

Sermon followed by Service

June 4, 2023 -

Impossible Faith for Impossible Times - 11 Kings 16-17:7

It was a best of times. Business was good. Life was good. Israel was great - or at least better than before. For miles around, hundreds of miles around, for generations, long after he was dead, Omri, the King of Israel, was known for making Israel matter again. And Omri was able to do what few before him were able to do; he passed his kingdom on to his son. You know that son as Ahab. For Israel, Ahab's time was a best of time. Business was good. Life was good. Israel was showing itself to be great again. It was a best of times.

But you know how the line goes. It was the best of times and it was the worst of times. In Israel it was a best of times if you didn't care about God. But if the LORD mattered to you, it was a worst of times.

You may remember how a hundred years before our lesson, God gave Jeroboam the northern 10 tribes of Israel. David and his son Solomon had been kings of a united Judah and Israel. But Solomon chose to listen to his wives more than he listened to God; he chose to follow the world of his wives instead of staying true and faithful to the LORD. And so the LORD judged Solomon's spiritual adultery by splitting Solomon's kingdom in two and giving the larger portion to Jeroboam. You may also remember how Jeroboam thanked God. He made it illegal for his people, for God's people, to go to God's temple in Jerusalem. Instead he made two golden calves - one for the north of Israel and one for the south of Israel - and ruled that Israel worship the LORD by worshiping the golden calves.

It got worse. Because Israel's kings were more interested in power for self than the Truth of God, because they were more interested in doing their own thing than God's thing, they did little to connect and lead their children with God. And since the people weren't going to church God's way, they did their own home-church thing, drifting off from the LORD. In the years just before our lesson we're told: **“Omri [the king who was making Israel great again] did evil in the eyes of the LORD and sinned more than all those before him. He walked in all the ways of Jeroboam son of Nebat and in his sin, which he had caused Israel to commit, so that they provoked the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger by their worthless idols.”**

If the LORD God didn't matter to you, it was a best of times, but for the people of God who cared about God, it was becoming a worst of times. Ahab took it a step further to the worst. **“Ahab son of Omri did more evil in the eyes of the LORD than any of those before him. He not only considered it trivial to commit the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, but ... he did more to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger than did all the kings of Israel before him.”** How so? Ahab married Jezebel, daughter of the Phoenician king of Sidon [today in Lebanon]. Jezebel brought her Canaanite gods - Baal and Asherah - and made the worship of Baal and Asherah to be the state-sponsored religion of Israel.

A word about worshiping Baal and Asherah. In the Canaanite system, Baal was a chief god, a fertility god of rain and storms, pictured as riding a bull, with bull horns on his head. Asherah was his wife, a fertility goddess, often pictured with breasts nursing and a birthing canal wide open. Worshiping Baal and Asherah wasn't so much about doing right, living good, and loving God; worshiping Baal

and Asherah was about stirring up the god's fertility powers with immoral, perverted sex, orgies, even temple prostitutes.

Jezebel took her religion seriously. She wined and dined 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of Asherah at her table. To be a good husband, or at least an obliging husband, Ahab had a temple built for Baal, and an Asherah pole raised for Asherah. And so Jezebel and Ahab made worship of the sex gods to be the state-sponsored religion for God's people.

It got worse. Jezebel wasn't content leading God's people away from God. She ordered God's prophets, the LORD's prophets, to be killed. Some were able to escape and hide out in caves. But for them and for the few of God's people who actually cared about God and what God said, the way that Ahab was making Israel great again, the way that life in Israel was "good" ... for God's people in Israel who loved and looked to God it was a worst of times.

Any of that sound familiar? State-sponsored, state-encouraged immorality? God's Word being silenced; God's people going quiet? If we were to stretch the time-line a bit, a little later in Israel's history, we hear God's prophets condemn government corruption, business corruption, the haves stepping on and squeezing the have-nots. Any of that sound familiar?

