

The Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 18)
 Year of the Lord 2019
 Luke 14

**“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 14:25–35 *Now great crowds accompanied [Jesus], and he turned and said to them, “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.* For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’ Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.

“Salt is good, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is of no use either for the soil or for the manure pile. It is thrown away. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

In the Name of Jesus:

With CROWD-IN-HAND, Jesus BEGINS with words of hatred and the cross; and He ENDS with an estimation of a manure pile. O!, my dear ones! THIS is a Savior we can sink our TEETH into!

Because HE is going to bear the whole thing! Call it what HE CALLS it; call it what MOSES calls it; call it what WE, groping the dark, call it! God, life-and-death, meaning, guilt, the shred of conscience not yet vacuumed out of us! HE...has borne it all! From the START:

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.” ¹

‘Great crowds were following Him...’ And HE did everything possible to turn them all away. According to the Gospel according to Saint Luke—it worked!

¹³ Pilate then called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, ¹⁴ and said to them, “You brought me this man as one who was misleading the people. And after examining him before you, behold, I did not find this man guilty of any of your charges against him. ¹⁵ Neither did Herod, for he sent him back to us. Look, nothing deserving death has been done by him. ¹⁶ I will therefore punish and release him.”

¹⁸ But they all cried out together, “Away with this man, and release to us Barabbas”— ¹⁹ a man who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection started in the city and for murder. ²⁰ Pilate addressed them once more, desiring to release Jesus, ²¹ but they kept shouting, “Crucify, crucify him!” ²² A third time he said to them, “Why? What evil has he done? I have found in him no guilt deserving death. I will therefore punish and release him.” ²³ But they were urgent, demanding with loud cries that he should be crucified. And their voices prevailed. ²⁴ So Pilate decided that their demand should be granted. ²⁵ He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection²

Forget about the CROWDS! What about the ‘true’ disciples; the ‘determined,’ the ‘sincere...’ I’m sorry, I’m going to make myself laugh soon!

22 Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called the Passover. ² And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to put him to death, for they feared the people.

¹ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 3:21–22). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

² [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 23:13–25). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

³ Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was of the number of the twelve. ⁴ He went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers how he might betray him to them. ⁵ And they were glad, and agreed to give him money. ⁶ So he consented and sought an opportunity to betray him to them in the absence of a crowd. ³

AND....

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.

²⁴ A dispute also arose among them, as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest.⁴

ANNNDDD....

³¹ "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, ³² but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers." ³³ Peter said to him, "Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death." ³⁴ Jesus said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me." ⁵

⁵⁴ Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house, and Peter was following at a distance. ⁵⁵ And when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat down among them. ⁵⁶ Then a servant girl, seeing him as he sat in the light and looking closely at him, said, "This man also was with him." ⁵⁷ But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him." ⁵⁸ And a little later someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not." ⁵⁹ And after an interval of about an hour still

³ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 22:1–6). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

⁴ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 22:21–24). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

⁵ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 22:31–34). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

another insisted, saying, “Certainly this man also was with him, for he too is a Galilean.” ⁶⁰ But Peter said, “Man, I do not know what you are talking about.” And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. ⁶¹ And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, “Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times.” ⁶² And he went out and wept bitterly. ⁶

My dear ones: the condition Jesus made does NOT make HIS work hinge on CONDITIONS WE must fulfill. ‘If any man would come after Me...’. Instead, the Lonely Man, with those words, made Himself utterly alone—and you will never be forsaken by your God; YOU are never alone; nor I!

So that WE are free—to BE MADE SAFE! To take OUR Baptism—NOT as our big show and pledge that now, finally, I’m gonna do this diet and durnit, this time, I’m gonna STICK to it! NO!

WE may take OUR washing as the boast and claim of ALL we’re afraid of—God, heaven, life and death, the quiet moment when only conscience is there...---

Our Baptism is the BOAST...FROM...OUTSIDE...OF...US... that we’re clean, and godly, and alive, and at peace with ALL, despite whatever still nags at our necks!

And, then we are ALSO, FREE....! To fast and pray and beg The Spirit given us and work as never before—to give up ALL we dream WE have our hands in control of, our minds, our will, our INFLUENCE!

And when THAT wonder happens—and we let the Savior BE the Savior and WE BE just the SAVED, the RESCUED, the UNBELIEVABLY GIFTED AND GIVEN-TO...

⁶ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 22:54–62). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

Then, the Promise of the Father, the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, is FREEING up space for the next poor, lost and wounded and sick and sinful man to have heaven opened up to HIM...even through us!

Actually, I'm going off the rails again by making 'cross-bearing' HINGE on OUR religiosity and preparations.

ONE...DID...bear the cross after Jesus, according to the Gospel according to Saint Luke! It seems, my dear ones!, that IF and WHENEVER WE ever do this, it will be ALSO, JUST: such a surprise, an abuse of power, an arrest...TRULY following the Savior:

²⁶ And as they led him away, they seized one Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross, to carry it behind Jesus. ⁷

Doctor Martin Luther wrote, in several places, that when our faith and our love truly get traction and going, even among US, it is more often than not as if WE were 'half-asleep,' not truly paying attention, a surprise; even an intrusion, interruption and inconvenience. Simon of Cyrene would agree! So would, as I read it, Simon Peter; who had more preparation to carry the cross than the rest of us all.

So, my dear ones: Rejoice in the Lord! I say again: Rejoice!

Until He returns—and even WHEN He returns!—HE will take care of all the bearing and suffering and saving and loving...

⁷ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 23:26). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

So that WHEN, IF, we ever get splinters in OUR shoulders—and we wish such a burden were gone, the disrespect and unfairness of this day, this event, would have been forced on someone ELSE—

No doubt, HE is well resourced to save us from that—the worst of our faith and love-shirking we can do!

He gives us still, His Body to eat and His Blood to drink. The healthy do not need a doctor; the sick do. The Spirit of Jesus does not call to repentance those who HANDLE flawlessly all that heaven lays on them! The word and cross and saving and gifts—even screwing our heads back on straight—is all and only done for those who need the Savior TO BE the Savior; in Jesus' Name!