

Sixth Sunday Of Easter

John 14: 15-21

May 25, 2014

My Fellow Redeemed In Christ,

In The Nicene Creed We Confess That We **"Believe In One Holy Christian And Apostolic Church"**. An Apostolic Church Is A Church That Is Based On The Teachings Of The Apostles. That's What Jesus Means When He Tells The Apostles: **"If You Love Me You Will Keep My Commandments" (V. 15, Esv).** Jesus Says This Not Once But Twice. Jesus Gave His Apostles The Responsibility To Faithfully Preach And Teach The Word That He Had Given Them Over The Course Of Three Years. The Setting Of Our Text Is The Lord's Supper. But In Our Text The Apostles Didn't Look Anything Like The Teachers Of The Church...They Were Confused And Afraid. In Many Ways It Was A Bad Night For The Apostles. They Had Learned That Jesus Was Going To Be Betrayed By One Of Their Own, Judas And That Peter Would Deny Him Not Once But Three Times. But Worst Of All They Learned That Jesus Would Be Killed...And He Talked About Leaving Them. Can You Imagine Their Confusion, Their Anxiety? At This Point In Time It Was Difficult To See How These Men Would Become The Founding Teachers Of Jesus' Church. But That's The Point Of Our Text. For In This Text Jesus Told Them That He Would Give Them All That They Would Need To Be **"The Apostles Of The Church"**.

I. In The Midst Of All Of Their Confusion And Anxiety Jesus Comforts Them By Telling Them: **"I Will Not Leave You As Orphans"**.

A. After All Of The Horrible Events That The Apostles Would Live Through.....Things Would Look Up On That First Easter.....He Would Be Raised From The Dead. Only After That First Easter Did The Apostles Finally Understand That When Jesus Died That Horrible Death On The Cross That He Was Dying For The Sins Of The World As Peter Says In Our Second Lesson: **"For Christ Also Suffered Once For Sins....That He Might Bring Us To God" (1 Peter 3: 18, Esv).** Before Jesus' Resurrection From The Dead The Apostles Saw His Crucifixion As A Defeat And The End Of Jesus And The Hope They Thought They Had In Him. In Our Text Jesus Was Telling Them That Things Looked Bad Now....But Soon Things Would Look Better As He Told Them: **"I Will Come To You...You Will See Me....Because I Live, You Also Will Live....In That Day You Will Know That I Am In My Father, And You Are In My, And I In You" (Vv. 18, 20, Esv).** When Jesus Said Those Words The Disciples Did Not Understanding What Jesus Was Saying. But In The Near Future They Would Not Only See Him Again, Raised From The Dead, But They Would See Him Also Ascend Into Heaven Where He Would Sit Down At The Right Hand Of God The Father Almighty To Rule All Things As The Apostle Peter Says In Our Second Lesson: **"...Jesus Christ...Has Gone Into Heaven And Is The Right Hand Of God, With Angels, Authorities, And**

Powers Having Been Subjected To Him" (1 Peter 3: 22, Esv). And In This Way Jesus Would Be With Them **"...Always To The End Of The Age"** As He Says At The End Of Matthew's Gospel..**(28: 20, Esv).** Now That He Sits At The Right Hand Of God The Father Almighty He Is Able To Come To Us In A New And Different Way....Through His Word And The Sacraments Of Baptism And The Altar. Through These Means Of Grace Jesus Gives The Forgiveness And Life That He Has Won With His Death Upon The CrossAs Well As His Presence. This Love Of Jesus Would Move His Apostles To Love Him And To Obey Him As Jesus Says: **"...He Who Loves Me Will Be Loved By My Father, And I Will Love Him And Manifest Myself To Him" (V. 21, Esv).**

B. But Jesus Had More Yet To Give....They Holy Spirit.....Or As Jesus Calls Him **"The Spirit Of Truth" (V. 17, Esv).** The Apostles Already Had The Holy Spirit.... For Even Though Jesus Is Speaking Of A Future Giving Of The Holy Spirit On The Day Of Pentecost He Also Says That They Already Had The Holy Spirit: **"You Know Him, For He Dwells With You" (V. 17, Esv).** People Without Faith In Jesus Christ Don't Have The Holy Spirit As Jesus Says: **"....Whom The World Cannot Receive" (V. 17, Esv).** Jesus And The Holy Spirit Always Go Together....You Can 'T Have One Without The Other. And Even Though The Apostles Already Had The Holy Spirit ...On Pentecost They Would Receive Him In A New Way To Enable Them To Be Witnesses To Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit Would Remind Them Of Everything That Jesus Said And Did....He Would Lead Them Into Truth And Give Them The Courage And Power To Witness Especially To His Death And Resurrection. In This Way The Apostles Would Become The Authoritative Teachers Of The Church As We Heard In Last Sundays First Reading: **"They Devoted Themselves To The Apostles' Teaching...." (Acts 2: 42, Esv)** And In The Apostle Paul's Letter To The Ephesians He Says: **"You Are...Members Of The Household Of God, Built On The Foundation Of The Apostles And The Prophets....." (Eph. 2: 20, Esv).**

