

Second Sunday after Trinity: Luke 14:15–24

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Rev. 14:13 (KJV)

Those who are dead in Christ, works follow them. How dead are you? Pretty dead, you'll see. If you're not receiving communion, you are not receiving grace. This is normal in the church today. People have functional, useful relationships. "You light up my life." "You're someone I finally get to rail on - you meet a need in my life." "You're someone I can blame, and so you are useful in that way." Those functional relationships are the product of a carnally minded Christian. The carnal mind is enmity with God. It can only think of itself - its own lust. It is death, the wrong kind of death, but it will work.

Means of grace through the mutual conversation and consolation of the brethren. Where two or three agree, they have the mind of Christ. Where this is not the case, there is not the communion God wants.

Your mutual conversation becomes one big means of grace. When you are cut off from mutual conversation, you are cut off from charisma.

God's grace comes to us in one way that is often overlooked. Oftentimes it goes unnoticed as one of those things that just happen. Yet, other times you draw strength and encouragement from it. It is possibly one of the most important things that happen in the church. It is the friendship and fellowship you receive as you reach out, give and receive the gifts... Maybe this does not seem too carnal and natural. The gifts you share with one another seem small and insignificant and you may not even consider them gifts. Mutual conversation and consolation not only can be, but is, the means God uses to keep us in his grace. Your priesthood... the clues to how this mutual conversation and consolation... The Spirit loves company.

A lot of people want to keep other people out of their life. They get their reward. When their god-project fails or wish-dream totters, they come around just long enough to use you.

As he goes to work in the word and the sacraments to give us the certainty of faith, the spirit is always gathering us together with other people. As a member of the church you are a part of the community of the saints.

Where is baptism? In order to keep your mind stayed upon God and be in perfect peace, you need daily baptism. Without daily baptism you are out of God's rest. God is down-to-earth. "Well, I have a personal relationship with God - Jesus, my buddy." How do people avoid daily baptism, the sacraments? Busy-ness.

The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, not stinginess. There is a man who scatters and has plenty. There is a man who withholds and is in poverty. The Word and the Spirit are one. The Word of God is a sword that pierces right through and sees the motives and intents of the heart.

Psalm 119:165 (KJV) Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.

Today, Jesus is saying, "Ye who are weary and heavy laden, come unto me." He is the bishop and shepherd of our souls.

Psalm 119:67 (KJV) Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.

There is a God in heaven that shows up in strange places. The chastening of the Lord brings peaceable fruit. I don't like chastening for the moment, but later it does yield peaceable fruit. You know what I would want if I were God - a million dollars in this life with no tribulations. Don't be that dumb.

Luke 14:12-18 (KJV)

They all made excuses. Excuses are what we all make every day.

Luke 14:19-21 (KJV)

The Lord of the house was angry about the works of the flesh. He was so angry he put a death sentence on them, a cut-off sentence.

Luke 14:22-24 (KJV)

Get the real losers that my house may be filled. What is the supper you have been called to, but have been too busy to attend? It is nothing less than the sacraments in the church. Communion.

How many of you bury your gifts and talents? There are two of you. If you're really hearing me, you're glad to hear this because there is hope that you will turn again to the Lord, to His mercies that are new this morning. You were called, but when did you come into the great supper, the communion of saints? Are you waiting until you are over your offence? Are you waiting until you have enough money so people won't be a threat to you?

You can't judge by the outward because you don't know their motive. Are they going somewhere with their prattle, or is it just a cover-up?

Blessed are those who are called to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. It is an eschatological supper. It is the marriage supper of the lamb, and the communion of saints, where we commune over the body and blood of Jesus, whose body you are; bone of his bones, flesh of his flesh - the Bride of Christ.

Jesus said, "I am the bread of life." Unless you eat of this bread you have no life." When you meet Jesus on the road to Emmaus, he turns you around. "Go, tell my disciples; let my Word, my kindness and my peace show up in you."

We just talk in a functional level only and there is no peace in that. This is a reduction from whom God created you to be - a mouth house - a bold confessor - people who are witnesses and martyrs.

