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St. Paul's Lutheran Church  
2100 16<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Austin, MN 55912-1749  
Pastor Ted Barthels  
Sermon preached on  
May 10, 2015  
5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Easter

Scripture Lessons: Isaiah 54:7-13, Revelation 3:14-22

Hymns: 537; 340; 399; 800

Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Sermon Text: John 14:13-21

13 And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.

15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments. 16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— 17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

19 "A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also. 20 At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. 21 He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him." (NKJV)

This is the Word of God.

Sanctify us, oh Lord, through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

In Christ Jesus, Our Living Lord, dear fellow Redeemed:

INTRO: Faithfully executing the duties of one's office. --

When one makes a promise to faithfully execute the responsibilities of one's office we recognize it as one of those times when it is correct and even God-pleasing to take an oath. That is how important it is. So when a pastor is installed, or a church council is installed, or even in civic offices, when people take on the responsibilities of serving the public good, we look for individual's to faithfully execute the duties of their office. To fail to do so is to fail the public trust. For those who are entering an office of the church more than temporal lives can at stake; people's souls may depend on that trust being fulfilled. The focus of our meditation this morning concerns –

## **THEME: The Faithfulness of Our Living Lord.**

In His office as the Christ our Lord Jesus had an important function to serve as our Priest, our Mediator, our connection to God the Father. In our text Jesus was preparing His disciples for the time when His *visible* presence would be removed, when they would *feel* His absence from their lives. He wanted it made clear to them that He would remain faithful in His role as a connection to God the Father by --

### **I. Empowering Our Prayers.**

**John 14:13-14** And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.

Do we really grasp the power of this promise that Jesus makes in these words? Whatever you ask in Jesus' name, -- *whatever* you ask – there is no request that is too great or that is too farfetched, or that is too insignificant to be laid before the Lord. He is faithful in hearing our petitions. I know where your mind is going, that we may ask foolish things. In our weakness we may even ask sinful things of the Lord. Is He promising to do those things as well? Jesus' words "**that the Father may be glorified in the Son**" really cover those eventualities. If the things that we ask would fail to glorify the Father either because they would be to our spiritual or even physical harm, or to the harm of another then the Lord would not grant them. If the things we ask would shame the Lord's name before the world, then Jesus would not grant that flawed petition. That isn't a "cop out." It isn't an unfair limitation on what we

might ask of the Lord. In no way is that true! What it is is a safeguard against our own foolishness. We ask according to the Lord's will. Knowing that His will is not capricious but good and gracious toward us. He is our Lord and Savior who cares for us so much that He sacrificed Himself on the cross enduring the agony of God's curse for our sins that we might be saved. He went the distance for us to open the way to the throne of God's grace that we might have this blessing of knowing that the Lord hears our prayers, and acts on our prayers.

He is telling us here that as our Lord He listens to us, and He will grant us all that is for our good and blessing. He will grant all petitions that are presented in His name. Again that is such a vitally important point, that we offer our prayers **in Jesus' name**. Jesus is the One in whom our hopes of heaven are fulfilled. Jesus is the One who has obtained peace with God and restored that ideal relationship with God that existed before sin entered into the world. Only Jesus' merit could make this happen, so only the name of Jesus, (prayers offered with faith and trust in these merits of Jesus) makes it possible for us to come to the Lord in prayer, and have the confidence that the Lord will grant us our petition according to His gracious good will for us and our salvation.

**The Lord is faithful.** He has compassion on us as we face the trials and the struggles of this life. He shall not be negligent in our care. He has fulfilled this responsibility of caring for us by --

## **II. Promising a Powerful Helper for Life.**

**John 14:15-18** "If you love Me, keep My commandments. 16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— 17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

Again we see that our faith is tied to the Lord's promise. Our text reads "**If we keep His commandments.**" This isn't only a matter of observing the Ten Commandments in our lives. It has a lot more to do with believing in Him as our Savior from sin. That is where a new heart is found. The Spirit works through the gospel to cleanse

our hearts, and melt the cold stony hearts that we had and give us warm hearts vital and alive, that we know the love of Christ, and so love in return. Not only do we love Jesus in response to His love for us, but we love our fellow man in response to Jesus' love for us.

So the Spirit who opened our hearts to believe is a powerful presence in our lives. Jesus promised and then sent the Spirit to be an ever present power within us as we walk through the pilgrimage of this life on our way to heaven. We are weak, and easily discouraged. We may even be tempted to doubt the Lord's presence and power in our lives as we might feel downtrodden by the forces of evil in this world, and discouraged by the apparent slow progress of the gospel in the world around us in our personal lives. Set such doubts and misconceptions aside. **Jesus is faithful.** Even though the world can't see the Spirit of our God, and so does not know Him, we know Him, and Jesus has assured us that the Spirit will be with us, and we know the power of the Spirit in our hearts. The Spirit comes to us as we hear the Word of the Lord. He strengthens us continually as we are enveloped in the Word of grace that speaks to us of the love of Christ, and Jesus' desire and ultimate determination to bring us home to Him in heaven.

The Lord is faithful –

### **III. Granting Us Assurance of Everlasting Life.**

We live in a world that has many strange and unscriptural ideas about Jesus. Since they can't see Jesus in a physical corporeal way, they take the position that He is only an historical figure who lived a couple thousand years ago whose *ideas* live on and impact the world. They don't really understand that Jesus lives, really lives, and that He is actually about life, real life, eternal life! Jesus wanted His disciples to comprehend what He was, and is, and ever shall be about. So we read Jesus' words in our text, words spoken only hours before His suffering and death.

**John 14:19-21** “A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also. 20 At that day you will know that I am in My Father, **and you in Me, and I in you.** 21 He who has My commandments and keeps them,

it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.”

The disciples were blessed to see Jesus after His resurrection, a blessing the Lord was not going to grant the world. The disciples are our witnesses to the truth about Jesus that He who died for us rose again and lives forevermore!

Jesus spoke clearly about the reality of resurrection and eternal life. He was on His way to die when He spoke these words, and He knew it! Jesus wasn't in denial about what was going to happen in the coming hours. He understood that He would die, and He understood that He would rise again. Jesus was communicating the power of His life for all those who would believe in His name. Because Jesus lives we live. That new life begins now as we comprehend the wondrous relationship that exists between the Father and the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. One of the aspects of this relationship that we want to remember is that this intimate loving relationship between God the Father and our Lord Jesus is also according to Jesus human nature. The Father is in him and He is in the Father. They are united in love and grace, love and grace that envelopes us as children of God who have been brought into this grace by the saving will of God. Now, once again we are comprehending the entire will of God including the saving grace that the Father revealed for us in His Son. We are brought into this love that brings us new life so that we find joy in the will of God for our lives, and living in a manner that pleases God and glorifies Him before the world.

Now the power of Jesus is manifest in us. It is evident that Jesus lives. It is evident that Jesus lives in us. People around us see that. It is evident for us also that Jesus lives in our hearts, and that our lives are bound up in Christ. For us it is evident because of the confidence we possess that the Father's love dwells within our hearts. We know His love, His forgiving grace, and His promise of eternal life. Jesus lives! Because Jesus lives we shall live also! We shall live with Jesus forevermore in heaven above.

He has not abandoned us in His suffering and death. In His resurrection Jesus has faithfully executed the responsibilities of His

office as Christ. He has come that we might have life and that we might have it more abundantly (John 10:10). **The Lord is faithful!**  
**AMEN.**

And the peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.