his tracks and the following sins sent him deeper into the pit. There are many lessons here for those who would learn. Every sin takes us down the same path. What seems small to us leads to greater infractions such that the pit becomes ever deeper. Some have gone so far that they can no longer see the flicker of light. This is why every journey of faith begins with repentance. This is why every worship service begins with repentance.

A decent person may be able to repent a little. A bad person does not realize the need. The worse off you are, the less you think there is anything to repent of. It takes a perfect person to repent perfectly. This is exactly what Jesus did at the beginning of his public ministry. Friends, do not underestimate the need we all have for repentance knowing that every sin can lead to destruction. With the Lord, we are on a journey of becoming like the One who is without sin. Every sin must be dealt with, for it is sin that brought the whole of creation into our current mess. Yes, we are forgiven for every sin, so do not think in terms of having to overcome the sin, it has been overcome. Instead, think in terms of the little mark that any particular sin has made on your soul. Without repentance and the application of the forgiveness which is already yours, that little mark can either, by grace, become nothing, or else, without grace, fester into something much larger.

If you follow the story of David and Bathsheba to its conclusion, you see that there was repentance. The deeds were done, but the mark of grace turned David away from becoming a sinful tyrant and back to the Lord. It must be the same for each one of us. At the end of this age, those who live by grace will see the stains of sin washed away in preparation for the coming age. Those who have masked their sin and lived without care for the things of the Lord will find that the whole of their lives has been a steady progression toward becoming a hellish creature. Penultimately, this is the place where the goats are separated from the sheep. It is serious business that, by all that I can see, precious few seem to give much regard.

What shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us. So that God be for us, we must be for God. This is where the relationship we have with the Lord is so important. Jesus has come to establish our eternal relationship with the Father. He has come so that we may live into the life He offers. That life is on His terms and in the way that has been consistent for all who believe.

“For this reason,” Paul says, “I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name.” It is that Christ may truly dwell in our hearts and always be on our minds. The world may call it whatever it will. The world seems to be in a pandemic of hatred. As for me and my house, I will serve the Lord.

The Lord will work out His salvation in your life, but you do have your part. Without living the way He teaches us to live, it is just pretense. Many seem to live that way. Our obsession with outward appearance drives this age. The Lord, through His grace (which is more than sufficient) will work out your salvation. Yes, there does need to be fear and trembling. The outer person is concerned with appearances, but the inner person stands on the balcony of life looking down and lusting for what is not ours. In your most inner person, is that place which knows the truth but secretly says to the Lord, “Not yet.” That too must be crucified on the cross with the Lord. He has come to make you perfect even as He is perfect. He has come to complete all who walk in belief, trusting that He will accomplish what is impossible for us on our own, but in faith, knowing that all things are possible with Him.

Five barley loaves and two fish are enough to feed a vast army. Had he so desired it, Jesus could have thrown the Roman empire into the sea. But Jesus did not come to establish yet another of the many earthly kingdoms that have come and gone. He has come to establish an intimate and personal relationship with each person who comes to Him by faith. But know this: it is an all or nothing proposition. Either you will fall at his knees and worship him, or else you will continue the life of pretense that abounds in this age.

Jesus even pays attention to the smallest detail. Amidst the plenty of that day, He instructed them to gather the remnants so that nothing was lost. Learn the lesson. Jesus will not leave the smallest amount of leaven in your heart lest, in heaven, it spawns, once again, the rebellion that has caused the world to become what it is.

This world wants signs and wonders. This world is quickly distracted. We wander like sheep without a shepherd. The Good Shepherd has come and He has called us to Himself. No matter where this life takes you, walk with the One who is leading. Distractions will come, but know that no matter the circumstance, or where you are, He is there. He who is able to walk above the fray – for did He not come to the disciples walking on water amidst the storm – is He not more than able to keep you afloat during the troublesome times in which we live?

Amidst any temptation, no matter the storm, hear the word of the Lord, “It is I, do not be afraid.” The Lord is leading us through the steady cadence of this world to the promised land. He will not stop, nor should you. He will continue until you are complete in Him. Rejoice and be glad, for the One who pays attention to every detail, has given you the hope of His promise. If you will turn to Him, He will lead you every step of the path before you. It is to this which we have been called through the promise of our baptism. It is to this which His holy word beckons us. To live is Christ and to die is gain. Die to sin, death, and the devil. Be resurrected to walk with Christ all the days of this life as He. Know that He who has begun a good work in you will carry it on to completion. Be led by the Holy Spirit and walk intentionally in the faith you have been given. Turn all distractions over to Him. And get off of the balcony where you are tempted. Love the Lord above all things! Amen.

Storms will come
nothing in all creation can separate us
He who knows our needs has provided, even before we ask

We live in an adulterous and sinful generation
I refer to the whole of it from Adam until now
David saw and wanted. He took advantage
the story of David and Bathsheba

When sin enters our heart, it leads us astray
we are scattered like sheep without a shepherd
when we sin, it is as if we tell the Lord He is not important
this thing, this is now my god
we follow the lust of our heart
we cover our tracks and in the end, it will take us down
a coverup is what brought down a president
if he has only repented and told the truth

David saw and he conquered.

he had to cover his tracks and he went deeper into the pit
some go so far that they enter into complete darkness

This is why the journey of faith must always begin with repentance
a decent person can repent a little
a bad person does not see the need and does not repent
only a perfect person can repent perfectly

David did repent and that is why he did not become another of the tyrants who have ruled
in this age.

Those who mask their sin with pretentiousness are the ones Jesus speaks of
there are sheep and there are goats

For this reason we bow before the Lord

The Lord will work out the salvation He has planned for us
there does need to be fear and trembling

Jesus has not come to establish yet another earthly kingdom

His kingdom is not of this world

He pays attention to the smallest detail

He who has begun a good work in you will carry it on to completion