ii. Now All Of This Is Very Comforting For Us

A.For Jesus Has Given The Apostles As A Gift To His Church.....To You And Me And To All Believers... So That We Can Be Certain.....Absolutely Certain That Our Faith Is Based On The Truth. On Our Death Bed We Don't Want To Have Any Doubts About God's Love And Forgiveness, No Doubts About The Resurrection To Eternal Life In A New And Better World...And We Can Be Certain.....Because The Word That Jesus Gave To The Apostles Had Been Given To Him By His Father As He Says Earlier In John's Gospel: **"For I Have Not Spoken On My Own Authority, But The Father Who Sent Me Has Himself Given Me A Commandment—What To Say And What To Speak" (12: 49, Esv).** The Father Gave His Word To Jesus And Jesus Gave That Word To The Apostles Who Have Given This Word To Us Notice Then How Each Person Of Our Triune God Is Involved In This Revelation From The Apostles: The Father, The Son, And The Holy Spirit. And To Obey Jesus Means Then To Be Faithful To His Word....The Word That Was Given To Him By His Father. And So This Means That Whenever

Christians Have Conflicting Teachings Someone Is Not Obeying Jesus....Not Being Faithful To This Apostolic Word. As God's Forgiveness Children You Have Every Right To Expect Your Pastors To Be Obedient To Jesus And Faithful To This Apostolic Word As Paul Says In His First Letter To The Corinthians: **"This, Then, Is How You Ought To Regard Us: As Servants Of Christ And As Those Entrusted With The Mysteries God Has Revealed. Now It Is Required That Those Who Have Been Given A Trust Must Prove Faithful" (1 Cor. 4: 1, 2, Niv).** And It Is This Apostolic Word That We Bring To Others So That They Too Might Know The Truth About God's Love And Forgiveness, Victory Over Death And Eternal Life In Jesus Christ

B. For It Is Only Through The Apostolic Word That The Blessings Of Jesus Christ Are GivenAs Jesus Says Three Chapters After Our Text: **"I Do Not Ask For These Only, But Also For Those Who Will Believe In Me Through Their Word" (17: 20, Esv).** Jesus Defeated Sin And Death With His Death Up On The Cross.....And The Proof Of This Is His Resurrection From The Dead On The Third Day. But That Was Two Thousand Years Ago.....How Do We Get What He Has Won For Us? We Can't Go Back In Time To The Cross And The Empty Tomb.....And We Don't Have To.....He Comes To Us... In His Word And The Sacraments Of Baptism And The Altar Which Give God's Forgiveness And Eternal Life. So In Our First Reading We Are Told That The Apostle Paul Was **"Preaching Jesus And The Resurrection" (Acts 17: 18, Esv).** In Our Second Reading The Apostle Peter Says: **"Baptism...Now Saves You..."** And Every Sunday We Hear Jesus Say: **"...This Is My Blood Of The Covenant, Which Is Poured Out For Many For The Forgiveness Of Sins..." (Matt. 26: 28, Esv).** And So It Is Only Through These Three Means Of Grace That Jesus As, He Says, Comes To Us And Manifests Himself Fulfilling His Words To Us That He Would Not Leave Us As Orphans....He Is With Us....And One Day.....Just Like The Apostles...We Too Will See Jesus With Our Own Eyes When He Returns To Take Us To That New World That He Has Prepared For Us...Eternal Life.

Conclusion: So Then The Apostles And Their Writings Are Gifts From Our Lord Jesus Christ. He Chose Them And Gave Them The Word That Had Been Given To Him By His Father. He Gave Them The Holy Spirit, The Spirit Of Truth, To Lead Them Into The Truth. And He Did This All For Us---That We Might Be Certain About God's Forgiveness And Eternal And Also Be Given The Gift Of The Holy Spirit. And This Is Why We Also Love Jesus And We Want To Obey Him By Being Faithful To His Word. And In This Way We Will Not Only Remain The"...**One, Holy, Christian And Apostolic Church**" But That Through This Apostolic Word Many Other People Will Also Be Brought To Saving Faith In Jesus Christ By The Same Spirit Of Truth.....May God In His Mercy Grant This To Us All. Amen..

