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Outlines on the Wuerttemberg Gospel Selections

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whelming Love of Christ. 1) It has freed us from sin's guilt, vv. 19-21, offering us this freedom in the Gospel, vv. 19 b, 20. 2) It has redeemed us from sin's penalty, v. 14. 3) It has delivered us from sin's power, vv. 15-17, offering us this deliverance in the Gospel, v. 18. — **Christ Is All in All.** 1) In Him we have been reconciled. 2) In Him God has established the Word of Reconciliation. 3) In Him we have been renewed. — **Calvary's Message:** 1) God is reconciled, therefore be ye reconciled. 2) Christ died for you, therefore live unto Him.

The pastor might preach a series of seven Lenten sermons on this text. 1) V. 14, *The Miraculous Death of Christ.* He died for all. We all have died. 2) V. 15, *The Purpose of Christ's Death.* We should live not unto ourselves. We should live unto Him. 3) V. 16, *True Knowledge of Christ.* Its nature, v. 16 b. Its effect, v. 16 a. 4) V. 17, *A Christian Is a New Creature.* That is a glorious fact. That is possible only through Christ. 5) Vv. 18, 19, *God Reconciled the World unto Himself.* That is an actual reconciliation. That is a universal reconciliation. 6) Vv. 19 b, 20, *God has Committed unto Man the Word of Reconciliation.* That is a glorious fact. Let us heed His plea. 7) Good Friday. V. 21, *The Vicarious Atonement.* Christ was made sin for us. We are made righteousness in Him.

THEO. LAETSCH

Outlines on the Wuerttemberg Gospel Selections

Palm Sunday

Luke 19:29-40

Today begins Holy Week in memory of the last days of Christ in the state of humiliation. The holy writers record every detail in the life of our Savior during these last days.

Momentous days! They bring us ever nearer to the great day of the all-atoning sacrifice and to the day of triumphant victory over devil, death, and hell. Today's text brings to our attention in a forceful manner that our Savior is not an ordinary man; that His going to Golgotha is not forced upon Him. He is the God-man who of His own free will lays down His life for our salvation.

Behold Our King!

1. *He is the King of Power* 2. *He is the King of Grace*

1

Vv. 29-31. The omniscient King commands, and everybody must obey. He knows where the colt is tied, vv. 32-34. His word is enough to make the owners yield. From afar He causes the strangers to obey. The owner's question (v. 33) shows that nothing

was prearranged between them and the Lord. It was the power of the King that made them yield.

And riding on the colt, He was hailed as the King coming to His city, v. 37. The multitude is seized with religious fervor, the path is strewn with garments and garlands, a shout of praise goes up, v. 38. And that is the same multitude that six days later would howl the terrible, "Crucify Him." But today they must hail Him as their King. He is the King of Power, the King of creation; He can, if it pleases Him, make even lifeless stones sing His praises, v. 40.

Behold your King. That man Jesus, lowly and poor of appearance, being formed in the likeness of man, living in the fashion of man, is the King of Power. It is the almighty God who is on His way to fight for us, to free us from the power of the devil and of death.

Saving the world is a superhuman task, but our King is equal to it; He is mighty to save, mighty to help. Our King is higher than the heavens. Rejoice, ye nations; rejoice, ye sinners, ye that are lost, ye that are weary and heavy laden! The mighty King Himself has come to rescue you. Satan is strong, death is fearful, mighty are the gates of hell, many and great are our sins; but behold your King; He is mightier than all your foes. The Stronger comes over the strong.

2

And this mighty King is also the King of Grace. He did not enter the city as a stern judge to condemn and to punish. True, the time would come when He would do just that, mete out retribution to the Jews for their mad unbelief and stubborn resistance. He foretold it this very day. He already saw the proud city in ruins, etc., vv. 43, 44.

But He wept over the city, v. 41. Today His heart swells with compassion. He comes as the King of Grace, with pardon for all sinners, to establish a time of grace, in which sinners can obtain pardon. He comes in the name of the Lord, v. 38. He is the Son whose coming the Father had promised ever since man lost Paradise; who was pictured by word and example as the Savior, the Prince of Peace, the divine Helper. He now has come to do the bidding of the Father in perfect obedience.

