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St. Paul's Lutheran Church
2100 16th Street SW
Austin, MN 55912-1749
Pastor Ted Barthels
Sermon preached on
May 26, 2019
5th Sunday after Easter

Scripture Lessons: Acts 14:8-18, Revelation 21:10-14,22-23

Hymns: 363; 384; 408; 50 (38:1-3)

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

Sermon Text: John 14:2-29

²³ Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. ²⁴ He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.

²⁵ "These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. ²⁶ But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. ²⁷ Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. ²⁸ You have heard Me say to you, 'I am going away and coming *back* to you.' If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, 'I am going to the Father,' for My Father is greater than I.

²⁹ "And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe. (NKJV)

This is the Word of God.

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

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

INTRO: The right connections make all the difference. There is even a social media platform, called “Linked in” that is supposed to help you maintain connections with people you know because you never know who they might know that might help you in your business or present a job opportunity you wouldn’t have heard about another way. It’s not just knowing who other people are; it’s having the connection, maintaining that connection that makes all the difference. There are many different ways and social media platforms to assist people in making and then maintaining connections that will advance your interests. Knowing which way is the best for you can be important to your life. Is it Facebook, or is it Linked in? For other interests in life maybe it’s Pinterest. Maybe it’s just calling people on the phone, or actually getting together for lunch, or sending them a greeting card, or all of the above. Keep those connections alive.

You are not alone in the world. There is an important connection that actually does make all the difference. We have one Friend who has done more for us than all other friends combined, and keeping that connection is extremely important, for the connection that He brings us is with God.

Once again our text this morning is from the Savior’s valedictory address to the disciples. He was preparing them for things that would come to pass in the coming hours and days. The relationship they had with Him was about to change dramatically, and Jesus wanted the disciples to understand that it would not be the end of that relationship. They were still going to be connected, strongly connected.

The lesson Jesus presented to His disciples on that night before He died is a lesson for us to learn and cherish as

well. We need to maintain our connection to Jesus just as much as the disciples. Jesus teaches us about --

THEME: Staying Connected to Jesus through His Word of Truth.

There were two disciples named Judas, and the one who was not the betrayer asked Jesus how he was going to manifest or reveal Himself to them without showing Himself to the world. The answer is found in --

I. Keeping Jesus' Word.

John 14:23-24 "Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. ²⁴ He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me."

If you love Jesus you will have a high regard for what He says to us in His Word. It is as simple as that; we are connected to Jesus through His Word. Jesus spoke the truth. Jesus is the truth of our salvation. Jesus said, "*If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.* ³² *And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*" (John 8:31-32) If anyone claims to be a Christian, (and that is what we call disciples of Jesus today) then they should pay attention to what Jesus says. He tells it like it is. Jesus didn't mince words, He called sin what it is -- sin! But then He called sinners to repentance. He announced forgiveness of sins. He directed sinners to the truth that saved. His Word brings us the good news of sins forgiven. If we abide in His Word then **we** are His disciples, and we are maintaining that all important connection to Jesus who alone can set us free from sin and death. Christians hear and pay attention and live according to what Jesus says, according to His Word, and He is the Word made flesh.

All Scripture is the Word of the Lord. In some churches they have incorporated those words into their liturgy,

“This is the Word of the Lord.” That is a good thing to confess. It is so important to understand. True teaching isn’t only what the church says, or what the pastor thinks, or some outdated idea of the past. This is the Word of the Lord! This Word is your connection to the Lord. That was Jesus’ answer to Judas on that night before He died. Going forward, they would stay connected to Jesus as long as they stayed in His Word.

Jesus wasn’t making things up as He went along, as so many of the false prophets of this world do. No, the word Jesus declared to the people was given to Him from above, it came to Him from His heavenly Father. God the Father sent His only begotten Son into the world that we should live through Him. God the Father announced this plan of salvation from the very day of the fall into sin when sin’s curse of death fell upon God’s perfect creation.

Jesus is that Word of life and salvation incarnate. He now told His disciples that remembering that Word, the Word He had taught them over the past three years, would keep them connected to Him. How could they remember everything Jesus had taught them? How could they remember all that they had heard Him tell the people, and all that Jesus had done? No one’s memory is that good? You and I have experienced that ourselves many times in life. Details get confused and fuzzy. One person remembers things one way, while another who saw or heard the same thing remembers it differently. How can we know the truth? Jesus presents us with God’s answer:

II. The Blessing and Power of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus said:

John 14:25-26 “These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. ²⁶ But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.”

