

Third Sunday after Trinity: Luke 15:11–32

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Those who have passed on have left us an inheritance we're only just beginning to discover.

You can see why some people are rich; they have no need for a king that is above them, ahead of them, on top of them. We'll have a vending machine Jesus, but to say that the Word of God is king...

The reason you're dried up is because you think it is Christ in you alone. You are an enthusiast, and you think you're sufficient in yourself. I'm only talking to people who are dried up. There are a lot of ways to say it. He's greater than our glory story. With this in mind we can take communion. I believe in the communion of saints and that God has chosen ways to give to us today, ways that seem foolish to our natural reasoning. He can give himself to us in wine and bread. Faith receives it. Faith can be saying, "Help my unbelief." This can be a faithful statement, when a man says this to God from his heart. I'm not going to try to peer into mysteries; I'm going to simply receive.

Luke 15:1-2 (KJV) Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. [2] And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

A sinner will hear, but Pharisees and Scribes are watching for evil. They watched how they can entrap him. A lot of people do this today because they don't have a king. Their whole issue is glory. If I can find some evil in you, then, for one thing, I wouldn't have to hear you. Why are people offended? Because they want to be offended. They watch for offences. What I've discovered is that people love injustices. They are so happy when they can find something "unjust." It is demonic. But we have a God who loves us.

When you were born into your family, did your parents wait 4-5 years to see how you did before they gave you your name? No. Today you're given your name. Whoever you're going to be is a gift. While we were, and sometimes are yet sinners, if you'd like, Christ died for us. Look at the sinners you might judge among us, judgment in the form of condemning them.

We preach Law and Gospel, but it is to bring an end of living in their prison house of legalism which they've lived in their whole life. Their whole life is predicated on legalism; family laws, the law of appearances, the law of looking good - all kind of laws. Are you saying we should take ugly pills? Don't misunderstand me. Paul said it was a very small thing what the Corinthians thought of him. In Galatia he fought against legalism. Were you thinking evil of someone this past week? You must have some law they broke. You didn't break it, so you must be a notch above them. Saul was head and shoulders above everyone in Israel, and he tried to kill David, the Anointed. He even hated his own son and threw a javelin at him. Saul is a type of flesh. Flesh is under the curse. Flesh = ashes to ashes.

Jesus Christ has abolished death. Tell the daughters of Jerusalem that. Jesus has just been scourged, crowned and given a cross carry. Jesus tells the daughters of Jerusalem not to weep for Him but for themselves and their children. He meant exactly what He said. Weeping may endure for a night. "Weep for yourself and your children. Why are you weeping for Me?" He knew there was wrath to come.

Remember who Jesus is talking to here in Luke 15 - Pharisees, Scribes, who were murmuring that Jesus received sinners. Are you receiving sinners? A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves. They beat him up and left him for dead. Two people came by; a Levite and a priest. They passed right by him. But the Samaritan, who is the dead-ringer for Jesus who can be who He wants to be, he stopped by and bound the man's wounds and took him to an inn. He came down for all of us who were left as dead, and he poured into our wounds the wine, the Holy Spirit, and he poured it into us to heal us and will do so today, if we receive it. We don't want to receive it because we don't like the vessels He comes in. They're not worthy enough. That is what this son says to his Father. "I'm not even worthy to be in the kingdom, or in the church, or in your home." How did he come to that conclusion? Wrath - trouble.

"We know that we're under the blood." Not when you leave your father's house. To leave his father's house the son discovered something - death. For you to be cut off from your father's house is death. If you're worthy if you can afford to avoid the communion of saints, the means of grace, the daily sacraments of communion and baptism. If you can afford to have mutual conversation between you and some other person in the church, somebody you can groove with, somebody you can use, or maybe even be used by, you're cut off with offences which you use to justify yourself.

Luke 15:11-12 (KJV) And he said, A certain man had two sons: [12] And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.