He is the King of Grace; therefore He goes forth uncomplainingly to an ignominious death, to be crowned with the crown of thorns, to shed His holy precious blood. But every thorn in that crown is a gleaming jewel of love and every drop of His blood a priceless pearl of pardoning grace.

And having thus prepared grace and every blessing for a

sinful world, He sends forth His messengers with the world-wide proclamation of peace in heaven, v. 38. And this word of grace and peace is a power of God unto salvation. Through this Word and His sacraments He comes to us and makes us His own.

Come, then, let us open wide the portals of our heart and joyfully receive our King of Grace. Come, let us adore Him. Jesus, to Thee will I live, to Thee will I die, Thine will I be now and forever.

Behold our King, the King of Power and the King of Grace.

H. J. BOUMAN

Maundy Thursday

Luke 22:7-20

For a better understanding of the text a brief description of the Old Testament Passover should be given in the introduction. The Old Testament Passover has served its purpose; our real Passover is Christ, 1 Cor. 5:7; He gives Himself to us in the Lord's Supper.

What does the Fact that Christ, Our Passover, Gives Himself to Us in the Lord's Supper Teach Us?

1. That He is our true Paschal Lamb.

a) V. 8. The Old Testament paschal lamb, a lamb without blemish, was originally slain in order that its blood, stricken on the door-posts, should be a token to the destroying angel to spare the children of Israel, Ex. 12:3-14. At the same time it was prefigurative of the Paschal Lamb of the New Testament, 1 Cor. 5:7.

b) Christ, who gives Himself to us in the Lord's Supper, is the true Paschal Lamb, without spot and blemish (without any sin of His own), whose blood, sprinkled upon our hearts, by faith in Him, compels the "destroying angel," the devil, to pass over, having no claim upon us, v. 20; 1 John 1:7.

2. That His one sacrifice offers an all-sufficient atonement.

a) The paschal lamb of the Old Testament was repeatedly slain, Ex. 13:10. It was ever to be a reminder of the Lord's deliverance of Israel from the Egyptian bondage and prefiguratively from the bondage of Satan and thus was to give assurance of entrance into the heavenly Canaan. The Old Testament Passover had served its purpose when Christ, the true Paschal Lamb, had come, vv. 15, 16.

b) Christ was slain but once, Heb. 10:14. In the Lord's Supper He is not offered up again and again as an unbloody sacrifice for the sins of the living and the dead, as the Roman Catholic Church teaches. The Lord's Supper is not a sacrifice but a supper, a feast,

in which Jesus offers the blessings of His one sacrifice on the cross. The Lord does not say, Offer My body as a sacrifice, but, "Take, eat, drink ye all of it," vv. 19, 20; Matt. 26:26, 27. By His one sacrifice Christ procured forgiveness for the sins of the whole world and offers Himself in the Sacrament as a pledge of such forgiveness.

3. That we should often partake of our true Paschal Lamb in the Lord's Supper.

a) In order to derive the blessings of the Passover, the children of Israel had to partake of the paschal lamb (every year). It was to be not only a "memorial," Ex. 12:14, but also a feast of communion between Jehovah and His Israelitish Church, Ezra 6:19-22.—By faith in the Savior, of whom the passover lamb was a type, the blessings were received.

b) In order to derive the blessings of the Lord's Supper, we must partake of the body and blood of our Paschal Lamb. Earthly elements: bread and wine ("fruit of the vine," v. 18); heavenly elements: Christ's body and blood, vv. 19, 20. Both; not transubstantiation. Oral, not only spiritual, eating and drinking. Christ's body and blood offered in the Sacrament were given and shed for the remission of our sins, vv. 19, 20; Matt. 26:26-28. In the Sacrament the Lord enters into close communion with us by giving us His body and blood in order to assure us of the blessings of His redemption. We should commune often for the strengthening of our faith. The Lord's Supper is not restricted to an annual event, 1 Cor. 11:25. "This do," says the Savior, v. 19. (See preface to Luther's Small Catechism.) The Christians of the early Church partook of the Sacrament daily during the days of persecution; weekly, was not uncommon.—"He is truly worthy and well prepared who has faith in these words," etc.