So what did God do in these worst of times? He raised up a man; he sent a man. We know he came from Tishbe, but that's about all we know of where he came from. We aren't told about his upbringing or how he was called to be a prophet. In these worst of times for God's people, what did God do? He raised up and sent a man named Elijah.

What could that one man Elijah do? Well, what did Elijah do? He did what God gave him to do; he said what God gave him to say. He stood up before Ahab with a message from God: **“As the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word.”** No rain or dew - what was the point? Baal, the god of rain and clouds, would be stopped up. Baal, the fertility rain-god of Ahab and Jezebel, would be shown to be impotent before the LORD. And all Ahab’s work to make Israel great again, all of Ahab’s godless work to make Israel great again, would be shown to be worthless without God.

Then what? We might expect Ahab to shrivel and beg on his knees - not yet. We might expect God to whisk Elijah out and away to some place safe, some well-watered paradise - not God’s plan for Elijah. Instead God sent Elijah into the boonies, a ravine east of the Jordan. There God would make sure he was safe, fed by ravens, and had a stream for water. Until the stream dried up; more on that next week. Today we see Elijah hiding out in a ravine, drinking from a stream, fed scraps by ravens - for three and a half years, about 42 months, about 1260 days.

What comes to mind? What a miserable existence for a hero of God? Or what an amazing way for God to take care of his own? I think I’m tempted to lean more into “what a miserable existence,” but what does Elijah show us? An Impossible Faith for Impossible Times. An Impossible Faith made possible by God’s impossible promises and God’s impossible miracles. Every time a raven brought Elijah a scrap to eat, Elijah had another reminder: “I have a God who keeps his promises!”

What a great lesson! In these impossible times, when we stand up for God, we don’t have to expect God to snap his finger and make

everything right our way, in our time. When we stand up for God, we don't have to expect God to make it easy for us. When we stand up for God, we do get to expect that God will work his will, in his way, in his time.

That was the faith that Jesus had when God sent him. That was the faith Jesus had as he patiently preached to crowds that would turn against him; it's the faith he patiently showed as he taught disciples who would stumble and fall. It's the faith that Jesus showed as he was hung up and out on the cross. It's the faith that God would accept his suffering for our sin. The faith that God would accept his death in place of our deaths. The faith that the God who was cursing and crushing him would take him from the cross and hold him safe in his hands, raise him from the dead, and set him up at his right hand to rule forever.

It's the faith that we get to have. It's the faith we get to have when God calls us out of the evil of this world - you are his. It's the faith we get to have when God calls us forgiven - we are forgiven even when we don't look or feel forgiven. It's the faith we get to have when God stands us up to shine his light - one by one like Elijah, or altogether as his church. We can speak up when God calls us to speak up. We can wait patiently when God would have us wait. We can live and we can shine and show an Impossible Faith for Impossible Times. Why? We have a God who even in the worst of times keeps his impossible promises and does the impossible for his people.

In a worst of times, God raised up Elijah; in the worst of times, God raised up his Son Jesus; in these worst of times today God is raising up you and me. When the best of this world has us tempted to join the world, when the worst of the world has us tempted to give up

on God, let's remember Elijah and what God did for Elijah. Even better, let's remember Jesus, what God did for Jesus, what Jesus is doing for us. With Jesus, like Elijah, we can stand up to the evil of this world and live with an Impossible Faith even in these Impossible Times. Amen.

June 3 & 4, 2023

SERVICE OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

IN OUR WORLD TODAY ... we see, hear, experience, and are surrounded by evil in a way that might shock previous generations. It can be easy to think: “the world is the worst it’s ever been,” and then to look at the world as enemy, to see ourselves (and Christ’s Church) as defeated, and to slide into a life that brings less and less of Jesus’ light to the world around us.

IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ...through ancient Bible History, the Spirit gives us some perspective on “the world at its worst.” But even better than perspective, we see God’s plan and promise for his people living in the “worst” of times. Today, we begin this summer’s worship series - **An Impossible Faith for Impossible Times.**

OPENING HYMN

“God of Grace and God of Glory”

Hymn 770

God of grace and God of glory, on your people pour your pow’r;
crown your ancient Church’s story, bring its bud to glorious flow’r.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage for the facing of this hour,
for the facing of this hour.

Lo, the hosts of evil round us scorn the Christ, assail his ways.
From the fears that long have bound us free our hearts to faith and praise.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage for the living of these days,
for the living of these days.

Cure your children’s warring madness; bend our pride to your control;
shame our wanton, selfish gladness, rich in things and poor in soul.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage lest we miss your kingdom’s goal,
lest we miss your kingdom’s goal.

Save us from weak resignation to the evils we deplore;
let the gift of your salvation be our glory evermore.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, serving you whom we adore,
serving you whom we adore.

INVOCATION

- M: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.
- C: **And also with you.**

+ CONFESSION OF SINS AND ABSOLUTION +

- M: We confess our sins and ask for forgiveness. Almighty Lord God, we have gathered today to thank you for the gift of your Son, our Savior. We need a Savior, for we have sinned greatly against you. But your mercies never end; they are new to us every day. So at your command and promise, we ask you to forgive us.
- C: **O holy and most merciful Father, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: God, have mercy on me a sinner!**
- M: I bring you good news of great joy! A Savior has been born for you! Jesus has destroyed the work of the devil; he has set you free to live with God. He has done what we couldn't do - he has made us right with God! Through Jesus you are forgiven and saved to be God's child. Glory to God in the highest!
- C: **Amen.**

+ PRAYER AND PRAISE +

LORD, HAVE MERCY

- M: For all that we need in life and for the wisdom to use all your gifts with gratitude and joy, hear our prayer, O Lord.
- C: **Lord, have mercy.**
- M: For the steadfast assurance that nothing can separate us from your love and for the courage to stand firm against the assaults of Satan and every evil, hear our prayer, O Christ.
- C: **Christ, have mercy.**
- M: For the well-being of your holy Church in all the world and for those who offer here their worship and praise, hear our prayer, O Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

M: Merciful God, maker and preserver of life, uphold us by your power and keep us in your tender care:

C: Amen.

M: The works of the Lord are great and glorious; his name is worthy of praise.

HYMN

“O Lord, Our Lord”

Hymn 939

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 7/8 time signature. It consists of ten staves of music. The first staff is labeled 'Refrain' and contains the lyrics 'O Lord, our Lord, how glo-rious is your name in all the earth.' The second staff contains the lyrics 'Al-might-y God, mer-ci-ful Fa-ther, you crown our life' and features a triplet of eighth notes. The third staff continues with 'with your love. You take a-way our sin; you com-fort our spir-it;' and also has a triplet. The fourth staff has the lyrics 'you make us pure and ho-ly in your sight. You did not spare your' and is labeled 'Refrain' above the staff. The fifth staff continues with 'on-ly Son, but gave him up for us all. O Lord, our Lord,'. The sixth staff has the lyrics 'how glo-rious is your name in all the earth. O Son of' and ends with a double bar line. The seventh staff continues with 'God, e-ter-nal Word of the Fa-ther, you came to live with us;'. The eighth and final staff has the lyrics 'you made your Fa-ther known; you washed us from our sins in'.

Refrain
O Lord, our Lord, how glo-rious is your name in all the earth.

Al-might-y God, mer-ci-ful Fa-ther, you crown our life

with your love. You take a-way our sin; you com-fort our spir-it;

you make us pure and ho-ly in your sight. You did not spare your

Refrain
on-ly Son, but gave him up for us all. O Lord, our Lord,

how glo-rious is your name in all the earth. O Son of

God, e-ter-nal Word of the Fa-ther, you came to live with us;

you made your Fa-ther known; you washed us from our sins in

your own blood. You are the King of glo-ry; you are the Lord!