When He gave you life, He just gave you life. You might have thought that it was your parents that gave you life, or that you arranged your marriage. You didn't know that God was giving you what he knew you needed from the beginning. You may have married a famine; maybe a famine for being a king or queen. The one you married won't always let you be that. Of course, divorce is always an alternative - it's better than blackmail. Some of you in this church that love to have problems all the time, and love to come with your stories, daily and hourly if you could get someone to listen, I submit to you that you could go to a good psychiatrist. What's \$175 an hour if you get healed and you get told it's not your fault? This is what you want to hear anyway, isn't it? It's their fault? Some people think it was at the point where they got here that their problems started, or when they got married to their wife. That's a lie. You were doing just as rotten before. "Well, I did alright until I had a son like this." Adam is Adam.

Luke 15: Here is life. He gave it to us.

Luke 15:13 (KJV) And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

"Well, I never got to be as riotous as I want." There are meat slicers. If you want to stick your nose in that riotous living, go right ahead. Have at it. You argue every day because you're right and you know more than the person that is laying down their life for you; go get a job where people appreciate you for all you know. Forget it! There is too much money you're leaving on the table being so right.

Luke 15:14 (KJV) And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

How do you feed swine? What do swine feed off of? Husks - emptiness - vanity - babble. We'll be polite and call it those things. Luke 15:15 (KJV) And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

The kingdom of God is yours. "What about tomorrow? I've got to secure my future. There's definitely a famine in this land. I'm going to build bigger barns. I might lose control if I don't

take control right now.”

Luke 15:16 (KJV) And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. No man gave to him. Thank you Lord! Be careful who you prop up, what lie you prop up. That's not love. "Who are you talking about today? You must be centering in on me." Who has had thoughts like that? You're right.

This young man here is every man. By now you should know that.

Luke 15:17 (KJV) And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

When he came to himself he said a miraculous thing. Or, you can fill yourself with husks the rest of your life - emptiness - babble. He rehearsed his story.

Luke 15:18-19 (KJV) I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, [19] And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

What's worthy? That is the end of the glory story. "I've justified myself. I've been in this church for 20 years, giving, giving and giving, and you owe me. Look how faithful I've been with my wife and my children (my husband and my children), and you owe." Have you been that faithful with your mother, or is she just another concession, a vending machine and she's not doing enough, and you have ways of letting her know it with your continual contention? And you think you're fooling people, and that is what's so funny. You are - you're fooling one. What do you get for your deception? Nothing. I cannot give to that. And I don't like you preventing me from giving. I cannot eat rancid meat. Can you? Can you stomach that? Good, you must believe in a God of Justice.

When Jesus came to Jirus house, and Tabitha, she was dead. He said, "The maid is not dead; she sleeps." What did they do? They laughed him to scorn. When you start talking about the true power of God, it is not of this world. This world is ashes to ashes, and that is all it is, flesh. All it is, is dust to dust. If you have hope in this world you will be fearful. If you have fear, you prove that you have hope in this world. The world - the present passing away, the illusion, the cosmos, where only these things are of value: the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life (I am worthy to receive honor). Do you have a flesh that lusts against the Spirit of God? Who is this thing called Jesus but an extension of your lust? Your mother is

letting you down again and not doing a very good job. I can see why you'd be discontent. Your mother is a friend of Jesus, unlike yourself.

I've been praying lately, and it's kind of Durkiniist kind of prayer, "Dear Friend of Sinners, it's me again." If He's not a friend of sinners, we've got a problem. Being a friend of sinners got him in trouble. The religious legalism of your mind doesn't like that. It may be useful for you to say, "I'm a sinner. I'm worse!" "Well, there are two of me." That's no confession - just defense, arrogance, and pride, co-opting God's Word to save your life, your sinful identity. It's common to man.

This boy here, who is he? I try to imagine what he was doing out there? I try to imagine him buying a round of drinks. "What a guy!" "You're the greatest!" People booed Alex Rodrigues in New York. This should show you something about people. He has an off week, or a off month, though he's one of the greatest, and they'll yell out, "Trade him!" I've been privileged to watch the best player in the league, the best hitter, Ted Williams. Six times out of 10 he made outs. How's your average? Just cause you make outs, don't worry. Babe Ruth has the record on strike outs. Who cares about your strike outs? You and the devil. "Oh God! Now everyone's going to know. My friends will reject me." It's okay. What do you need with earthly glory? It's dust? "Well, it's all I've got." You said a mouthful there - a mouthful of dust. Take care of your body, it's all you've got, the advertisements say.

