

The Twenty-first 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 22:34–46** 34 When the Pharisees heard that [Jesus] had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together.

**35 And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him.**

**36 “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?”**

**37 And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. 38 This is the great and first commandment. 39 And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. 40 On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”**

**41 Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, 42 saying, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?”** They said to him, “The son of David.” 43 He

said to them, “How is it then that David, in the Spirit, calls him Lord, saying,

44 “The Lord said to my Lord,  
Sit at my right hand,

until I put your enemies under your feet”?

45 If then David calls him Lord, how is he his son?” 46 And no one was able to answer him a word, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

In the Name of Jesus.

There is nothing wrong with you that the Christ has not made all right with Heaven.

And if Christ is not anxious about your standing with Heaven, then there is nothing wrong with you; nothing at all; nothing that matters.

Now, Love matters. Moses' instructions about love. Yes, Love CONTAINS, also, feelings and attractions and such. So, if you are running low on feelings, go get an injection.

But Mount Sinai love, commanded love—the Law, with its threat hanging there always, 'You shall. You shall not.'—that is NOT gravity, magnet to steel, attraction. Heaven love is work.

Because that's the state in which we find ourselves: original sin. Come from the factory in need of work and of teaching, even threats: 'You are not God. You are not the only person on the road. You are not the final word on anything. You belong to One above and to all below. Unbend yourself from yourself and get to work! Love.'

It's Love what killed Christ!

There sure are funny names of men we hear about from the Gospel According to Saint Matthew: Sadducees, Pharisees, lawyers—Lord have mercy! They were a hateful bunch, angling and chattering about others, about EACH other. But what united them was their UTTER HATRED of the teaching of the

Reformation, the teaching of Doctor Martin Luther, of your Baptism into Christ, of the Small Catechism Luther gave the Church. Jesus Christ knew Luther's Gospel as well.

The Good News that terrifies every man. For it takes from our hands our two idols most dear: dino-saurs; and impatience. That's grampa's translation—for some reason?—of the STUFF we must have in our grip or all is lost and tears begin to pour; and of the majesty we all dream up for ourselves, that will not brook a single slight, real or imagined.

Law teaches children love. Thank God! There are great things in the Law of love!

It is a RELIEF to remove from our throats things that will choke us.

It is a setting-free NOT to be the center of gravity. What a burden it must be to be a celebrity, an elected official: hopping and dancing to attract our attention.

But NO MAN masters the Law and no man masters love. And EVERY MAN is left with cringing guilt on one hand over lapses of love; and on the other hand, with delusional superiority over those who cannot keep up with US SINNERS doing love, practicing on love; pretending to love.

Oh, the Gospel! Oh, the—UNHEAD-OF report!

Christ came to be the King that ends all kings. Saint Paul reveals that HE will even give up that title at the End.

Whose son is the Messiah, the Christ? David's. David was the example—to a degree—of the king who pursued the love of Moses and his law.

Yet King David was a Lutheran king!! A terrific, real, hard-boiled sinner! So he was CERTAIN—in a word, he 'prophesied', he BEGGED the Lord that he needed a king even for HIM, a Lord. There must be something, there must be Someone—David prayed; David sang; David looked for! Faith!—There must be another Word from above other than Love and the Law.

Dr Luther had wanted posters made about him; he was declared a criminal. The Blessed Holy Trinity had other plans than the pope's stake and burning. Poor holy father.

But why was Luther an outlaw; excommunicated and damned to this day by—going by numbers and influence—the ONLY Christian Church that has any heft in the here and now?

Because He trumpeted a Savior slain, a Lord now our Servant; God that all men are sweating and anxious to attract, as a dear, dear Father, Whose ONLY reason for existing, for BEING so big and so this and that and all of that is...for me!

‘Me,’ says Faith! ‘WITH all my love-breaking; WITH all my lawlessness; WITH all my sins. And I need never pretend!’

I fell in love with a saying from a modern author—the man cannot stand Christians, our hypocrisy!; and is full of venom for anyone who isn’t like him; I like the guy!—he wrote, basically:

‘The fanatic is always concealing a secret doubt.’

You want to start working at love? Chew on THAT, that even a Christian-hater can get right about love and the Law:

‘Your secret doubt inside erupts in wrath!’

My dear ones, if you must browbeat the next man INTO your style of love, you have no confidence about your love. And, of course, no Christian faith.

If we must ape all fantasy-religions and ‘GUILT’ others into crying to the Lord for mercy as WE MUST...then we’re not really crying for mercy, are we?

What do we doubt?

We doubt the same thing the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the lawyers and the mob on Good Friday could not lean on with confidence: this frail man, crowned with thorns, no supporters, NO churchly influence, no MONEY, no power—HE is the final word on who should be confident with heaven?

After He rose from the dead, He made it even WORSE for the fanatic in each of us; and incalculably happier than anyone could imagine!

‘Y’ALL! YOU! Peter, my buddy! And all you others, who forsook me in my need! Y’all, whose obsession morning, noon and night is which of you pastors is the greatest! Can’t imagine better men for ME to pretend as HOLY!’

‘Y’all BE my Good News to every nation, to every man; even to the fanatics!’

‘Spritz the nations at my authority—which includes all What’s what with God. And teach them one, two things: always burden OFF; never burden ON.’

‘Embrace your enemies. I do!’

‘Take my Body and eat it. Take my cup and drink my Blood, all of you; you are not alone in My Kingdom!’

‘And with THAT as the final word on you, be brave to take your old insides to a dancing bear-trainer and teach it: ‘You are not God. You are not the only person on the road. You are not the final word on anything. You belong to One above and to all below. Unbend yourself from yourself and get to work! Love.’

Love fits in, for a disciple of THIS Christ, tucked in between the Gospel first and the Gospel last. I am baptized. I am at peace with Heaven. So I’m not even afraid of the Law, or of the real work of Love in the Name of Jesus. Amen.