

## Second Sunday after Trinity, Sunday, June 26, 2022

**Readings:** Proverbs 9:1–10, 1 John 3:13–18, Luke 14:15–24

### *The Gospel Call Goes Out to All*

Wisdom has issued an invitation to the divine feast: *"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"* (Prov. 9:5–6). This is the call of the Spirit of Christ to believe the Gospel and to receive His saving gifts in the Holy Supper. Many make excuses and reject this invitation, even as the Jews did in the days of Jesus, yet the Master's house will be filled. The Gospel call therefore goes out to the lowly and despised, into the highways, even to all the Gentiles (Luke 14:15–24). For *"you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ"* (Eph. 2:13–22). In Christ, believing Jews and Gentiles are no longer strangers but fellow members of the household of God. The enmity of class and race is put to death through the cross. Having been reconciled in the one Body of Christ, we are enabled to love one another (1 John 3:13–18) as we await the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which will have no end.

### **Sermon Transcript:**

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

It's always interesting when the Gospel ends something like this. "For I tell you none of those men who are invited shall taste to my banquet." Real "Gospely" there. It seems a little more judgmental and law in its orientation. So let us work to figure out what the Gospel is all about and where we find the Gospel in these messages. This passage found in Luke is actually used by our Lutheran Church fathers to talk about the doctrine of election. The doctrine that God has called us to salvation, before the beginning of time that our names are written on the book of life. They were written before God created anything at all. Now that should be a great comfort to all of us. And it is meant to be. In fact, that is all the doctrine is about, is to offer comfort to us as Christians, because we still deal with this world today. And we still deal with our own sinful natures. If we're honest with ourselves, or at least if I'm honest with myself, I admit that I have not lived according to the will of God all the time. I have failed on occasion. Actually pretty regularly I have failed and fallen short of the glory of God. I mean, there are things that I know I should have said, and I did not. And there are things that I did not say that I should have said. And I'm sure the case is the same with you. I mean, even Paul, after he had written already multiple epistles, words that we find in the New Testament, he himself said, "The good that I should do that I don't. And the evil that I ought not to do that I do." If Paul is struggling with this, then it's no surprise that you and I also struggle with doing the will of God.

And so this doctrine of election is this doctrine that God has called us. And He has brought us in the kingdom. And you notice that it's not the wealthy or the good people that come to the banquet. It's the crippled, the lame, the blind, the poor, those that don't have anything to offer to the master. All they are doing there is to receive. They got nothing to give. And that is again for us a great comfort because God has called us poor miserable sinners, enlighten us with His gifts and enlighten us with the Gospel and strengthen us with His gifts so that we might believe. You see, it is not us that does anything. It is God that does it all for us. He has called us and enlightened us and strengthened us. And we are His not by our own effort, but because God has

chosen us before the beginning of all time. And if you question that, He made sure that you were secure in His calling because He baptized you. You are baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. God Himself has called you His child. And you did nothing to deserve it, nor did I. In fact, we've done many things to not deserve it. And yet, He still calls. Now then if this doctrine of election is to assure us that we have been called by God and are claimed by Him, then logically, it must mean that God has called others to donation, right? Wrong. This is not how the doctrine works. See again, here we have also in this example, why do the people not enter the feast? Is it because God has not called them? We know that God desires all to be saved, that He died on the cross to forgive all of the sins of all of humanity. And yet some still do not believe. Why? Because it is their choice to walk away. It is their responsibility, as it is here. You see these people, the ones that ought to get in, what do they have? They have these simple excuses, actually really bad excuses when it comes right down to it. "I bought a field and I must go out and see it." Really? You bought land without knowing what was on it? Maybe it's filled with rocks and sand and nothing will grow there. And yet you put out good money to buy it sight unseen. What a fool. "I bought five yoke of oxen and I go to examine them." You bought five yoke of oxen. You have no clue whether they'll actually do the job or whether they're ready for the glue factory? Really? That's not an excuse. That is just you wanting what you want rather than wanting what God wants. You are choosing not to go. Last one, "I'm married a wife and I cannot come." Oh, I'm sure your wife wouldn't come to a very glamorous and glorious meal. You're going to take her out and give her a great night out, served by the master. Doesn't cost you a dime and you're not going to go? Again, foolish and dumb, but that is our condition. All of us, unless we are called by the Gospel, unless God has enlightened us with His gift.