At the same time we are to do this in remembrance of our Savior's work of redemption, glorifying His name, v. 19; 1 Cor. 11:26.

4. That we should, by partaking of our Paschal Lamb in the Lord's Supper, give expression to Christian fellowship.

a) The paschal lamb of the Old Testament was eaten in the family circle; households that were small joined with others. It was restricted to God's people, v. 14. At the same time it was a token by which the children of God were known to be separate from the children of this world, Ezra 6:21.

b) Even so our partaking of the Lord's Supper gives expression to Christian fellowship, v. 14; 1 Cor. 10:17, to the fact that we are Christ's disciples and united with our fellow-Christians in Christ. It also gives expression to our separation from the

world, our exodus from sin to serve our God and Savior; yes, by the Sacrament we receive new spiritual strength to fight the battle against sin.

Let us thank our Savior for the Lord's Supper, often with a penitent and believing heart receive His body and blood for the strengthening of our faith and of our Christian life, give expression to our Christian fellowship, and show forth His death to the glory of His name, so that we may also in heaven be found at the marriage supper of the Lamb, vv. 16, 18; Rev. 19:9.

J. H. C. FRITZ

Good Friday

Mark 15:33-39

There are two aspects of the Good Friday story which must be kept in mind if a Christian would derive the greatest benefit from the contemplation of the various historical incidents which are recorded by the evangelists, in particular those associated with the climax of the story, the account of the Savior's death. On the one hand, we have here the most terrible arraignment of sin and its consequences, since the imputation of the sins of mankind to the world's Redeemer caused Him the unfathomable tortures of the cross. On the other hand, we have, in the victorious conclusion of the Savior's Passion on Calvary, the climax of the Savior's substitutionary work. When He exclaimed, "It is finished," the actual redemption had been accomplished. 2 Cor. 5:18 ff. These two aspects in our text.

The Two Most Profound Lessons of Good Friday

1. *The unspeakable depths of the Savior's final humiliation*
2. *The overwhelming impression made by the incidents attending His death*

1

In keeping with Old Testament prophecy (Pss. 22 and 69; Is. 53) and with the Savior's own prophetic statements, His state of humiliation reached its greatest depths on Calvary's hill. (The story as told by the four evangelists.)

Our text mentions in particular the scorn and derision of the Redeemer's enemies. Although some of them at least must have been familiar with Aramaic, they pretended not to have understood the Savior's cry. One of the scorners even made a great show at assisting the "culprit" by offering him a few drops of moisture on a sponge, vv. 35, 36. That is the way of the so-called practical jokers against the Christian faith to this day.

But a far deeper humiliation and far more mysterious than this contempt heaped upon Him by the rabble was the fact of the

Savior's rejection by the righteous God, vv. 33, 34. He to whom the sin of the whole world had been imputed, Is. 53:4-6, had to endure the punishment which God had laid upon men, Ps. 69:4 b, 5. To be forsaken of God is equivalent to enduring the tortures of eternal damnation. To such unspeakable depths did the Savior have to sink in His work of atonement.

2

The lesson of the Savior's perfect atonement is the sweetest Gospel. The almighty power of the Son of God enabled Him to carry His work to a successful conclusion. His sixth and His seventh word on the cross were not the utterances of a man who is obliged to yield because of exhaustion and weakness, but they are indications of the victory gained by Him in crushing the head of the Serpent, v. 37.

The veil hanging before the Most Holy Place was symbolical of the entire Old Testament covenant, the covenant of the Law. It separated between the place where God revealed Himself and the ordinary people. Under the Old Covenant God dealt with His people, as a rule, only through priests. But now this restriction, this obstruction, has been removed, and all believers have direct access to the throne of grace. See Letter to the Hebrews, e. g., 10:19, 20.