Refrain

O Lord, our Lord, how glo-rious is your name in all the earth.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God and Father, dwelling in majesty and mystery, filling and renewing all creation by your eternal Spirit, and manifesting your saving grace through our Lord Jesus Christ, in mercy cleanse our hearts and lips that, free from doubt and fear, we may ever worship you, one true, immortal God, with your Son and the Holy Spirit, living and reigning, now and forever.

Amen.

FIRST READING

1 Kings 16:29-17:6

In the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, Ahab son of Omri became king of Israel, and he reigned in Samaria over Israel twenty-two years. Ahab son of Omri did more evil in the eyes of the LORD than any of those before him. He not only considered it trivial to commit the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, but he also married Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and began to serve Baal and worship him. He set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal that he built in Samaria. Ahab also made an Asherah pole and did more to arouse the anger of the LORD, the God of Israel, than did all the kings of Israel before him.

In Ahab's time, Hiel of Bethel rebuilt Jericho. He laid its foundations at the cost of his firstborn son Abiram, and he set up its gates at the cost of his youngest son Segub, in accordance with the word of the LORD spoken by Joshua son of Nun.

Now Elijah the Tishbite, from Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word."

Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah: “Leave here, turn eastward and hide in the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan. You will drink from the brook, and I have directed the ravens to supply you with food there.”

So he did what the LORD had told him. He went to the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan, and stayed there. The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the brook.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM OF THE DAY

Psalm 27A

Refrain



The LORD is my light, the LORD is my help, the LORD is my sal - va - tion.

The LORD is my light and my salvation—whom / shall I fear?

The LORD is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I / be afraid?

One thing I ask / from the LORD,

this only / do I seek:

that I may dwell in the house / of the LORD

all the days / of my life,

to gaze on the beauty / of the LORD

and to seek him in his / temple. *Refrain*

He will hide me in the shelter of his / sacred tent
 and set me high up- / on a rock.
 I remain confi- / dent of this:
 I will see the goodness of the LORD in the land / of the living.
 Wait / for the LORD;
 be strong and take heart and wait / for the LORD.
Glory be to the Father and / to the Son
and to the Holy / Spirit,
as it was in / the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. / Amen. Refrain

Refrain

The LORD is my light, the LORD is my help, the
 LORD is my sal - va - tion.

SECOND READING

2 Timothy 1:7–12

For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. Rather, join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God. He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher. That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet this is no cause for shame, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

1 John 3:8

Alleluia. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. Alleluia.

GOSPEL

Matthew 9:35-10:4

Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.

These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise be to you, O Christ!**

HYMN OF THE DAY

"O Christ, Who Called the Twelve"

Hymn 716

O Christ, who called the Twelve to rise and follow you,
forsaking old, familiar ways for ventures bold and new:
grant us to hear your call to risk security
and, bound in heart and will to you, find perfect liberty.

O Christ, who taught the Twelve the truth for ages sealed,
whose words and works awakened faith, the ways of God revealed:
instruct us now, we pray, by your empow'ring Word.
True teacher, be for all who seek their light, their life, their Lord.

O Christ, who sent the Twelve on roads they'd never trod
to serve, to suffer, teach, proclaim the nearer reign of God:
send us on ways where faith transcends timidity,
where love informs and hope sustains both life and ministry.

O Christ, th' apostles' Lord, the martyrs' strength and song,
the crucified and risen King to whom the saints belong:
though generations pass, our tribute still we bring,
our hymns a sacrifice of praise, our lives an offering.

SERMON

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

MISSION OF THE CHURCH

M: Eternal God and Father, we give you thanks for the blessings we share as members of your holy Church, for your gracious Word and sacraments, for opportunities to worship and to grow in faith and knowledge, for occasions to serve and be served, for fellowship with believers in our congregation and in our synod.

C: Help us to rejoice in these blessings, dear Lord, and to use them faithfully.