If you eat this bread you will never hunger and will live eternally.

Ephes. 5:30 (KJV) For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

Eat the book. It will be bitter at first and then pleasant. The gospel must be hated more than any other thing.

Jesus does not avoid death in you or I. We bear about in our body the dying of Jesus, daily. Those who hate you hate Jesus. It isn't even you they hate; they hate the Word that is in you. They may be sitting here, but they are not from us. If they were from us they would not go out from us.

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He partook of our nature "that through death he might overcome him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to life-long bondage." In the language of act, the divinity of Jesus does not consist in the fact that he

successfully avoids death on our behalf, but it is hidden precisely in the fact that he dies for us and so conquers death. That is, we do not see through the humanity to an abstraction called divinity hidden somewhere behind the scenes. It is in and through the humanity, the suffering and dying, that we come up against what his divinity means. He does not come to protect us from death; he comes to do it to us. He brings death home to us. He does old beings to death. The suffering and dying Jesus is therefore the one in whom we meet our end, the eschatological end of our existence in bondage to sin and death. He is the end of the old being who vainly constructs death-denying projects, who thinks that abstractions such as divinity and immortality can save.

Daily, death-denying projects? Too busy to go to the marriage supper? "Well I just got married." "Well, I need to take care of my business, be diligent." There is nothing wrong with these things unless they are put before Christ. Then they become demigods - worshiped as idols before God. You can have your family before God. "I know now that I can bless Abraham because he will command his children." A lot of men won't command their children because they, themselves, do not want to be commanded. Abraham didn't make little Isaac his god. If you make little Isaac or Isacca your god, you will pay. You make them little consumers so they can finally catch something – they will be swallowed.

He puts an end to our old story negatively and positively. He is the end (finis) of the old, and the goal (telos) of the new. The old is put to death so that the new can be resurrected in faith and hope to look to the last day in confidence.

There, is perfect peace. If you really knew there was a better place you were going to, not as an abstraction but convinced in faith, you would not be in fear. I have that hope, but how deep does it go?

In the language of act the divinity of Jesus consists in the fact that precisely through his suffering, death and resurrection, he does good to us. As John's gospel has it, in the instance where Jesus gets into trouble for breaking the old order by healing on the Sabbath, the Son does what he sees the Father doing. Their unity is a unity of doing. "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever he does, that the Son does likewise" (John 5:19). He was, of course, killed for that, killed by the likes of us who did not want the old to end because we thought we could bring it to a better end ourselves.

We perceive the Word centering in on our hearts, minds, and thoughts, and we want to kill the one who is bringing it to us. We get busy and tell Jesus to keep out. We see the sword just about to go into our heart and we get busy, fast. "Excuse me..." "I would have called, but I didn't want to bother you."

But even in his dying, he does only what "He sees the Father doing" to the end. As the one who actually dies, unprotected, rejected, forsaken, even by God, he is "the end of us" as beings who thought divinity was a protection. The crucifixion of Jesus is the end of us. We cannot see through it. There is nothing "godlike" here for old beings to recognize. It is simply the end. God is through with us as old beings. There can be no survivors, no spectators. The only way forward is through faith in the resurrection.

All your worries and fears are over. What were they about? To get the praise of men or women. You wasted your life on all that, when you could have just received Christ. But it is not too late. If you want to put it off another 40 years, that's your business.

Thus Jesus is the repetition of God to us, because in the first place he is the absolute end of the old, the chaos of darkness, bondage, and sin. He is the end of all the old being's hopes, dreams, and fantasies. He shatters our godlike pretensions, even the possibility of finding them reinforced in his divinity.

What do you hope in? The way to get your mind on Him and that brings you into rest and peace, is that you would love the church so that the church finally presses you out and you no longer have hope in yourself, but hope in the one all-powerful God who raises the dead. And He doesn't like to wait around too long to do it.

Jesus is the repetition of God to us. It is a repetition, in the first place, because we have encountered this end before, though we have fun away from it. God not proclaimed, the absolute God (*dues ipse*) of the magnificent abstractions, we have said, is the end of us, the death of us. For God not proclaimed leaves us no room, no freedom, no future. In terror and bondage we flee that God, succumbing to the temptation to take matters into our own hands, to be as gods ourselves.