Such evidences of the deity of the Savior did not remain without their effect upon the people, as the evangelists relate, Matt. 27:51-53; Luke 23:48, 49. The centurion but voiced what every one is bound to declare when he follows the gospel narrative of the Savior's Great Passion, with its climax on Calvary, Gal. 2:20.

P. E. KRETZMANN

Easter Sunday

Matt. 28:1-10

Another Easter sun has risen in all its festive glory—but upon what a world! (Portray world conditions with a few bold strokes in the light of the most recent developments.) The world is writhing under the agonizing dominion of fear. Fear grips the hearts of men, dominates their thinking, and casts a deadening blight over their lives. Terrified by the present, they look into the future with dark forebodings, Luke 21:26; Lam. 3:47; Ps. 55:5.

But it was for just such a world that the Easter Gospel was given; and the more dismal and disheartening the background of contemporary events, the more indispensable and glorious does this Gospel appear.

So today. "Mid the encircling gloom," above the tumult and the shouting of the present crisis, we hear the voice of the Easter angel:

"Fear Not!"

1. *"For Christ is risen"*

2. *"And He goeth before you"*

1

A) Story of Easter morning up to v. 6: "He is risen."

B) Since Christ rose from the dead, we, His disciples, *need not fear*, v. 5; Rev. 1:17 b, 18.

1) We need not fear *death*. By nature man does, for he knows that he cannot stand in the presence of God, 1 Cor. 15:56; Heb. 10:31; 12:29. At present death is reaping a rich harvest (in war-stricken areas: among the armed forces on land and sea and in the air; in bombed and burning cities; by famine, lack of shelter and epidemics; in our own country: by increasing accidents, sudden death, etc.). Truly, 1 Sam. 20:3. Yet we need not fear, for we have the *risen* Christ. His resurrection affixed the seal to the redemption completed for us by His death on the cross and assures us of the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Thus death is transformed into the very gate of heaven, Rom. 4:25; John 14:19; 11:25 f.; 1 Cor. 15:20; Heb. 2:15; 1 Cor. 15:55-57. Hence we need not fear death but can say: Luke 2:29 f.

2) We need not fear *life*. It is true, life may at times be more hazardous than death. To live rightly may require more courage and steadfastness than to die rightly. Hence many devout souls today are afraid of life, afraid of the future. Why? Because of world conditions, alarming symptoms in the life of the Church, and their own frailty. But such fear is needless, for we have the *living* Christ. Having risen from the dead, He lives forevermore, Rev. 1:18; Rom. 6:9. He lives —

a) As the *King of the world*, supreme, omniscient, omnipotent, Eph. 1:20-22 a; Ps. 110:1; John 21:17; Matt. 28:18; Heb. 1:3. The world may be in confusion, war-torn, utterly hopeless, — "truth forever on the scaffold, wrong forever on the throne," — yet the living and exalted Christ is in control. "Great earthquakes" may rock our civilization, v. 2, yet: Hymn 524:2, 5. Hence, "fear not," Ps. 46:6 f.

b) As the *Head of the Church*, Eph. 1:22. The Church on earth may be rent by discord, despised by men, apparently weak and bungling, the victim of reverses and defeats, like the disciples in our text; yet: Matt. 16:18 b; Ps. 46:5. The Church is in the hands of the everliving Christ, who loves her, Eph. 5:25-27, and who will protect her, Rev. 3:10; Eph. 2:20. Hence, "fear not," Hymn 276:3; 466:4.

c) As the *Shepherd and Bishop of our souls*, 1 Pet. 2:25. True, we are sinful, frail, foolish. In addition, we are confronted with doubts, temptations, tribulations, even as were the early disciples. Our enemies are stronger than we are, Eph. 6:20. Well might we lose heart. But the living Christ is on our side, Matt. 28:20 b. Thus we have comfort, help, and the assurance of victory, 2 Tim. 1:12. Hymn 82:2. Hence, "fear not."

Recapitulation of Part 1. Hence the cheering voice of the Easter angel, v. 5 a.

2

A) But the risen, living Christ is not to be removed from His disciples in His state of exaltation. The angel says, "*He goeth before you*," v. 7 b. They are to meet Him, vv. 9, 10, to walk and commune with Him, Luke 24:15. Another reason why they ought not fear.