M: Jesus Christ, Lord of the Church, you give grace to your people by calling us to be your witnesses in the world. Open our eyes to see the great and noble mission that lies before us. In the hurting eyes of the lonely, in the pained eyes of the sick, and in the searching eyes of the lost, help us to see your face, O Jesus, and to serve others as we would serve you.

C: Awaken us to the opportunities you give to proclaim your message of love.

M: Holy Spirit, giver of life, through Word and sacrament bestow on us the wisdom and power we need to witness clearly and to act boldly. Help us to speak the truth in love, to give the reason for the hope we have, and to conduct ourselves with gentleness and respect.

C: Set our hearts on fire as we work and witness for Christ.

M: Hear us, Lord, as we pray for a family member, an acquaintance, a neighbor, or a friend who does not believe in you, or whose faith is weak or troubled.

Silent prayer.

M: Bless the Church with men and women who are willing to proclaim your Word in places where we cannot go. Keep them and their loved ones in your care, and let nothing hinder their work. By the power of the gospel, restore their spirits each day, so that they do not lose heart as they serve us and others.

C: Move us to support them with our sincere prayers and generous offerings.

Special prayers and intercessions may follow.

- M: Wherever your Word is proclaimed, O Lord, grant it success. Let your kingdom come to us and others, so that we and many more might join the assembly of saints and angels to sing your praise forever.
- C: **Savior of all, hear our prayer and help us in our mission. Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

THE SACRAMENT

(Guests, please see our communion practice on page 2.)
(Gluten-free wafers are available; ask Pastor.)

M: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

M: Lift up your hearts.

C: **We lift them up to the Lord.**

M: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

M: Praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In love he has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. In the past he spoke to us through prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, who is the radiance of his glory.

Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ. To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and thanks and honor and glory for ever and ever.

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY *Sanctu*

C: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly is the Lord of hosts.
The whole earth is full of your glo - ry.
You are my God and I will ex - alt you.
I will give you thanks for you have be - come my sal -
va - tion. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly is the Lord of hosts.
The whole earth is full of your glo - ry.

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'HOLY, HOLY, HOLY Sanctu'. It consists of six staves of music in a single system. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first staff starts with a common time signature (C). The lyrics are written below the notes. The music is a simple, melodic line with some phrasing slurs. The final staff ends with a double bar line.

