

DARLING DOWNS PARISH OF THE AELC
TRINITY OAKEY, ST PAUL'S GREENWOOD, ST JOHN'S AUBIGNY,
BETHLEHEM TOOWOOMBA

13 August 2017

Bulletin for the 10th Sunday after Pentecost

HYMNS: 403 153 155 36

INTROIT: I shall love You, O LORD, my Strength.

The LORD is my Rock, my Fortress, and my Deliverer. My God is my Rock, **in whom I take refuge**, my Shield, and **the Horn of my salvation**, my Stronghold.

He should be praised! I used to call to the LORD, and I kept being saved from my enemies.

The snares of death had surrounded me, and the torrents of wickedness were terrifying me.

The cords of Sheol had surrounded me. The snares of death had confronted me.

I was calling on the LORD in my distress, and I was crying to my God for help. He used to hear my voice from His Temple, and my cry to Him for help used to come before Him, into His ears.

Psalm 18:1-6

COLLECT: Almighty and most merciful God, preserve us from all harm and danger, that we, being ready in both body and soul, may cheerfully accomplish what You want done; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

READINGS: Job 38:4-18 "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?"

Romans 10:5-17 "It is with the mouth a person confesses and then he is saved."

Matthew 14:22-33 Jesus walks on the water.

SERMON: Acts 4:1-13 Christ Alone

¹Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them, ²being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. ³And they laid hands on them, and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. ⁴However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand. ⁵And it came to pass, on the next day, that their rulers, elders, and scribes, ⁶as well as Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the family of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. ⁷And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, "By what power or by what name have you done this?" ⁸Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel: ⁹If we this day are judged for a good deed done to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well, ¹⁰let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. ¹¹This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.' ¹²Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." ¹³And when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marvelled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.

The Message of Salvation to All

It is often said that there are really only two religions in the world, two plans for obtaining salvation. One is to be saved by earning it. The other is to receive it as a gift. Paul puts attempting to keep the law into that first category when, in our Second Reading from today, Romans 10:5-17, he quotes Leviticus 18:5, "The person who has done these things will live by them."

To be sure, if a person could keep God's law and do what it requires, then salvation could indeed be achieved that way. But if a person falls short of the law's requirements, as every sinner does, then the law turns on the would-be earner of salvation with a curse. Deuteronomy 27:26 minces no words: "Cursed is the man who does not uphold the words of this law by carrying them out." (See also Galatians 3:10.) That road leads to catastrophe!

Attempting to earn "righteousness that is by the Law" is a totally unworkable option. The alternative Paul presents is "the righteousness that is by faith." Using the literary device of personification, Paul ascribes the power of speech to righteousness. When righteousness speaks, it first issues a disclaimer. It tells us what not to do: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (which means, to bring Christ down) or 'Who will descend into the depths' (which means, to bring Christ up from the dead)."

Using expressions drawn from Deuteronomy 30:12-14, righteousness by faith says, Don't embark on a course of action where you try to set up a saviour by yourself - as though you had to go up to heaven and bring Christ down to earth. Or do not presume that you have to go to the underworld to bring Christ back from the dead? Trying to create your own saviour is a foolish and impossible task.

But what does righteousness by faith advocate? What is the proper plan to obtain salvation? It is that which trusts in a message, that which clings to a promise. It is having the righteousness gained by trust and confidence in the gospel message, the message proclaimed in the Word as taught by Paul and his peers.

Paul asks, “But what does it [righteousness by faith] say?” Answer: “The Word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart,” This is the Word faith, which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”

Salvation is not a matter of doing and earning, but of receiving. It is confessing with the mouth that Jesus is Lord and confidently believing that God has raised Him from the dead as our Saviour and Substitute.

Jesus came down to earth to live the perfect life sinners could not live; He kept the Law for them. He lived a perfect life to earn the righteousness that sinners needed. What’s more, He died the death sinners deserved for their many transgressions. With His lifeblood He paid for their lack of keeping the Law. By His perfect obedience He earned the righteousness necessary for our salvation.

Christ has done everything. The Word proclaims this glorious truth to us, and that same Word also works faith in the heart to believe and accept Christ’s righteousness. The Word creates the confidence that can say, “This Jesus is my Lord.”

Once again drawing from Deuteronomy 30:14, Paul says that Word “is near you, in your mouth and in your heart.” In practice, the order of heart and mouth is reversed from what Paul uses here. The Word first penetrates the heart and creates faith there. Then faith, if it is true and living faith, shows itself in the confession of believing lips. Paul uses the chronological sequence of heart and mouth when he repeats this great truth in verse 10: “For with the heart a person believes, so that he is counted righteous, and with the mouth a person confesses and then he is saved.”

Welcome to all with us today! May God bless our worship of Him by His serving of us!

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Weekly sermons and bulletins are available at www.aelc.org.au.

Please notify pastor of anyone who is unwell or in need of a visit.

COMING SERVICES

20 August 11 Pentecost	27 August 12 Pentecost	3 September 13 Pentecost
8.30am OAK HC 8.30am TMBA PR JZ 10.00am GRN HC 10.30am AUB PR JZ	8.00am Bible Study & 9.00am HC TMBA 8.30am OAK LR 9.00am GRN LR 10.30am AUB HC	8.30am OAK HC 8.30am TMBA LR 9.30am AUB LR 10.00am GRN HC
Sunday, 20 August		
READINGS: Isaiah 56:1, 6-8; Romans 11:1-2a, 13-15, 28-32; Matthew 15:21-28		
HYMNS: 507 401 151 368 315 426 TMBA & AUB: 403 153 155 36		
Sunday, 27 August		
READINGS: Isaiah 51:1-6; Romans 11:33-12:8; Matthew 16:13-20		
HYMNS: 331 188 471 (290 291) 457		

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bible Studies:

Sunday, 27 August 8.00am. TMBA

Friday, 18 August, 7.30pm. GRN

Friday, 25 August, 7.30pm. AUB/OAK

Choir Practice for Reformation will begin on the 10th of September, 7.30pm at Oakey.

As the 500th anniversary of the Reformation draws near, the time has come to begin preparations for this celebration. On Sunday the 29th of October, we will be holding a combined AELC Reformation Day service at St John's Aubigny. Pastor Ohlson will be the guest preacher, and Pastor Ziebell and Vicar Zabel will be presenting short papers after lunch. If anyone has any suggestions on how else we can celebrate, please let pastor know (hymn singing evening, sacred concert, etc).