B) This is part of our Easter comfort. In this chaotic, perilous world the living Christ is not far from us, secluded in a distant heaven, removed from the ways, problems, and heartaches of His people. Even since His ascension *He is with us*, Matt. 28:20; 18:20.

1) *He accompanies us* on our way. This is not a figure of speech but reality, Acts 18:10 a. "Closer is He than breathing, nearer than hand and feet." (Describe what this means to us in various situations of life.) Hence, "fear not."

2) *He "goeth before" us*, v. 7. We need not choose the way ourselves; for: Ps. 48:14; Is. 49:10. By His voice, the Gospel, He guides us, John 10:4; by His example He leads us on, John 13:15; 1 Pet. 2:21. Thus we may journey through the perils of life and even through the valley of the shadow of death, Ps. 23:1, 4; Rev. 7:17. Hymn 218:9. Hence, "fear not," but: Hymn 331.

Conclusion.—Thank God for this Easter Gospel. But remember that its consolations belong only to those who truly "seek Jesus, which was crucified," v. 5, and who "worship Him," v. 9.

E. J. FRIEDRICH

Easter Monday

John 20:11-18

The Easter-story is thrilling, beautiful; the Easter Festival inspiring, memorable. But it is essential that the Easter Gospel set up in our hearts, by the working of the Holy Spirit, the conviction that Christ in His resurrection has entered into a relationship with us; and that this relationship is *eternal*. Easter means not merely the retelling of history; but it marks the establishing of life in every Christian, Rom. 6:4. It is not always easy

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for the Christian to preserve this sense of relationship and fellowship with the risen Savior. That He is invisible, that He is spoken against, that problems and difficulties continue, may shake this sense of relationship. Our sermon is to make clear and strengthen

Our Glorious Relationship to the Risen Savior

- 1. We are sure that He is our Savior*
- 2. We are with Him in everlasting fellowship*

1

As we meet Mary Magdalene, she still shares the ignorance of the disciples concerning the truth of the resurrection, v. 9. She is sad, v. 11; she assumes that death will hold Jesus, vv. 13, 15. But the Easter-message, made clear to her by the Savior Himself, brings about a glorious certainty.

A) The certainty that He has made good His word. How revealing is Mary's cry, "Rabboni!" The Rabbi was the teacher. She had followed Him, knew His teaching. Suddenly there flashes through her mind that teaching, always bound up with the resurrection, Matt. 17:9; 20:19; suddenly she realizes that it has all been proved. — a) The promise of the resurrection has been accomplished, John 2:19. It is the most startling promise; now that it stands, the rest does, too, 1 Cor. 15:14, 15. — b) The character and Word of Christ as a whole now becomes the object of the Christian's trust and confession. That Word proves itself not fiction or merely interesting; it is now the power of life, Acts 2:31; 4:33; Rom. 1:4.

B) The certainty that He has completed our redemption. Mary knew from experience that Christ had come to do battle with Satan and his empire, Luke 8:2. She felt in her sadness that the fight was given up. But now there is new certainty. — a) The resurrection means forgiveness of sins, the stamp of approval of the heavenly Father upon the work of redemption, Rom. 4:25. Satan is not merely attacked but defeated. Sin is conquered, 1 Cor. 15:17, 55-57. — b) The resurrection of Christ means the resurrection also of the Christian. Christ's solemn aim to be the Resurrection and the Life, John 11:25, is validated, 1 Cor. 15:19-23.

2

The uniqueness of this text consists in the remarkable way in which it glorifies every Christian's relationship with the risen Savior. Mary experienced the fulness of joy in finding and trusting the risen Savior; but an even greater joy was before her, and that is ours, too, the fellowship with Him.

