

The Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 16)
 Year of the Lord 2019
 Luke 13

**“Holy Spirit, Light Divine, shine upon this heart of mine;
 Chase the shades of night away; turn the darkness into day!”
 “Let me see my Savior’s face; let me all HIS beauties trace!
 Show those glorious truths to me which are only known to
 Thee!”**

Luke 13:22–30 *[Jesus] went on his way through towns and villages, teaching and journeying toward Jerusalem. And someone said to him, “Lord, will those who are saved be few?”* And he said to them, “Strive to enter through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the master of the house has risen and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, open to us,’ then he will answer you, ‘I do not know where you come from.’ Then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets.’ But he will say, ‘I tell you, I do not know where you come from. Depart from me, all you workers of evil!’ In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but you yourselves cast out. And people will come from east and west, and from north and south, and recline at table in the kingdom of God. And behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last.”¹

In the Name of Jesus:

‘I am the Lord your God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt. You shall NOT have any OTHER gods set in my presence.’ Right there! I need go no farther than the First Commandment of Moses; to learn what my PROBLEM is; AND why the Lord Jesus taught and journeyed TOWARD Jerusalem. A journey that maybe the Egyptians would call a disaster; and those who crucified Him—for whom He prayed!; and those who handed Him over into the hands of sinful men. Thus, all the mocking and laughter of Our King; crown made of thorns and regal staff taken from His hands to strike Him. ‘King of the Jews! Ha!’

¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Lk 12:49–54). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

³⁵ And the people stood by, watching, but the rulers scoffed at him, saying, “He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!” ³⁶ The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine ³⁷ and saying, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!” ³⁸ There was also an inscription over him, “This is the King of the Jews.” ² (I added the ‘Haha.’ But that’s what they meant!)

But that journey, my dear ones, has led to, has Created Anew, has brought to life a heaven and earth of the Lord’s pledge and commitment: “... as the new heavens and the new earth that I make shall remain before me, says the LORD, so shall your offspring and your name remain.”

Though I WILL INSIST on fearing, loving, trusting ALL SORTS of false gods—though I am made in the image of my Dear Father in heaven—My Father in heaven has turned heaven and earth upside down and over—over AGAINST ...EVERY...IDEA...I...COULD...HAVE—about God, about heaven, about my safety and life and... ‘WHAT will remain of poor, little ME!’

³² Two others, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. ³³ And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁴ And Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” And they cast lots to divide his garments.³

Since HE is heading THERE—and TEACHING, as He journeyed, WHY He was going THERE—THEN MY salvation, MY God—yours too!—is certain and pledged and fulfilled!

But the soldiers for whom HE prayed, whom He INSTALLED in Heaven by His prayer—still cast lots for his clothing.

² [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 23:35–38). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

³ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 23:32–34). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

And SOMEONE—I hafta think His name was Paul; an Anderson relative, at least!—SOMEONE had to ruin the parade by bringing up some of the most sleazy and slippery false gods in our pockets! ‘Let’s talk NUMBERS here, Jesus! Looking around at the world, other men, even inside ME—and listening to the devil’s preachers and the devil’s church and the devil’s governments—things do NOT look all that good for—Oh! What shall I say? For MANY? Are we talking FEW, here?’

That’s where the Gospel reading turned all sour and rough today.

‘Lord, open to us,’ then he will answer you, ‘I do not know where you come from.’ Then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets.’ But he will say, ‘I tell you, I do not know where you come from. Depart from me, all you workers of evil!’ In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but you yourselves cast out.

But the Gospel according to Saint Luke keeps going; not ONLY to the King who can even rule ME—and YOU!—but BEFORE all that even, to THIS:

¹⁹ And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” ²⁰ And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. ²¹ But behold, the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table. ²² For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!” ²³ And they began to question one another, which of them it could be who was going to do this.⁴

Recently, a dear brother commented after a Bible class, shaking his head: ‘Pastor; you teach the Good News of Christ, our Baptismal

⁴ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Lk 22:18–24). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

birth, the great gifts of the Lord's Supper, the certainty of our salvation; but it seems I need to learn it over and over every week! I forget it so easily!' My response was to welcome him into MY club! For no one has as tenuous a hold on the Gospel as your poor preacher. 'Holy Spirit, light Divine. Show those glorious truths, which are ONLY known to THEE!'

That is the nature of Christ's work, the Gospel, and Church! He saves us; and then, we REMAIN—because He keeps on SAVING us!