Because we flee, we have no end, no *telos*, no destiny, no purpose. It just becomes vanity - under the sun living - your world without end.

But we are not gods, and so we have no end (no telos). We wonder what “fate” or “destiny” or “chance” will bring, or what “history” will say about us. We thought to escape fate or chance by claiming freedom, but we only placed ourselves in its hands. Having no end, we are subject to concupiscence, endless desire, driven by a law which says only, ‘No end in sight.’

There is no end but you, so you'd better get consuming - come on down, it's going fast.

Jesus ends all that. Jesus finds us in our endless flight. He finds us out. Jesus repeats, we might say, “the God experience” by dying for us. He is the one in whom the God crisis confronts us again concretely, the end of everything, the end of our godlike pretensions, the end of the law, the end of the age, and – dare we say it? – the end of God? Certainly the end of God as wrath! He dies the death we refuse to die. “It is finished.”

In all that, he creates in us, through the proclamation, faith. And faith enables us to enter into God's rest. Faith that ultimately works by love. How does it work? The Body of Christ, the Gifts of Christ, come through the conversation. You're not even aware of it. Gifts that come to you in your brother - conversation that washes you. You take it so lightly, you may not even know it. The friendship of fellowship.

Love is longsuffering. In other word, it doesn't expect fruit today. Everything is in God's season. I look on as a husbandman waiting for a harvest, but I know it is not on me to bring the fruit. I can't make it rain, nor make sunshine. He will give us the latter rain and the sun, so that Christ will be formed in you and in me.

Blessed are they who are called to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, the bread of life. The lamb dwells on the throne in the midst of us.

To be spiritually minded is peace. Set your affections on the things of God; the things above. The kingdom of God is about peace. An invitation to a banquet. People won't come in today because they are about their god-project.

The Word was with God and the Word was God.

Those who don't end are subjected to continual, ongoing lust and concupiscence. Envy (lust) causes divisions and wars among them.

Love doesn't seek its own; it envieth not. Someone getting something you don't have brings out envy in you.

The carnal mind has not reconciled itself to death so it lives in continual concupiscence: "What did you get? How much?" Do you still care about that? It works.

The key to all of this - the key to rest starts when you admit that because of your total depravity you are unable to keep your mind stayed on him. This is just the start. Then you realize that there are two of you and one of you always keeps his mind on the Word of God and does the will of his Father. Good thing he drowned old Adam again this morning. Good thing the water of the Word washed the bride once again. This isn't theory. Knowledge won't help you. Remembering words won't help you. It's the cross.

Why is it then that people have no peace? They may have peace as the world gives - silence, the murdering breath, "Don't bother me, I'm mad at you." You're hurt and misunderstood, aren't you? Get over it! If you don't die once daily, you live in lust.

The key to keeping your mind stayed is nothing more than the Word and what it means - VOCATION!

This is where your neighbor drives you out of your mind into the mind of Christ. If you are a father, mother, son, or daughter, you have a vocation, several of them. In vocation, people can see that you've died this morning that you've died to worries, cares, concupiscence, and inordinate affections with people. Have you died to judging people or trying to control people, even if they are your wife or husband, children or parents? Some of the children here are better at controlling their parents, than their parents are at controlling them. It is a curse when Israel is ruled by women and children. It is because men have abdicated. If a man doesn't wash his wife he doesn't love her. God is quite capable of washing me.

Vocation comes into the world of your neighbor and that is the key to keeping your mind on Christ. Christ is in your neighbor, even in someone less mature than you. This takes the form of seeing the necessity of daily sacraments - communion and baptism. It is no longer I who live. It is no longer the old man the devil keeps trying to get you to identify with. Get rid of the old man (Gal 2:20). Paul is beside himself, out of his mind: "It is no longer I who live."

You can always tell who is not a babe - fruit, but not in the form of works. Works follow those who are dead in Christ (Rev 14). If you're dead you can say, "It is no longer I who live."