The young people could get a vision to turn the world upside down. As you get near this gospel, which I haven't got to yet, it is explosive. It is unconditional. Imagine the people you know who haven't heard this. All they've heard is some religious tripe about a vending machine God who breaks periodically. They kick him. "We come to the meeting and no Pepsi's. No Cadillac? It was all a lie." "I believed what Ken said. I sent my \$60 in for a year, went out the mailbox and I still haven't got my check - my healing." Get rid of a god like that. The world wants to see Jesus. The Greeks said, "We would see Jesus." We've seen enough religion. We've got our own religion. The Greeks certainly believed the body was not all there is. They knew there was more to it than that. They staked their life on that and they didn't know what it was until Paul went up to Mars Hill.

Luke 15:20-21 (KJV) And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. [21] And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

He did not say, "My flesh has sinned." That is you, the sin. You have to admit that God deals in opposites. If you haven't caught onto that, you could be offended, and from your perspective justifiably so. The world is offended, but they don't understand that he deals in opposites. They got their understanding from triumphant, victorious Christendom. Come after me and it will cost you everything. Young people like that. Communism had such a pull on people, particularly in Eastern Europe, because they had no hope in religion.

Daily pouring out, is the law, not the gospel. The gospel always comes as promise, gift, forgiveness, absolution, and ends with nothing left to do regarding this relationship. Down here, there was a man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. What would you like to do? The Levite and priest walked right by him. Have you done this? Have you walked by someone who wasn't useful to you? "Do I have to stop, Don?" No, what you should do is take care of you and yours and teach them to do that also. Make sure they don't have a vision that is way beyond what is in front of them. Make sure now, and see how they turn out. The problem is, they don't turn out; they turn in. They think life is about getting stuff. Even though it kills them, they think that if they had more stuff, they wouldn't feel this angst. Jesus must sound crazy. It is a paradox. Whom he loves, he makes poor miserable sinners; not that they weren't already, but they've got some morality to boast in, some attainments, and they live in illusions. They might think they're Alex Rodriguez, or they could have been if their parents had more PE for them, or the school had provided more PE for them. Is there nothing higher to be than Alex, or a teen idol? Go down to San Francisco, or maybe you could talk to Glen after the meeting if you want to know more about playing guitar. You won't get anything from Glen. You know how he is. He's not into that anymore.

Blessed are you poor. That's the song that was sung. He is our story, and that's what Cameron Jr. was all about - his father's story. Where's he at? Well, they scorned Jesus when he said, "This girl is not dead; she's sleeping." Martha and the other Jews said, "Couldn't this man have done something," for his friend Lazarus? Have you ever asked, "Couldn't they have done something for me. I'm in this plight because of that." That's the devil speaking. Have you ever listened to the devil's voice?

Luke 15:21 (KJV) And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. You can't say that. Only after Christ is done with what he's going to do will those words be a reality, will you really understand the weight of that. "Oh yea, I've crucified Jesus." Where is he crucified, do you think? Revelation says in

Sodom and Egypt. He's always crucified in Egypt. Who wrote that? John. "Poor John - he doesn't know that it was really Jerusalem where Jesus was killed and persecuted."

God led the son to true confession. Are you worthy? Alright, Alex, go for it!

Luke 15:21 (KJV) And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

Luke 15:22 (KJV) But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:

This is the gospel. The Father was looking for him before he came back. The father never stops looking for us. In Christ, the Good Shepherd, the Father pursues the sheep, the lost sheep. He has ways of pursuing us.

Luke 15:23 (KJV) And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry:

Bring Jesus let's eat Him. This is what Communion is all about - a gift. God so loved the world He gave.

You know about the older brother, don't you.