And it was BE-YOO-TIFUL! Soon after, the dear brother then commented: 'But, how FEW people know this Good News!' And then even Pastor Blabbermouth was silenced. Actually, I was afraid. (Why worry about how many?! Lord have mercy!)

I've told y'all before how quickly I came to learn and love the word 'Y'all!' My poor Beautiful Lady could not order a pizza our first day in Baton Rouge—without being schooled by the young lady on the phone 'We don't say "you guys" here! And it AIN'T "You All!" It's one word, slid together.'

Since no translation committee has the good sense to put someone from the South to work, it's hard to tell when the 'YOU' of the Bible is one person or lots. When it's plural I trot out MY pathetic 'Y'all.'

But I translated it correctly when I started this little book report. 'YOU shall have no other gods. Singular! I am talking'—Moses threatens, tortures, KILLS!—'I am talking to you; just you....'

'Will only a few be saved?! SLAM goes the door! THE ONLY proper answer to such idolatry is MOSES. 'YOU better STRIVE! The future looks dim! I NEVER KNEW YOU! But OTHERS will be just fine!'

It has taken y'all almost thirty years of teaching this Paul; but it is finally sinking in. As a younger pastor, I really did think that EVERYONE had to be a Lutheran—Grace alone! By Faith Alone! Christ Alone!'—in order to be certain that God will hear his prayers and keep forever.

Plenty of Law and cross and Gospel and patient forbearance by the Holy Spirit, and His Church, has opened the door a crack. PAUL needs the straight medicine of salvation; every other man, woman, child, may be commended to the SAVIOR. He will reign over His Kingdom just fine. MY part is to pray: Let that Kingdom come!

Who enters that narrow door? The Gospel according to Saint Luke makes it clear!

³⁹ One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!" ⁴⁰ But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?" ⁴¹ And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." ⁴² And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." ⁴³ And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise." ⁵

Hooray! We just need to be SO ROTTEN that even he wicked, heathen, worldly ROMANS need to beat us up and hang us up to ridicule and break our legs because we are hanging around too long!

Only a few?! I'm counting FOUR soldiers who killed Him slowly; and now one PERVERT-MURDERER-THIEF-WASTE of a life! We're up to FIVE!

⁵ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 23:39–43). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

And when He rose, He even appeared to SIMON! Simon, who wanted NOTHING to do with the coronation of THIS KING, after He made His journey to Jerusalem.

Heaven's going to need extra CHAIRS, it seems! Few! NOW we can LAUGH! Haha!

And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. ⁸ But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." ⁹ For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, ¹⁰ and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men."⁶

¹⁸ And behold, some men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed, and they were seeking to bring him in and lay him before Jesus, ¹⁹ but finding no way to bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the midst before Jesus. ²⁰ And when he saw their faith, he said, "Man, your sins are forgiven you." ²¹ And the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, saying, "Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

²⁷ After this he went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth. And he said to him, "Follow me." ²⁸ And leaving everything, he rose and followed him.

²⁹ And Levi made him a great feast in his house, and there was a large company of tax collectors and others reclining at table with them. ³⁰ And the Pharisees and their scribes grumbled at his disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" ³¹ And Jesus answered them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ³² I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."⁷

⁶ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 5:7–10). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

⁷ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 5:27–32). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

The whole DEAL is turned upside down, beloved of the Lord!
THIS upside-down!:

²¹ Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, ²² and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.” ⁸

Y’all MUST see this! Being Baptized TOO—special, each one of y’all!—FEW is a word that should NEVER pollute our LIPS!

Instead, faced with loveless-ness, enmity, unbelief and scorn—the Holy Spirit Who has been pleased to live in even ME—y’all too!—tells the world, ‘Y’ALL don’t even need JESUS here to save Y’all NOW! Y’all have my Church! EVEN—surprise! Surprise!—those lousy Lutherans. You can find them. They live like this before Me forever’:

²⁷ “But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. ²⁹ To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either. ³⁰ Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. ³¹ And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.

³² “If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³ And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. ³⁴ And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. ³⁵ But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. ³⁶ Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.

⁸ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 3:21–22). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

Eat and drink the Body and Blood given and poured out for you, dear Christian. Learn, again, today, with your slow-learner pastor!—that neither few nor many are hopeless, as long as His Spirit still lives in the baptized. This means—praise the Lord!—even you lousy Lutherans, in the Name of Jesus!

⁹ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 6:20–37). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.