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St. Paul's Lutheran Church
2100 16th Street SW
Austin, MN 55912-1749
Pastor Ted Barthels
Sermon preached on
March 18, 2018
5th Sunday in Lent

Scriptures: Isaiah 52:12-53:6 Passion Lesson: Jesus Crucified
Hymns: 144; 151:1-6; 305:1-4; 151:7-8

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

Sermon Text: Hebrews 13:12-15

Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His
own blood, suffered outside the gate. ¹³Therefore let us go forth to
Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. ¹⁴For here we have
no continuing city, but we seek the one to come. ¹⁵Therefore by
Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is,
the fruit of *our* lips, giving thanks to His name. (NKJV)

This is the Word of God.

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

In Christ Jesus, our crucified Savior, dear fellow Redeemed:

INTRO: Looking to Jesus who endured. --

The theme of our Sunday meditations this Lenten season is taken
from the opening verses of the twelfth chapter of Hebrews, the
chapter immediately before our text. The idea of enduring
something is sometimes lost on us. We use the word maybe a little
to loosely, referencing things that are pretty quick in passing, and
maybe not so severe as we would like to make them out to be. We
may think that our situation is worse than anyone else's, but maybe
we aren't being as objective as one might be.

Of course there are any number of trying situations that may arise in one's life that may call for endurance. We face the challenges of raising children, or struggling with a difficult job for many years, or enduring the pain and trials of a chronic debilitating illness. It is also true that any of these may have spiritual implications. That is our area of greatest concern, the spiritual trials that come while we are walking our Christian walk of faith. The verses from Hebrews 12 that provide our greater theme address this.

Hebrews 12:1-2 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ²looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

We are reminded that we are not the first children of God who had a struggle, a spiritual struggle in this life. The reference back to “so great a cloud of witnesses”: is a reminder of the heroes of faith in the Old Testament who lived with faith in the **promise** of a coming Savior, not with the promise fulfilled in Jesus as we do. They endured, and so we also need to endure, realizing the race is not to the faint, nor to those who cave in to the pressures or allurements of the world and our sinful flesh. We need to set sin aside, and run with endurance, perseverance.

And that is exactly why the Lenten season is so important for us. You see it is not only about learning all that Jesus did and all that Jesus suffered, but it is also how we draw strength from learning and reviewing this wondrous truth of our salvation. If we are going to endure unto the end then we need to keep --

**THEME: Looking to Jesus Who Endured the Cross;
He Is Our Endurance.**

Jesus was about --

I. Running with Endurance.

Jesus was on a mission. It was not an easy mission. It required a great deal of the Lord. It didn't get any easier as life went on. That mission was to secure salvation for us. It required that He live a perfect, sinless life. No matter what difficulties Jesus was to encounter in life, and He encountered *all those difficulties* that are common to man, He had to deal with them only and always according to the perfect will of God, and always and only as we are equipped by the Lord.

After His baptism Jesus was singled out by the devil for special, personal attention. Jesus endured. He did not give in to temptation but defeated the devil with the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Yes, Jesus dealt with the devil with the same weapon God has placed in our hands to fight off temptation.

In His ministry Jesus worked tirelessly, with endurance, serving, loving, healing, teaching. Even when people rejected Him, called Him names, Jesus endured. He did not sin. Then it came time for the sacrifice that was needed to secure our salvation. Jesus set His face for Jerusalem. Evidence of determination, *endurance*. He would not be deterred, even by His close and dear friends who gave Him terrible advice, attempting to turn Jesus away from allowing Himself to be crucified. Jesus endured.

And then that night came when Jesus observed the Last Passover Supper with His disciples. He entered the Garden of Gethsemane where He endured such grief, as the burden of our sin and its curse was laid upon His heart. With willing submission to the will of His Father, Jesus endured.

Jesus endured the abuse of sinful men with their lies and false accusations, with the blows to face and body, with their ridicule and blasphemy. He endured the scourging, the crown of thorns, more beatings, more and more ridicule. It went on and on, hour after hour, all the time knowing that it was by His stripes that we would be healed, in the greatness of His love for us Jesus *endured*. Yes, it was all about the mission, the goal that was set before Him. In the opening verses of our text we are reminded.