Justification by Faith – A Matter of Death and Life, Page 30

It is of great importance to see that the simul iustus et peccator is not a conclusion drawn from our failures under the legal system as a kind of sop to the "anxious conscience." That, I am afraid, is the way it is often treated. "Well, I admit I fall short in the legal system in my life. Oh well, it's okay because we're all simul iustus et peccator.

Leaving the legal scheme intact we come to realize at least now and then that we can't really do everything – after all, nobody's perfect! – so we settle for saying, "Oh well, we are simul iustus et peccator! Isn't that what Luther said after all?" Taken that way it is a counsel of despair, cheap comfort for lazy sinners. It boils down to the platitude that there is some good in the worst of us and some bad in the best of us. But that means only the simul is used as a rescue for the legal scheme instead of a complete departure from that scheme

You can't, and all your best efforts are just sin if they're done in your flesh.

Look what you did or didn't do, and compare yourself to others.

In the scriptures the divine imputation is the creative reality which by the very fact of imputation unmasks the reality and totality of sin at the same time. unmasked it...since God has to impute righteousness we must be sinners.

Since God has to impute righteousness (we can't get it under the legal scheme) then we must be sinners.

Or even had some hope in becoming according to our legal schemes.

Look at the records you've kept, you older brothers. "All these years, I did that, and never did that." Look at the metaphor and let it pierce your heart. This is the natural way of thinking. "I got a bad hand dealt to me." You have a new father. Who got a bad hand? That dead person who is buried in baptism with Christ. Are you still taking about him? Why. If any man is in Christ he is a new creature, and old things have passed away. You now live an ecstatic life.

Point to your gifts. Point to someone who is not useful to you.

Go ahead and save your life under the legal scheme. You've got some facts, don't you?

We must be made sinners. It would make no sense for him to impute righteousness if we were already wholly or partially righteous or even had some hope of becoming so according to our legal schemes. It would make no sense for God to forgive sins if we weren't actually sinners. He would simply be wasting his breath. Thus exactly in order that God "may be justified in his words" and "true when he judges" the thinking of ad modum Aristotelis must be jettisoned when we come to the question of justification. One must learn to thin ad modum scripturae.

There's a little good in the worst of us, and a little bad in the best of us; although you won't think in terms of these words.

Justification by unconditional decree means a complete break with thinking in terms of the legal schemes and processes. The most vital enemy of the grace of God, Luther insists throughout his commentary, is not so much the so-called godless sinner, but precisely the "righteous" who think in terms of a legal process, an "intrinsic" moral progress which renders grace fictional and gradually unnecessary.

"Who me, having a righteousness based on my offences, my record keeping, my comparing myself with others?"

When God imputes righteousness he makes us sinners at the same time. He makes it quite plain that we do not have righteousness in ourselves and never will. By declaring us righteous unilaterally, unconditionally for Christ's sake, he at the same time unmasks sin and unfaith. By forgiving sin, sin is revealed and attacked at the root in its totality: our unfaith, rebellion, and blindness, our unwillingness to move out of the legal prison, our refusal of life.

Only faith in the flat-out judgment of God is equipped to do battle with human sin. One can only be still and listen to the judge. That is the only salvation from both despair and presumption, immorality and super-morality. In the light of the creative, unconditional divine act it becomes clear not just that we have sinned and fallen short of the law, but precisely that "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory [precisely the glory] of God" and all he has created. By speaking unconditionally, the Creator is doing again a new thing.

But we speak that God has created a new creation, and it is a gift. This is offensive, though.

The younger brother is a new creation, and God did it. "I have sinned, father." In other words, what are the wages of sin? To be cut off from your father's house. When you say you have no need of anyone in the church, you have to defend yourself against the gifts, don't you? There is really a multitude of counsel here. Even young people here have some gifts. What can I do but avail myself? What can you do but live in the ecstatic existence of continuously receiving. Yes, when you are brought to poverty, to being poor, you can receive and live outside yourself instead of living outside of your father's house. You are a new creation and you have a new name; Son, Daughter, heir and joint heir. Where are the gifts of Christ? "Oh, he didn't give me one." That's a way to bury it. Just get around something thirsty and the waters will spring up within you.

