

## The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost (2020)

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.  
Amen.

**Matthew 16:13–20** Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus answered him, **“Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.”** And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.

In the Name of Jesus.

‘Blessed are you, Simon! My Father in heaven has revealed to you what you confess! Now—tell no one! Or else! I mean it!’

‘Tell no one!’ Because, this first:

<sup>62</sup> And the high priest stood up and said, “Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?” <sup>63</sup> But Jesus remained silent. And the high priest said to him, “I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.”

<sup>64</sup> Jesus said to him, “You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.” <sup>65</sup> Then the high priest tore his robes and said, “He has uttered blasphemy. What further witnesses do we need? You have now heard his blasphemy. <sup>66</sup> What is your

judgment?” They answered, “He deserves death.” <sup>67</sup> Then they spit in his face and struck him. And some slapped him, <sup>68</sup> saying, “Prophecy to us, you Christ! Who is it that struck you?” <sup>1</sup>

Next morning: just as bad.

<sup>27</sup> Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor’s headquarters, and they gathered the whole battalion before him. <sup>28</sup> And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, <sup>29</sup> and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” <sup>30</sup> And they spit on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. <sup>31</sup> And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him and led him away to crucify him. <sup>2</sup>

THEN...r...i...g...h...t....THEN: ‘Tell EVERYONE!’ But not Simon, Rocky, whatever his name. But those who—by eyes, by experience, by history, by boasting...ugh!—by THOSE WHOM WE WOULD DEEM LEAST...’FOR...JESUS!’—

(Jesus could not care less who is FOR or AGAINST Him!)

<sup>50</sup> And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.

<sup>51</sup> And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split. <sup>52</sup> The tombs also were opened. And many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, <sup>53</sup> and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many. <sup>54</sup> When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe and said, “Truly this was the Son of God!” <sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Mt 26:62–68). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>2</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Mt 27:27–31). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>3</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Mt 27:49–54). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

Oh! Praise the Lord!

ANYONE can mouth the words, blab the Creed, come to THEIR OWN conclusions. He is what the pagan centurion was figuring:

This man suffers—heaven blacks out; this man dies—earth shakes to pieces; someone up there is upset with what we down here have done!

And THERE’S the difference between blessed Simon and the pagan reader of the signs of the times! Simon learned—by bitter words and experiences and Jesus—that heaven is ONLY PLEASED when THIS CHRIST suffers, dies and is buried...that His kingdom come!

Jesus’ killers and company figure out things how things are going for them by checking out the mood of the sky and the steadiness of the earth—how FLEETING our observations and data and conclusions and theories and religions and governments!

Simon, son of Jonah, was somehow in a heaven that is NOT some awefull ‘up there.’ He was with the Father Who approves of His Son, the King, the Christ. Simon Peter’s feet never left the ground.

Christ NAMED Peter the Rock on which the government of Jesus would be built and withstand whatever hell can throw at it.

And you know how the story of Peter goes. For it’s YOUR story, my dear ones; mine too.

IF Heaven is patient with you and me—not wanting us to perish—and the Holy Spirit calls and gathers to enlighten us again next week, we will hear how the insides of the Rock are not a BIT different from the insides of the centurion and those with him and WE MUST NEVER DESPAIR AND WE MUST NEVER STOP PRAISING THE LORD!

<sup>21</sup> From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.

<sup>22</sup> And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you.” <sup>23</sup> But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.” <sup>4</sup>

Y’see?!

SIMON has the SAME OUTLOOK as the head of the squad that beat and tortured Jesus to death: ‘SOMEONE UP THERE is gonna be MIGHTY MAD if this fella down here is injured by any of US!’

NO! Heaven is ONLY going to quiet the clouds and thick darkness and thunder and lightning and hell...WHEN WE BEAT the Son of Heaven to death!

What’s a Lutheran, my dearies? What’s a Christian? A disciple? A Rock? A heaven-blessed child of God?