Jesus answers this concern with the promise of the Holy Spirit. Jesus uses a very special name for the Holy Spirit calling Him the "Paraclete." It is difficult to transfer this concept into English. The word "Helper" as we read in the New King James is part of it, but only part. It is literally one who walks by one's side with the idea of giving comfort and aid. It came to mean one who counsels, or speaks on one's behalf. So as you can see it is a loaded word, loaded with very special meaning for the disciples, and for the child of God yet today. The Spirit is our Comforter and Help in time of need.

In this context Jesus is emphasizing the relationship of the Spirit to His Word, and all that Jesus had taught the disciples. Jesus gives assurance to the disciples that the Spirit, whom the Father will send in Jesus' name, will bring to remembrance all that Jesus had said to them, **ALL** Jesus had said to them. More than that, the Spirit would **teach** them all things. The Spirit would bring to the disciples a fuller understanding of Jesus' life and salvation in Jesus' name. The Spirit would bring them that understanding of Jesus words they were struggling with even as Jesus spoke these words to them.

We see in these words of our Lord a presentation of the entire Godhead in our faith and salvation. Jesus' Word is the Word of life that comes not from Jesus alone but also from the Father. The Father would send the Spirit in Jesus' name bringing with Him that full revelation of the gospel which is recorded for us in Holy Scripture. The words we read in the gospels of all that Jesus said and did are perfectly recorded, accurate and reliable, not because the disciples were superior human beings with remarkable memories, but because the Holy Spirit brought all things to their remembrance. The Holy Spirit guided and directed the writing of the gospels, and the epistles as well. It is as we have learned: *"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,*

¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

With this assurance not only of the accuracy and reliability of the Scriptures, but also of the authority of Holy Scripture we may go forward in life with confidence. When we are challenged by the world, or by misinformed or misguided Christians, we have the authoritative answer of the Word of God, the Word of our Lord Jesus. It is not what I think or I feel is right, or what someone else thought was right for the times in which they lived. It is the Word of the Lord with the authority of the Triune God standing behind it!

That brings us assurance of faith, for it was by this gospel that the Holy Spirit called us out from the world and created faith in our hearts, and brought us into the household of God. He is the *Holy* Spirit because He has sanctified us, called us out from the world to be God’s holy people. The blessing that comes to us in this is:

III. Possessing Peace with the Father and the Son.

Jesus said:

John 14:27-29 “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. ²⁸ You have heard Me say to you, ‘I am going away and coming *back* to you.’ If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, ‘I am going to the Father,’ for My Father is greater than I. ²⁹ “And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe.”

Jesus was leaving the disciples with the blessing of peace. Yes, Jesus knew and was preparing them for events that were rapidly coming upon them, events that would be disturbing and distressing, but Jesus was leaving them His peace. His peace is far superior to any peace the world knows or attempts to give. The world says, “*Peace, peace, when there is no peace!*” (Jeremiah 6:14) False prophets

promise peace of mind and spirit. People walk about in a cloud, not a cloud of enlightenment as they have been deceived to believe, but a fog of confusion, a fog that blocks true spiritual insight and peace. When the world promises peace it is tentative and temporary at best, a false delusion at its worst.

Jesus promises and delivers peace. It starts with Peace with God, the peace that is found in sins forgiven in the only way that sins can be forgiven. Paul wrote by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, *“When we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. ¹¹ And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.”* (Romans 5:10-11)

That is the declaration of peace that comes to us from God a declaration that has a firm foundation, not built on the imperfections of human works of the law, but built upon the righteousness of Christ and the all atoning sacrifice which the Son of God made for our redemption and justification. We are reconciled to God!

“Having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ²through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” (Romans 5:1-2)

This is a full and open relationship with God in which He is our dear Father and we are His dear children. This peace which we possess now leads to an eternal life. As we walk in this life we live and breathe that truth of the word of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus talks about proceeding with full assurance of faith. He knew what trials lay ahead for the disciples, and yet He told them that they could and should go forward with faith. The same is true for us. He knows the trials and tribulations that lay before us in life. He has given us His

Word of truth. We stay in His Word and we will stay connected to Jesus, to His Father and our Father in Heaven, and to the Holy Spirit who comforts us with a remembrance of the love of God that is ours in Christ Jesus.

As you make your way through life it is important, especially in uncertain times of challenge to have the right connections, and that is exactly what we have. Be it good times or bad we are connected to our Crucified, Risen, and Ever Living Lord!

AMEN.

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