And part of the reason why a lot of people don't want to go there. And part of the reason why we don't live up to our calling here, as often as we would like, we go back to the Old Testament to Proverbs. Proverbs, the wisdom has created this feast, prepared it for us, but what does she do? She says, "Call those who are simple and who lack sense and bring them in." So in other words, what we are saying, because we are actually in the foretaste of the feast, that's what we talk about when we receive communion. A foretaste of the feast to come, we are part of this banquet. So by definition, we have admitted that you and I are simple and lack sense. Not exactly glamorous or glorious or of something that we can brag about because it's not about us. And it's not about what we do. It's about God and what He has done for us. And so we are simple and we lack sense unless God gives it to us. And then He gets all the credit because we are made wise through His presence. We are given knowledge through the Holy One and insight because it is the Word of God that works in and through us. It is not our own efforts or our own abilities or our own skills. You see, the sin of mankind has always been I want to make the rules for myself. I want to determine what is right or wrong. What feels good to me -that is right. I don't care what anybody else says.

And when you stand up and say the Word of God is clear on this, you get ridiculed and mocked. I mean, what does John say? "Do not be surprised brothers that the world hates you and that we have passed out of death into life." See, we are no longer in the culture of death. We are in the culture of life. We've been crucified in our sins, buried in baptism and brought forth new life. And as new life and Christians, we proclaim the light of God that God loves all humanity.

And we get a great opportunity to see a little bit of that taking place. Here this week, we've had a tremendous announcement decision by the Supreme Court on the feast of the nativity of John the Baptist. I find that wonderful. The feast of the nativity of John the Baptist. The man who in the womb of his mother gave glory to

God, leapt for joy because His Savior had come. In the womb, the baby declared the glory of God. And that just happened to be the day that the ruling was overturned. And yet, what do we have as a response? We have violence. We have threats. We have people calling evil good and good evil.

But we have a great opportunity now as Christians to share the light of Christ. It's in sharp contrast to the world around us. The reason the world hates us is because we shine a light in the dark areas of this world. We don't say look at me how superior I am and how awful you are. But we rather say, this is what the Word of God has said. And this Word of God has saved me and brought me hope and salvation, has brought me from being foolish and lacking sense to wisdom and knowledge of God, to assurance and certainty of salvation. It is the Word of God that I hold sacred. It is the Word of God that I point to. Not me, but God who has done it all. And for that, we are chastised. For that, we are accused of being evil because the world does not want to hear that they are foolish and they lack sense, because that is what sin is. It is a rebellion against the Word of God, which you rebel against God, that's foolish! But we have been enlightened and strengthened and nourished. And we have been called by God. We are His. It's also gives us a freedom in our evangelism. God has called all people out there and we don't know who it's going to be, but we are called to just share the glory of God with everybody. And whether we get the exact passage right, or we can't quite answer anybody's arguments or we stumble over the words. That's okay. It's God that is doing the work. We're just being His children thanking Him for being our Father. Takes the pressure off. You don't bring anybody into the kingdom of God. Your evangelism doesn't win souls. The Word of God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, does that.

We, as Christians, are simply called to brag about our glorious Father, to welcome people and to call people into this glorious feast. I didn't do anything to create this feast, but God has given to us free. I get it for free. You get it for free and it's free to them. What a great message. What a wonderful peace that God loves us all. And even though the world hates us, we still can stand firm because God is with us and will never leave us nor forsake us.

May His grace and His mercy and His peace and His calling be and abide with you always, now and forevermore, unto life everlasting. Amen.