We call him Emanuel, God with us. It is a question of where you live: Under the sun or In Him? I am convinced that most of your sin isn't as deliberate as you think - it is more of

deception. Demanding people do what I want them to, do I call that fruit?

We were all sinners in Egypt, but the Lord brought us out with a mighty hand. Now we can go into the Land of Promise - the land of sweet rest that the gospel brings, the gospel of what God has done in Jesus Christ, the good news that all of your sins have been forgiven, every last one of them. Sins of the heart are all forgiven.

Isa 26:3 should be seen through both law and gospel. Then we receive grace through the knowledge of the gospel. Many are too busy to come to the supper of the Word of God. You become what you eat. The book is the living testaments among you as your conversation washes and baptizes.

So the beginning of rest is first the realization that we can't do it, that is one of us. But Christ is, has and will yet do it if we allow him. For you to think that you can keep your mind stayed on him is false optimism that will end in despair.

Sheep have a tendency to get out. The Lord is our Shepherd who brings his sheep to rest with his rod. He wants to bring us to his marriage supper. All the things that we would be worried about aren't big when we're brought before God. We forget this if we're not in baptism daily.

Why don't we have time to do nothing? Think of the time people spend getting things. He restoreth my soul and leadeth me to still waters. Restore- brings me back to the starting point, back home again, call to mind

Ephes. 2:14 (KJV) For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

God will finish what he starts. Naturally, you would want to give and give to children. But there comes a time when it would not be good for them.

If you love the brethren, your heart will have confidence - be assured. Love is long-suffering and doesn't demand instant results.

VOCATION - let us rest. Through his grace, through his active work in us, we rest in Him. Because he is who he is, we can rest. Love is longsuffering and does not seek its own.

He will have perfect peace because he trusts in thee and keeps his mind stayed on Thee. The origin of peace is justified by faith. Since we are justified by faith we have peace with God –

harmonious with one mind. We have peace with God when we remember we are justified in Christ. I will keep him in perfect peace.

Isa 26:3 - is a promise. Does God break his promise?

The peace he speaks of here is the gift of God. He who trusts in him receives this peace because he knows the-character of God. When you hear evil tidings you can relax. My God - I will trust Him. I won't trust in other things like my own story. He will keep him in perfect peace - the mind is support, or upheld by Christ. It is he who does it. We are the passive recipients. If we trust in other things, we won't have peace. What you look to and take refuge in is your God, according to Luther.

He has put a gift in each of you and that is why the head can't say to the hand, I have no need of you.

The Gospel: Proclamation all the time. Blessed are they who are called unto the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. They will be looking to God as the author and finisher of everything, every day. Behold the Lamb of God.

1 John 1:2-9 (KJV)

Behold Him! Where is he to behold? He's on the road to Emmaus today. When the breaking of the Word comes forth to you in your conversations, say to yourself, "This is nothing other than the Word of God showing up in an earthen vessel" Behold Him! You who are sometimes heavy laden with cares, worries and doubts, come, take and eat of this my body. The blood, a better blood, was shed for the remission of your sins. Daily, through our vocation, our sanctification is worked out.

The calling - He is saying, Come, Come unto me. We're going to have a banquet. You who were losers, not too good, you who were no where near being as the Pharisees, come. Come to the living God who dwells in Zion. Come to Emmanuel. Come to the conversation that in and among each of you. Each of your function as priests. You have a high calling and it is a pastoral calling too, but don't take the word in some limited context.

Prayer: Blessed are we because we have been called to your marriage feast this day, and every day this week. We've been called to the true charisma of your Word; each person having your word in them and manifesting it in different ways. We thank you that we can look at the Scripture through law and gospel. It is impossible with men, but our eyes are on you, the

fulfillment, even in us. We look to your Word in faith and trust. We look at you for our failures, knowing that even those will work together for good.

Sermon Notes - Don O'Connor - 1/16/05

(The message through Jennifer's ears.)

I am interested in, the hope of my heart is, that each person here would be at peace. I stand before God and I stand between those God has given me in my office. It doesn't mean that I am any better than anyone here. But I believe my motive is from the Lord.