A) This fellowship transcends even Mary's experience on Easter Day.—a) She thought, in the first moment of her Easter faith, that the time had come of which Jesus spoke to His disciples, that all things would be theirs, John 16:16-27. This evidently was her motive for a gesture of adoration, which Jesus stops. "Touch Me not." His reason could not be that she was not to adore Him as God or that He did not wish to be so adored. Cf. Marcus Dods *ad loc.*, *Expositor's Greek Testament*.—b) Rather did Jesus use this means of correcting her faulty impression concerning the fellowship of the risen Savior with His Christians. It was not to be a tangible, fleshly, and physically determined relationship; not one via touch. The true relationship would be entered into with His ascension, v. 17; that withdrawing of the visible form, while remaining ever present at the side of every Christian, that intimate union of the Christian with his Savior which is established by faith, engendered and strengthened and preserved through the Gospel.

B) This is the glorious fellowship in which we stand with Christ after this Easter and forever.—a) The Ascension is past; the message of the redemption and resurrection has come to us; through the power of the Spirit the Word has brought us life in Christ.—b) Now the glories of this fellowship are to permeate our lives as Christians. Proceeding out of our faith in the risen Lord is to come a life lived in and for Christ Jesus, aware of His presence, trusting in Him for every need, growing in the capacity to serve Him and to suffer for Him, Phil. 3:8-14. He, the risen Savior, is the Head, we are the members, 1 Cor. 6:14, 15. That changes everything—and always for good!

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

First Sunday after Easter

Luke 24:36-47

Christ issued from the grave with a celestial, spiritual body. Crowned with glory and majesty, He stood in the midst of His disciples and transformed them.

The Risen Lord Transforms His Disciples

He turns

1. their sorrow into joy
2. their darkness into light
3. their weakness into strength

1

The tragedy of Calvary had made tragic figures of Christ's disciples. They wept and lamented, were fearful lest they had adhered to an impostor.

But Christ arose and was now standing in their midst. Could it be He whom they knew to have died and to have been buried? Were they the victims of a delusion? Reproving them for their fears and doubts, Jesus asked them to behold His hands and feet and to recognize Him as Himself. Did He not have a body that can be handled? Has a spirit hands and feet, flesh and bones? And when they still believed not for joy and wonderment,—perhaps weighing within themselves whether a good fortune so immense might not turn out to be unreal,—Jesus ate before them. Recognizing Him, convinced of His resurrection, they became glad, v. 41; John 20:20.

However, their sins still plagued them, the consciousness of which had made them cringe before Him. He comforted them, vv. 46, 47. This meant remission of sins for them, too, even as He had entered in among them with the greeting "Peace be unto you."

Christ's suffering and death cannot be a matter of indifference to us either. A normal person can hardly help bewailing Jesus as He is being led to an ignominious and cruel death. However, we have a sorrow that lies much closer home, Luke 23:28. We are transgressors of God's Law, subject to death and damnation, and share with all sinners the responsibility for the crucifixion of the Son of God. But the risen Savior convinces us likewise of His resurrection and comforts us, too, with the remission of sins, based on His name, His suffering and rising again. Rom. 4:24, 25. This fits our trouble exactly and removes it.

2

There was a large blind spot in the disciples' vision. Extensive sections of Scripture, the most essential ones at that, were completely blacked out to their understanding. All references to Christ's Passion and consequent resurrection were meaningless to them, Luke 18:31-34. Christ proceeded to show them from the Scriptures the necessity of His suffering and rising again on the third day. And when He showed them that according to the Scriptures remission of sins must be preached in His name, they understood the purpose of His resurrection to have been the achieving of that righteousness which is imputed to all believers. With the recognition of this truth the bright daylight of a full understanding broke upon them. Now, in addition to the great relief of an unbearable burden fallen from them and in addition to the supreme joy of knowing themselves restored to God's favor, they had the satisfaction of understanding the Scriptures.

The sum and substance of Scripture is Christ, who died for our sins according to the Scriptures and rose again and thus pro-

cured remission of sins for all nations. Knowing this, one may be ignorant of much Biblical lore and yet understand the Scriptures. Not understanding this, one may be a walking Bible cyclopedia and yet not know the Scriptures. This understanding the risen Lord renews and increases in His disciples and with it the heavenly wisdom which delights the heart and lights up the pages of the Bible.

