

SERMON

2023 Lutheran Women in Mission Sunday



Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and from the Holy Spirit, who calls, gathers, enlightens, sanctifies, and keeps us in the one true faith, until that glorious reappearing of our great God and coming King, Jesus, the Christ! Amen!

Scripture: Psalm 24:7-10

Theme: The King is Coming

God promised to Adam and Eve an heir that would redeem Adam, Eve, and eventually all humanity, from the curse of the sin of disobedience and lawlessness, brought upon humanity in the Garden, thereby plunging all humanity into sin, original and actual. "Sin is every thought, desire, word, and deed which is contrary to God's Law" as we have learned in the Word of God and Luther's Small Catechism. Throughout human history, God pictured the coming redemptive King through various images of His promise, providence, provision, and protection for His people. David saw God's redemptive glory in the return of the Ark of the Covenant from Obed Edom to Jerusalem to the place of worship. God's sanctuary was now in Zion, the Temple. Meaning the glory of the Lord coming to His people.

This redemption, proclaimed in the name of the Lord for God's people, crushed the evil head of sin, Satan, and our sinful flesh and returned us to Himself in His reconciling Word, worship and witness of His Son, Jesus, [Savior from sin] Emmanuel [God with us].

King David proclaimed: Psalm 24:7-10

*⁷ Lift up your heads, O gates!
And be lifted up, O ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.*

*⁸ Who is this King of glory?
The LORD, strong and mighty,
the LORD, mighty in battle!*

*⁹ Lift up your heads, O gates!
And lift them up, O ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.*

*¹⁰ Who is this King of glory?
The LORD of hosts,
he is the King of glory! Selah*

God's only begotten Son comes to the world in three ways; first, in the promised Son, David's Lord, the world's Savior, Mary's incarnate Son; secondly, personally in our hearts, by grace through faith, not of ourselves but as the ultimate gift of God; and thirdly, in His great Parousia, second coming for the ages, the end time.

It is obvious the world needs to be rescued from itself. The onslaught of brokenness, destruction, disease, and death are all around us and we make it worse with our selfish ambitions, hatred of others, and self-centered greed. Genesis chapter 6, verse 6 tells us, *And the LORD regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart.*

Apostle Paul spoke of the days of lawlessness [2 Timothy 4]. Through the eyes of sin, we could easily become downcast and heart-broken because of the evil of our world. "*Man's inhumanity to man*" refers to human cruelty, barbarity, or lack of pity and compassion toward other humans — essentially, mankind's ability to see and treat other people as less than human. We would quickly give up because of the constant bad news; but God's hope, peace, joy, and love as we proclaim in the coming of our Advent King of glory, is the promise of our God for His people. Good News in a bad news world. Christ is the King of glory! Paul reminds us, *that is, in Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God* (2 Cor. 5:19–21).

This LWML Sunday, let's remember the mission work of God's people — Christ's church is to proclaim the Gospel to all. Jesus reminded the Emmaus disciples of this promise, *Then he (Jesus) opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high* (Luke 24:45–49). Through the 'Gospel' (Romans 1:14–17), the people of God have received the power of God's salvation and are obligated to proclaim the Gospel to all people, to Greeks and to barbarians, to the wise and to the foolish.

The Gospel is our only hope, as the King of glory comes in, with and through the Gospel, as we are buried with Him in Baptism and raised with Him to a new life [Romans 6], and *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come* (2 Cor. 5). In this new life creation, God provides us with every means of grace we need to fight off every kind of evil, with His word of "It is written." and His ultimate word, "It is finished." Through Word and Sacrament, God provides temporal and eternal means for receiving the King of glory right now and throughout eternity. Because the Gospel is *the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith"* (Romans 1:16,17). The Gospel is the life-changing message of God for the world. It changed Martin Luther's life from one seeking to appease the wrath of God, by doing good works, to one who received the good grace of God in Christ, and who brought the Gospel back to the Church of God.

The world has been in the throes of sinful behavior since the 'Fall.' Oftentimes we make believe our times are the worst of times. Surely, we have seen some horrific and horrible atrocities in our time: wars, the senseless killings of babies, children and adults; poverty, homelessness, addictions, every kind of evil one can imagine. We would surely give up, but for the grace of God. As Noah found favor in the eyes of God, so we too find favor/grace in our King, Jesus, as we look beyond the brokenness of our humanity to the blessed hope of His coming in His resurrection.

Like King David, we look to a heavenly King. King David knew a thing or two about a dark, inhospitable world, even in his own life and family. But David, a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22), found hope from the darkness in the light of God's grace.

"Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle!" Paul, the apostle to the gentiles, reminds us that the mission of the church, not just the LWML, is to **"Pray for All People."**

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time. For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth (1 Timothy 1:1-7).

A little fearful child, sleeping alone in the darkness of her room, cried out to mom and dad as a storm rolled across her Midwest-town. "Mom, dad, come in here," she cried in the dark of night, as the storm rolled and roared as if it was in the room with her. Mom and dad consoled her and reminded her that they were in the next room and God is in the room with her so she need not fear. They encouraged her to go back to sleep. Awakened again and again by the rolling and roaring storm, she said to her parents the last time they entered her room, "I know you said God is in here with me, but I need someone in here with skin on them. "

As we look through the heavenly eyes of the King of glory, in the darkness of our sinful world, then, we see clearly the promise, providence, provision, and protection of God for His people in Christ. A God with skin on Him. A God, who took on flesh and blood and the sin of humanity in His body, made His way down the road of agony, pain, and suffering, nailed to a tree, and died for the sins of the world. May this LWML Sunday remind us to be missionaries and share the Gospel throughout the world so that all will know of Christ, God's coming King of glory who provides redemption to all who believe in Him, everlasting life, now and in eternity. Amen.

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