The one who uses his eyes and other buckets, and experiences the signs of heaven and earth—and then tucks all that nice evidence and the conclusions we draw for them....under THIS:

<sup>31</sup> Then Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away because of me this night. For it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’ <sup>32</sup> But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.” <sup>33</sup> Peter answered him, “Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away.” <sup>34</sup> Jesus said to him, “Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times.” <sup>35</sup> Peter said to him, “Even if

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<sup>4</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Mt 16:21–23). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

I must die with you, I will not deny you!” And all the disciples said the same.<sup>5</sup>

I’m gonna get to sleep tonight! Despite...everything! You too! Boast of HIS washing of you and give your Father in heaven His standing orders for the night and then fall asleep at once and in good cheer! Oh. And when the time comes, DIE that way too. If I’m around, I’ll hold your hand and I’ll walk you through it.

There’s what WE offer and intend and put into practice...

And then there’s what The One Who has Heaven and Earth in hand offers and intends and puts into practice...

So when the disciples asked Jesus HOW to pray—help us get it right!—instead, He gave them a script, and told them that that script makes ‘whatever is up there’ and behind all the signs: OUR Father!

And so, my dear ones: what’s all the anxiety about? Over the NEXT man’s sins—or, now and then, our OWN less-than-stellar adaptation to God or the men God made for us to adapt to, to stick to, to never let despair?

Worry, over signs in heaven—we’re gonna get some rain this week!

Fretting about signs on earth we cannot see—but our rags and shields will show this virus--

--O...B....E...Y...the governors JESUS HAS IN HAND!

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<sup>5</sup> [\*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version\*](#). (2016). (Mt 26:31–35). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

Even your poor pastor—who has gained a nasty reputation as one who won't stop talking about the Small Catechism of Doctor Martin Luther—(everyone, shudder in horror!)

Even I have been less than fully AWASH with the meaning of the first three petitions of the Lord's Prayer. If I may be bold to read the signs: maybe this is why heaven SEEMS to be lashing out at the ones I hold dearest; and SEEMS to be showering nothing but laughs and giggles on wicked, wicked men...

If Simon Peter can be put through the ringer and come out rock-solid, maybe even Paul.

Pray these petitions—and put as much trust as you can muster into them: since the Christ of shame and suffering and death says that heaven is ONLY PLEASED with H...I...M...  
D...E...A...D....—and the dead raised from their tombs---

Then the little words that are most despised in this world—they make God OUR Father—thus OUR SLAVE! We got HIM by the EARS!

### **The First Petition**

Hallowed be Thy name.

*What does this mean?*

God's name is certainly holy in itself, but we pray in this petition that it may be kept holy among us also.

*How is God's name kept holy?*

God's name is kept holy when the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we, as the children of God, also lead holy lives according to it. Help us to do this, dear Father in heaven! But anyone who teaches or lives contrary to God's Word profanes the name of God among us. Protect us from this, heavenly Father!

### **The Second Petition**

Thy kingdom come.

*What does this mean?*

The kingdom of God certainly comes by itself without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may come to us also.

*How does God's kingdom come?*

God's kingdom comes when our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead godly lives here in time and there in eternity.

### **The Third Petition**

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

*What does this mean?*

The good and gracious will of God is done even without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may be done among us also.

*How is God's will done?*

God's will is done when He breaks and hinders every evil plan and purpose of the devil, the world, and our sinful nature, which do not want us to hallow God's name or let His kingdom come; and when He strengthens and keeps us firm in His Word and faith until we die. This is His good and gracious will.

N...o...w, what WE do, is BLESSED!: SAYING THE WORDS JESUS MAKES GOD-TAMERS...

And then, there's what HE DOES: His pledge; His word!

My dear ones: daily and much, we may pray that heaven's will is done on earth—and there is NO DOUBT IT IS DONE!

We may pray that the kingdom of God would come and that we would be blessed here with God and when we die with even MORE!

And the One was crowned with thorns and now has risen from the dead: He pledges that Heaven has nothing better to do than to hear and put into practice THAT PRAYER!

That's why hurricanes; that's why viruses; that's why terribly dashed hopes: because THOSE are E...V...E...R...Y BIT as MUCH the answer to the Prayer He teaches us, as the things even the unbaptized seek after; which are also good: what shall we eat; what shall we drink; with what shall we be clothed?

When the Spirit of Jesus gives you the Body of Jesus with the Bread, to eat, and the Blood of Jesus to drink with the wine—from MY hands—NEVER DESPAIR!—all that fretting orbiting that man or woman, the one out there, the one in the mirror—not even the gates of hell can use that CHIEF SIN—anxiety!—to dislodge God about from being YOUR Father in heaven, in the Name of Jesus.