Hebrews 13:12-13 Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. ¹³ Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach.

He was unclean, not because of His sin, He had none, but because of our sin. So He was led outside the camp, that is outside the city of Jerusalem, away from all the people. The point was that Jesus was taking our sins away. He was removing the uncleanness of our sins from us. So He suffered, bearing the reproach of God, the curse of our sin. Securing our salvation wasn't a sprint. It was a long, hard endurance run. Jesus endured the cross leading us to follow after Him that we might run the race of faith.

We go to Him, outside the camp, outcasts from this world, bearing His reproach. People will ask, "What's the matter with you?" "What's the matter with you? Why won't you pray with us?" "What's the matter with you? Why won't you join us and our organization?" "What's the matter with you? Why won't you just ease up and live like the rest of us, you know, get along?" "What's the matter with you? Do you think you're better than everyone else?" "What's the matter with you? Don't you want to be happy? I can make you happy if you walk in this other direction with the flow of the crowds of this world."

NO! We follow **Him**, we learn how we ought to run with endurance. We learn from Him who endured the cross, despising the shame, all for the joy that was set before Him, the joy He would find in your salvation and mine.

Jesus is the One who shows us what it means to run with endurance, but now we need to --

II. Gain Endurance.

Yes, this life presses itself upon us. Yes, there are always issues that we must deal with, but following Jesus we "*glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance;*⁴ *and perseverance, character; and character, hope.*" (Romans 5:3-4)

There are needs that we have in this life. When confronting tribulation we grow weary of the race. And are tempted to stop. So how do we gain endurance, perseverance? We keep looking to

Jesus where He is, sitting at the right hand of God. That is where our future lies. That is where our true and eternal life resides. Our life is hidden with Christ in God! (Colossians 3:2-4) Our text states the truth clearly.

Hebrews 13:14 ¹⁴ For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come.

Too often we approach life situations as if this life is all there is, that everything is about the here and now, this life. This is not our whole life. Our life on this earth is temporary. Compared to our eternal life it is *very* temporary indeed. So if we leave this life's allurement behind in favor of our eternal home we aren't losing, we are gaining. We also can do so with confidence that the Lord who loves us with an everlasting love will strengthen, comfort, and bless us. If we keep our eyes on Jesus we will keep our eyes on our heavenly goal which Jesus has prepared for us, to which He has gone ahead of us. He will come again to receive us to Himself, and we will live with Him in glory with pleasures forevermore. He is our Endurance! He grants us strength and wisdom and every needed blessing. Keep looking to Jesus who endured the cross; He did it for you. He did it for YOU!

Our Endurance is simply --

III. Responding to His Endurance.

Hebrews 13:15 Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of *our* lips, giving thanks to His name.

First, remember what Jesus achieved by enduring the cross. When He died the veil in the temple tore from top to bottom, indicating that the separation that was present because of our sin had been removed. We have access to God through Christ crucified. We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. We can come before His presence with singing. We can turn to our heavenly Father and offer Him our praises for the salvation that He has secured for us. Along with our need to be fortified for endurance, coming to praise the Lord for His grace is sufficient cause for us to be here! Here in church with our fellow believers we bring this sacrifice of praise to the Lord.

Our text refers to this as the fruit of our lips. It is important to bring to the Lord the fruit of our lips. It begins here in corporate worship, and it is encouraged and nourished here by the Lord, but it doesn't stop here. It continues with us openly professing His name. We live in a society that actually doesn't know what it means to be Christian, to be a Christ believer, to trust Jesus wholly for righteousness and life. When we meet others who are struggling with sin and guilt; we have what they need. In the gospel of a crucified Savior we have what the world needs. If that is what abides in our hearts then our mouths will confess, as did the dying malefactor who turned to Jesus for forgiveness and eternal salvation.

It isn't just lip service. What our hearts believe, what our mouths confess will also be the nature of our sanctified lives. Endurance against temptation and sin; saying "No" to sin, and "Yes" to righteousness is noted by those around us, and it is noted by the Lord as thanks and praise.

Hebrews 12:1-2, "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ²looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross."

He is our Endurance!

AMEN.

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