One summer, Lewis went away on vacation and when he came back his well was dry. When you use it, it keeps the flow coming into it. Try to preserve it, and you may have to dig a new well, and that is how it works.

The gift of Christ is the Holy Spirit in each of you. You can grieve and vex the Holy Spirit by not confessing sin. That separates you, but not ultimately. God has a thing called "mighty famine." Is the famine the law? Could be. It always brings me to where I have no hope, and to Christ. God picks a young man in his strength - buying drinks for everyone. What a guy! "Money - he's giving away money. I love you honey, but you didn't give me enough this week. I'm tired of this machine; I'm getting a new one."

If your Jesus is nothing more than a vending machine, it means that you haven't seen the greater vending machine. If it isn't Christ you're coming to, it's a bad deal.

Theology is for Proclamation, Page 138

One speaks in the Spirit and imparts the Spirit when one speaks the unconditional gospel of Jesus Christ, when one is not afraid to declare the Word that slays and makes alive.

I forgive your sins. For Christ's sake, and in the Name of Jesus, I declare to you the forgiveness of God.

Imagine people, like your wife or your husband, you could speak the unconditional forgiveness of God and everything else to. "I love you. I forgive you." Ask any woman if this will kill her, when she knows it's from your heart. It disarms her.

The proclamation that puts an end to the old and begins the new in Christ is precisely what liberates us to believe and trust in God. Just exactly the nothing does it, the fact that the old Adam and Eve can do nothing and so are simply killed by the sword of the Spirit.

Nothing left to do? "Isn't there something?" How could you?

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One way or another, the "nothing to do" spells death. The Old Adam may, of course, think to take advantage of the situation. Since there is forgiveness, since there is nothing to do, we may exchange this liberty for license, try desperately to realize some kind of destiny by a life of self-indulgence.

A life of avoidance. No neighbors. "I can't indulge myself if they're around."

But that only means that the Old Adam has not died to sin and so shall die the death of sin from which there is no return. But that is a depressing business and one does best by spending as little time with it as possible. Paul usually just gives such positions the back of his hand...

Page 138 – The proclamation that Christ has died for us, that everything is accomplished, that nothing is to be done to redeem ourselves or establish our density, creates faith and reconciles to God.

When you're free of all men by being their servant, the servant of all, you'll be free of them. He is not merely necessary. Who is he? He's the king. Have you been made poor? This is

God's mercy. Sometimes He uses His law. You went by that man who was fallen by the way. When you come to the realization that Christ has done it, is doing it, and will yet do it, and you can't do it, you won't take it for license and think you're free to live a life satiating the flesh, a life of concupiscence. All flesh is grass, but Jesus has abolished death. What would you like to do? "Do I have to?"

Let me tell you one thing and then we'll close. I've told you before, but it bears repeating.

Thesis 28: By the way - it is not gospel. It's the fruit of the gospel. You could make it into a law. What does it mean that Luther says the love of God that lives in man loves, fools, sinners? Christ died for the ungodly, and while we were yet sinners he died for us. This is foreign to religion today that says we're to get saved and lead the good life. But there is none good. You're still simultaneous, and you can co-op that too, for license, and lead a life where Thesis 28 has been ripped out.

My big problem is I'm not poor so I can't be as blessed, until a mighty famine comes in my heart. I call suffering evil, or I try to do something about the suffering of someone I love, and I prop them up. I like the way Oswald Chambers dealt with that - he called them amateur providences. "Oh God, I will not let my little boy suffer." "Mommy loves you." "I won't my little daughter suffer, as you have." "Oh, I'll be the Good Samaritan there and bind up their owies with my tender, loving care." This sounds good until you see what an amateur providence is. God has ways. It manifests when I'm not living in the fruit of Thesis 28 - when I refuse to love my neighbor and fulfill the royal law of Christ. If you think evil of anyone you're hating them. It would be good to admit it and confess it.