Text:

Isaiah 26:3 (KJV) Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

I read this scripture and ask, "Who is at perfect peace?" Are you in perfect peace?

What could help you is to see this scripture through law and gospel. There will be joy and no more condemnation. In Christ we are in perfect peace. The beginning of peace and rest in your life is to be aware that you can't keep your mind stayed on him. How many of you kept your mind steadfast on God, Jesus Christ - the Proclaimed Word? Well then, you ought to be condemned. If you only look at the Scripture through law you will be condemned. Knowing this won't help, but there is something that does help.

The original language means the mind that is supported or upheld by Him.

Isaiah 26:3 (KJV) Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind (is supported or upheld by himself) is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. The mind that has been washed is the mind that is stayed on Christ.

Isaiah 57:21 (KJV) There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

Rev. 21:8 (KJV)

Who are these who cease from their labors?

Rev. 14:13 (KJV)

Who are they? They are the dead who die in the Lord. Are you one of them? Have you been crucified? Yes.

The opposite of rest to me, and the way it is manifest, is to be turned inward - taking thought for your life, your needs, cares and worries - YOURSELF. I think this is a good foretaste of hell. When the wrong one is on the throne, everything has to be interpreted by my lust, my desire, and my concupiscence.

How can keeping your mind stayed on him be practical? What would it take? How many of you have been bird watchers - fruit inspectors - already today? God is setting you up all the time for things to be brought out of you. All it takes is for someone to get something, particularly a husband or wife. You have things a lot of people in this world would like to get. Some of them would shoot you to get what you have.

Rev 21: 8 The fearful and unbelieving will be thrown into a lake of fire and torment. Praise the Lord, this is not just allegorical.

Since we enter into perfect peace through keeping our mind on him, how does that work?

Let me tell you first how it doesn't work.

1 Cor. 2:9-12 (KJV)

The media today will tell you all the things you should be getting, how you should look, and what you should own. It will tell you all the problems in the world that you are not solving, to where it will drain you if you let it. A lot of people try to solve their unrest by buying things, becoming consumers. You have not been given the spirit of the world, but we have been given the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

If you have more value on the package than what is in it, you are tricked. You judge by the outward. Our value system has been conditioned by this world to put value on what is useful and what gives us glory.

1 Cor. 2:13-16 (KJV) Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. [14] But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. [15] But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. [16] For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

The mind of Christ is the mind that keeps stayed upon the Word, upon Christ. The mind of Christ is about doing his Father's will, about speaking his Father's words and loving his

neighbor.

1 Cor. 3:1-3 (KJV)

If you are envious, you are still carnally minded. How much of your mind do you keep on the Lord if you are envious? How many of you are envious? How many of you, more often than not, call it by another name. The theologian of glory cannot call envy, envy. The theologian of glory justifies lust and envy. They may be offended at what someone else got. "God, how come you gave them that and not me?" Other people could say that of you, and they are.

Divisions: What is dividing you from your brothers and sisters?

Cor. 12:1 (KJV) Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

How to keep your mind stayed is first to admit your utter inability. Then you begin to look on the cares of others. It's your vocations that bring you to your neighbor. Your family is a good place to start for some people, but this might be an over-familiar place for others. You are the servant.

There is still a promise of rest which none entered into beside Caleb and Joshua because who alone trusted God. By faith, we are in Christ daily. It is a vocation. You are all apostolic if need be. We are all the off- scouring of the earth. Grace and peace are multiplied through the knowledge of God.

Luther says in The Smalcald Articles (Not exact quote.)

We will now return to the Gospel, which not merely in one way gives us counsel and aid against sin; for God is superabundantly rich [and liberal] in His grace [and goodness]. First, through the spoken Word by which the forgiveness of sins is preached [He commands to be preached] in the whole world; which is the peculiar office of the Gospel. Secondly, through Baptism. Thirdly, through the holy Sacrament of the Altar. Fourthly, through the power of the keys, and also through the mutual conversation and consolation of brethren, Matt. 18, 20: Where two or three are gathered together, etc."