3

Of this knowledge the earth shall be full as the waters cover the sea, Is. 11:9. To bring this about was to be the task of the disciples, a pleasant assignment; for who would not be a bearer of joyful tidings? And of all glad news the gladdest and most salutary are "these things," Rom. 10:15.

It worked out thus in the life of the disciples. Before the resurrection of Jesus they were timid in confessing Him. But not long after Christ's resurrection things began to happen. They preached Christ with leonine courage, Acts 4:33, to all nations, Rom. 1:8; 10:18.

Repentance and remission of sins will ever be preached in Christ's name. This, too, is written and will inevitably be fulfilled to the end of time. The preaching of the Gospel will never be silenced. All Christians must necessarily take a hand in this. True faith cannot but be actively interested in mission-work, Acts 4:20; 2 Cor. 4:13, 14. *S. S. Hymnal*, 136:4; 318:1.

Let us attend to, but also at, the preaching of the Gospel! As the disciples thus (vv. 34, 35) spoke, Jesus stood in their midst, revealed Himself to them, and opened their understanding. Where Christians are gathered together in His name, He will turn their sorrow into joy, etc., Is. 61:3.

PAUL G. BIRKMANN

Second Sunday after Easter

John 10:22-30

The physical voice of Jesus was heard by friend and foe during His sojourn on earth. All mankind will hear the physical voice of Jesus on that great Day of Judgment. Some will tremble; the blessed will rejoice. Fanatics endeavor to hear the physical voice of Jesus now, in dreams, in trances, in the sighing breeze, in the roar of thunder. We Christians expect to hear that pleasant sound yonder in heaven. Until then we hear His voice as He speaks to us now.

The Voice of Jesus

1. It is the Word of God.

The term "voice" is often used to denote official speaking and teaching, like the term "word." Such teaching may be oral,

in writing, by representation, by reproduction. Thus Jesus employs the term here. If He referred to His physical voice only, we would not be His sheep. Some would confine His voice to the word which He spoke physically as emphasized in red-letter editions of the Bible. However, the Father endorses every word of the Son; the Son reiterates every word of the Father; the Holy Spirit has given by inspiration, and still preserves, the voice of Jesus. See v.30; Matt.17:5; Deut.18:15,18; 2 Pet.1:16-21. The Father is God; the Son is God, v.30. The perpetuated voice of Jesus is the inspired Word of God, the Bible.

The hearers of the voice of Jesus on the occasion of our text heard a reprimand and judgment, vv. 25, 26; and they heard words of grace, vv. 27-29. The voice of Jesus is the Law; cp. Matt. 5-7; chap. 23; but Jesus came primarily to preach the Gospel. While He is the Lawgiver and Judge, above all He is our Redeemer and Friend. His Word is supported by His works, v. 25, by His acts of justice, by His acts of mercy.

Since the voice of Jesus is the Word of God, it is as loud as the Church speaks it, reaches as far as the Church extends the Gospel, as polyglot as the Church, and it will speak to the end of time. Where it is not speaking, there confused voices spread confusion. (Context.)

The doctrine of the prophetic office of Christ teaches how the voice of Jesus speaks today.

Transitus: Hear ye Him, Matt. 15:5.

2. It brings peace and blessedness, Luke 11:28.

Christ's voice speaks to be heard by man. Some do not hear it, except with prejudice, and to reject it. They hear and heed the voice of the flesh, of perverted reason, of the world, of Satan. The voice of Jesus as Lawgiver announces judgment on the unbelieving, v. 26 b; 9:39 to 10:6. Jesus as the Savior calls those His sheep who hear gratefully to heed. The manner of hearing is indicated also by the Greek tense, vv. 27, 28. The hearing of the voice of Jesus is the evidence and confession of our relation to Christ, v. 27 a; John 18:37. Do you love and heed the voice of Jesus?

Believing hearers of Christ are comforted and made happy by Christ's affectionate and effective knowledge of them, by the present possession and future enjoyment of eternal life; by deliverance from perdition, by divine protection and safety, vv. 27-29.

The voice of Jesus is calling today, instructing, encouraging, preserving, comforting, 2 Tim. 3:15-17. Guided by His voice, let us follow Him.

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