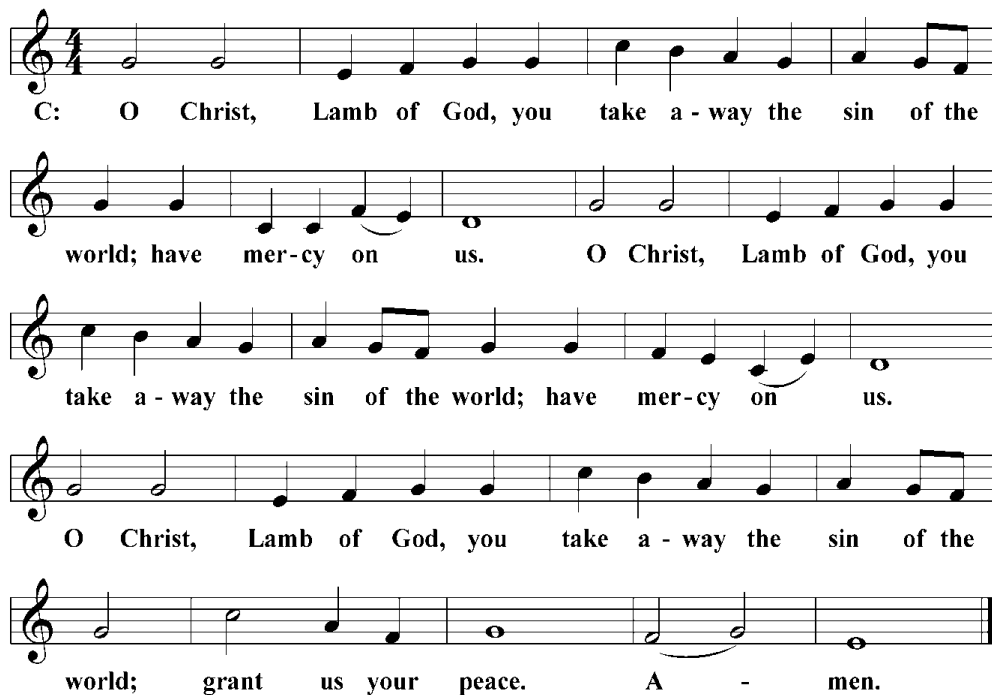
WORDS OF INSTITUTION

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my † body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my † blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

M: The peace of the Lord be with you always. **Amen.**

O CHRIST, LAMB OF GOD *Agnus Dei*



C: O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God, you
take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.
O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; grant us your peace. A - men.

DISTRIBUTION HYMN

"Lord Jesus Christ, You Have Prepared"

Hymn 667

Lord Jesus Christ, you have prepared this feast for our salvation;
it is your body and your blood, and at your invitation
as weary souls, with sin oppressed, we come to you for needed rest,
for comfort, and for pardon.

Although you did to heav'n ascend, where angel hosts are dwelling,
and in your presence they behold your glory, all excelling,
and though your people shall not see your glory and your majesty
till dawns the judgment morning,

Yet, Savior, you are not confined to any habitation,
but you are present ev'rywhere and with your congregation.
Firm as a rock this truth shall stand, unmoved by any daring hand
or subtle craft and cunning.

We eat this bread and drink this cup, your precious Word believing
that your true body and your blood our lips are here receiving.
This Word remains forever true, and there is naught you cannot do,
for you, Lord, are almighty.

Though reason cannot understand, yet faith this truth embraces:
your body, Lord, is even now at once in many places.
I leave to you how this can be; your Word alone suffices me;
I trust its truth unfailing.

Lord, I believe what you have said; help me when doubts assail me.
Remember that I am but dust, and let my faith not fail me.
Your supper in this vale of tears refreshes me and stills my fears
and is my priceless treasure.

Grant that we worthily receive your supper, Lord, our Savior,
and, truly grieving for our sins, may prove by our behavior
that we are thankful for your grace and day by day may run our race,
in holiness increasing.

For your consoling supper, Lord, be praised through out all ages!
Preserve it, for in ev'ry place the world against it rages.
Grant that this sacrament may be a blessed comfort unto me
when living and when dying.

CLOSING PRAYER

M: Hear the prayer of your people, O Lord, that the lips which have praised
you here may glorify you in the world, that the eyes which have seen the
coming of your Son may long for his coming again, and that all who have
received in his true body and blood the pledge of your forgiveness may be
restored to live a new and holy life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who
lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

BLESSING

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another.
Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace. **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

“Hark, the Voice of Jesus Crying”

Hymn 745

Hark, the voice of Jesus crying, “Who will go and work today?
Fields are ripe and harvests waiting; who will bear the sheaves away?”
Loud and long the Master calleth; rich reward he offers thee.
Who will answer, gladly saying, “Here am I, send me, send me”?

If you cannot speak like angels, if you cannot preach like Paul,
you can tell the love of Jesus, you can say he died for all.
If you cannot rouse the wicked with the judgment’s dread alarms,
you can lead the little children to the Savior’s waiting arms.

If you cannot be a watchman, standing high on Zion’s wall,
pointing out the path to heaven, off’ring life and peace to all,
with your prayers and with your off’rings you can do what God demands;
you can be like faithful Aaron, holding up the prophet’s hands.

Let none hear you idly saying, “There is nothing I can do,”
while the multitudes are dying, and the Master calls for you.
Take the task he gives you gladly, let his work your pleasure be;
answer quickly when he calleth, “Here am I, send me, send me!”

OFFERING

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