You never have to look for a neighbor. When your heart is open, they'll find you. "Well, what about evangelism?" It should be so contagious, so explosive, so insane... "Well, I was doing good until you said insane." What's foolish in this world is acting as though you have nothing and yet possess all things. They're not worried. In the world, you're supposed to have anxieties because you're not getting yours.

Someone told me they were anxious, and someone said to me, "We were up there so we went to the mall." You could get anxious about not getting to the mall because you're down here. There is no end to that lust, except one - the Omega, the end. What if you were so busy being caught up in the Body of Christ, you couldn't turn in so much. Let me give you a little help there. In this world, in this life, we're never perfected in our flesh, but we do go from glory to

glory, and faith to faith. Stop and think. You'll meet some people this week that will have a worried look on their face. If you say anything confronting to them, like reproof, watch out where they will go to; where they're already at - ultimate despair. They will be talking all about themselves and what they're not getting.

The daughters that are weeping, the question you should have for them is, "Don't you have any neighbors? Why do you keep talking about yourself, justifying yourself, thinking about yourself, and comparing yourself to others?" Someone told me you were crucified, buried with Christ. Don't you have any neighbors that will deliver you from the prison house of legalism? You end up being miserable within yourself. This is why you get baptized every day, into the local church. The privilege you have, if you'd like, and it is not the gospel, is Thesis 28. It is not the gospel; it is the love of God that is the result of hearing the gospel. It is the fruit of the gospel and what does Christ deliver you from in that? Me. Myself. You may be pleased with yourself these days, so you don't need deliverance. But when you really allow the Word of God to pierce and search your heart... I got a pedicure, but it missed my heart.

Here you go! Go ahead, don't love your neighbors. Like I said, there is no hope in Jesus. Well then what have you been talking about? The only hope Adam has in Jesus is that Jesus would kill him. Have you managed to survive today? Too bad. If you haven't, the ultimate poverty of spirit is when you can confess the truth: It is no longer I that live, but it is the love of God that lives in me. I can't say to you, "Now we've heard, and let us love one another, and the peace of God be with you." It would be foolishness. What a wonderful thing faith is, so much so that a man would give everything for it - faith in what Christ has done for you, and does do for you, and will yet do for you. Even when you're selfish, again, he says, "I love you. I forgive you." I'll say the truth, and hopefully you'll pass it along because God has given you power to forgive sins: I declare to what God has said, what God has done. Those hidden sins, those shameful sins, those sins you don't even know about are all forgiven. When you come under this baptismal word, you come out a brand new creature.

Don, you were just talking about me today. Did you know you're here to be talked about? How many of you, if you really had a problem, would want me to talk to the elders about your problem?

I was recalling this morning, sometimes she'll say to me, "Would you forgive me for what I said last night, or yesterday?" I tell you the truth, and it's by the grace of God, I can't even remember, nor do I know what she's talking about. That wouldn't be me. What if you were

that way with everyone; you can't even remember what they said. To be caught up in the Body of Christ, in the Fruit of the Holy Spirit, you get so pressed out you don't have time to fear, or worry about tomorrow, which is a great sin and goes right against the Word of Jesus. It is a wonderful, glorious thing, a gift, to be caught up in the Body of Christ. The Body of Christ is everywhere. The communion of saints - to be caught up in that is to be free of me. Good riddance! Thank you Lord.

Knowing this, let us do nothing. Oh, you could never do nothing. But knowing this, why not rest today! Go home and enjoy whatever you have.

You are forgiven! I forgive you. If I can forget, anyone can forget. What's wrong with that? God has forgotten your sins. "Where did I put those sins? Oh yeah! In the sea of forgetfulness." Why are you dragging them up again? Whose sins are under the blood? Mine and my neighbors. But if I keep my sins, my offences, even though all that God has, has been given to me, and even though I, like the older brother, won't let go of my offences, and he couldn't enjoy the gifts of God in this world, I'm persuaded of better things.

May the God of all Mercy, comfort you and keep you in the peace of the Holy Spirit.

SOURCE

Sermon Notes - 427.08

(The message through Jennifer's ears.)