

12th Sunday After Pentecost
August 15, 2025

Be careful how you live. We live in a time with many false reports surrounding us. All of the heresies are alive and well in our generation. The more the onslaught has happened, the more we need to be aware of the false things that can and do creep into the church.

There seems to be this idea that we are good and that we need to tap into the goodness which can be recovered. If that's the case, then we do not need salvation. There is another idea that there are some powers that we can gain if we have the right kind of faith. What then do we do with Jesus who said, "All power and authority belong to me?" We are constantly bombarded with the idea of super people who are the next step in evolution. I am not one of them, so does that mean that I do not have the right kind of faith? We love to split God into multiple personalities and think of God as three separate persons. What do we do with Jesus who said that the Father and He were One?

We are not to be foolish, but understand the will of the Lord. Do not be epicurean, living for the pleasure of the flesh, nor prudish, thinking we understand all things. We all need to learn more deeply how to fear, trust, and love the Lord above all things. The Lord is not something we have created. He is not an opiate for the masses. He's not some old fashioned idea of how life is to be lived.

In purely worldly and contemporary terms, my Lord and Savior is neither old, nor white. He was born in Palestine and was crucified as a young man – earthly speaking. A young ethnic, some might say. So we are not about the business of promoting some kind of racist bigotry. The Truth has brought revelation and it is that revelation which is the core of bringing us to faith. We are to give thanks to the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

All times means all times. No matter what has happened in your life, nor the situation you find yourself experiencing should diminish the praise and thanks you offer to the God who created you. All of this is possible in and through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

In this world filled with propaganda, we have the opportunity to hear, receive, and live the word of truth. Propaganda leads to lies where a lie replaces the truth. Let me give you a simple example: you did not create yourself. You were born, but do you deny that you are created? Think simply of all of the lies in our age which tells us that we are our own person. If I did not create myself, then there are only two options. The first is that this is all random and just happened. But if it is all random, then why should anyone care what I think about anything? Why should I care about what anyone else thinks? But, in fact, I do care and so do you. So it cannot be random, otherwise, I would not think that it might be random. So, if I am created, what then? It simply means that I do not belong to myself. If I do not belong to myself, to whom then do I belong?

I am not talking about doctrine here, but about simple things. If God is the One who created me, then is the God who created me knowable? The answer is, "Yes." God has spoken. Now, if the God who created you and me has spoken, will we believe what He says, or what others say? This really has been the question of the past century. If God has spoken, then He has spoken. If, what we call Scripture, is just a bunch of fairy tales, then why bother? There is the choice of faith. God has spoken and in these last days He has spoken through the only begotten Son, the One we call Lord and Savior. His word is true and we do well to listen to Him, just as the Father instructed us when Jesus was baptized in the river Jordan.

All life comes from the Father. This is what Jesus is saying. The source of life offers us life. Yes, we have this thing we call life. A few years, experiences, and things that drive us forward. But is this life? Is there perhaps more? Yes, Jesus says. We can settle for things as they are for the four score or however many years we are given, but we were created for far more. How does one obtain this real or everlasting life. This is at the heart of what Jesus is telling us. We must be rooted in His life. We must be fed off of His life. The ones who feed on the life of Jesus will be raised on the last day.

So what does all of this mean? You eat and live, but you know that eventually the body you inhabit will give out to the thing we call death. The epicurean eat, drink, and be merry comes to mind. Even doing these things, you know that there must be more. It cannot simply be a matter of existing for however long. There is a longing in everyone's heart which is not satisfied in this world. If God created a longing that remains unsatisfied, it must mean that there is something beyond where we are looking. There is and this is the offer of faith.

Too many I fear look at the faith through kindergarten eyes. Yes, we are to come to the Father as children, but this is not what I am talking about. You see, what is offered truly is amazing and it is an all or nothing proposition. Jesus did not come to just brush us off to send us on our way. He meant what He said. God will teach us, but we must be teachable. Being teachable is what the Greek word we translate as disciple really means. It is not just a matter of learning our catechism, but about living the life that Christ literally gives us through His death and resurrection. His blood must become our blood. We must, quite literally, put on Christ. That means we need to get out of ourselves.

I do not understand good and evil. I want to think I do, but I do not. God is always good. Why does God allow bad things to happen. It is as simple as standing someplace with a thought that is not right and I am allowed to act on it. I am allowed. God allows us to be the awful people we sometimes are. We like that freedom, but we do not want that freedom in other circumstances. Here we are at the heart of getting out of ourselves. I want the freedom, but I do not want another to have it. But God has allowed it in this age. We take advantage and want allowances. We even think grace is an allowance. It is not. Things happen because of the hardness of our hearts. Jesus has come to kill that heart and give us new and clean hearts. He has come to give us His heart. He is the heart donor because our hearts are beyond repair. But the wickedness of this age is in us and we reject the heart which was given to us in our baptism.

Jesus is what feeds every person of faith. If you are feeding on your good works, your good doctrine, your right understanding of things, it may be fine for awhile, but it will not accomplish what only Jesus can and will accomplish to all who submit to Him.

Our Father in heaven has wonderfully created you as you are, where you are, with the gifts you have, and granted the gate of faith which leads to everlasting life. In this world of rebellion and lies, you hear the truth. The offer is before you. You are allowed in this age to go your own way. Many have and many will. Some are slowly ceasing to be Christian even though they outwardly go through the motions. Others, from our perspective, are slowly being conformed to Christ. Christ knows who is whom. But in the center of your being, what about you? Are you living into the life of Christ, consuming all that He tells you to consume, or is this just a little religion. It is time brothers and sisters to either be all in or not bother. You know what the outcome is for either path. These words of Jesus are serious and important. They are, quite literally, hard to swallow, but to live in, with, by, through, and for Him we must. The one who eats the bread of life will live forever. Amen.