

**2nd Sunday in Lent.**  
**LSB HYMNS: 935, 708, 688, 737, 630, 934.**

**INTROIT: - PSALM 22:23-31**

**P** You who fear the LORD, praise Him! All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him!

**C** **Be afraid of Him, all you descendants of Israel!**

**P** For He has not despised or detested the misery of the Wretched One, and He has not hidden His face from Him.

**C** **Rather, when He cried to Him for help, He heard.**

**P** My praise comes from You in the great assembly.

**C** **I shall fulfill My vows in the presence of those who fear Him.**

**P** Humble people will eat and be satisfied. Those who seek the LORD will praise Him.

**C** **May your hearts live for ever!**

**P** All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD.

**C** **All the families of the nations will worship before You.**

**P** For the kingship belongs to the LORD,

**C** **and He rules over the nations.**

**P** All the prosperous people of the earth have been eating and worshipping.

**C** **All those who go down to the dust will kneel before Him, even the one who could not keep himself alive.**

**P** Descendants will serve Him. The coming generation will be told about the Lord.

**All They will come and tell about His righteousness to a people yet to be born. For He has accomplished it.**

**COLLECT:** O God, You see that of ourselves we have no strength. By your mighty power defend from all adversities that may happen to the body and from all evil thoughts that may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**Old Testament: Genesis 17:1-7,15-16.**

**Epistle: Romans 5:1-11**

**Gospel: Mark 8 27-38.**

The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all, AMEN.

The text for our sermon today the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Lent is written in the book of Mark chapter 8:27-38 which was our Gospel reading before.

**27 Then Jesus went away with His disciples to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way He asked His disciples, "Who do people say I am?"**

**28 They answered Him, "John the Baptist; but others say Elijah, and others say one of the other prophets."**

**29 He asked them, "You, however, who do you say I am?"**

**Peter answered Him, "You are the Christ!"**

**30 He strictly warned them not to tell anyone about Him.**

**31 Then Jesus began to teach them that it was necessary for the Son of Man to suffer greatly, to be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes, to be killed, and, after three days, to rise again. 32 He was speaking frankly about this, and Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him. 33 However, Jesus turned around, looked at His disciples, and rebuked Peter, saying, "Get behind Me, Satan! For you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."**

**34 When He had called the crowd to Him together with His disciples, He told them: "If anyone wants to follow Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me! 35 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it; but whoever will lose his life for My sake and for the sake of the Good News will save it. 36 For what good does it do a person to gain the whole world and yet lose his own soul? 37 For what is a person to give in exchange for his soul? 38 For, if anyone is ashamed of Me and of My Words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."**

Lord God heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth Your Word is truth. AMEN

Dear friends in Christ.

Peace be with you.

The reading that we just heard from the Gospel according to Mark once again demonstrates the compact writing style of Mark. The reading you just heard was from Mark 8, and you can read of the same event in the Gospel according to Matthew in chapter 16.

The other thing that demonstrates the compactness of the narrative is again the number of events in today's reading. Normally we would hear Peter's confession, "**You are the Christ,**" one Sunday and then we would hear Jesus teaching about His suffering, death, and resurrection on the following Sunday. With Mark, you get them both on one Sunday and the reading still isn't all that long.

The wonderful thing about this "to the point writing style" in Mark is that you can compare and contrast these two events. Given that Mark wrote His Gospel based on what he heard from Peter, it's interesting to study Peter in these two events. At first Peter has this marvellous confession of Jesus, and then Peter has a major fail. You get it all in quick succession in Mark.

The location for these events is the area around Caesarea Philippi. Caesarea Philippi is north of Galilee in Gentile territory. This means that Jesus and His disciples are pretty much alone, you see this is a time of private teaching, just for the disciples.

Jesus asked a very important question. In fact, if you get the answer to this question wrong, it is very doubtful that you are a Christian. Jesus asked His disciples, "**Who do people say that I am?**" Most of us in the twenty-first century don't know this, but just about every family in first century Israel had a son named Jesus. So, just as we hear of all the women named Mary, there were actually a lot of men named Jesus. It's important for our salvation that we get the right Jesus. It's important that we know who Jesus is. It's not enough just to say, "*I believe in Jesus.*" We need to say something about Jesus so that others will know in which Jesus we believe.

Well, according to the disciples, most people got Jesus wrong. They told him, "**John the Baptist; and others say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets.**" The people's guesses were all honourable heroes of the Bible. In most cases, men would be very honoured to be compared to these servants of God, but not Jesus. The true Jesus is in a whole different category than these great historical figures.

Many people hold the name Jesus in high regard today, but they still have the wrong Jesus. Some people look at the example of Jesus and figure that that is all Jesus is. Jesus is an example, but He is much more. Some people think that Jesus was just a good, moral teacher and nothing more. In fact, Jesus is a great teacher, but He is so much more than that as well. There are all kinds of opinions about Jesus that get part of the truth, - but don't get the main truth of who Jesus is.

Then Jesus asked the disciples, "**But who do you say that I am?**" Peter being Peter, jumps in first and says, "**You are the Christ.**" Peter got the words exactly right. Jesus is the Christ. This is the foundation sentence of the creeds. When we properly confess Jesus as the Christ, we have properly confessed our salvation.

The interesting thing about the rest of the Gospel that we heard this morning is that the reading goes on to show that Peter didn't understand what he said! Although Peter got the words exactly right, He didn't know what they meant. How do we know that?

Well, first of all, Jesus strictly charged them to tell no one about Him. You would think that Jesus would want everyone to know His true identity. Nevertheless, He strictly charged the disciples not to tell anyone. He was stern, I want you to keep this information to yourself.

Then Jesus began to explain the true meaning of Peter's confession to the disciples. **He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again.** And He said this plainly. It wasn't in a

parable that they needed to ask for clarification. This is what it means for Jesus to be the Christ. It means suffering, death, and resurrection. It means dying on the cross in order to take away our sins, and it means rising from the dead. If we are to have the right Jesus, it must be the Jesus who died on the cross for our sins, and rose from the dead. If our Jesus didn't do these things, then we have the wrong Jesus.

Apparently, Peter got it wrong. Peter took [Jesus] aside and began to rebuke Him. Don't let that word rebuke fool you. Peter is ready to give Jesus a good tongue-lashing. Peter is ready to read Jesus the riot act. Let me remind you that Peter is a fisherman who is only about half way through his seminary training and Jesus is God in the flesh. Nevertheless, Peter takes it upon himself to scold the Son of God.

Jesus immediately saw the danger to Peter and He rebuked Peter right back. Turning and seeing His disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, **“Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.”** Jesus' words teach us that not only was Peter's understanding wrong, but Peter was even acting as an agent of Satan. Peter was actually tempting Jesus to abandon His mission to the cross to abandon His mission to die for our sins.

This exchange between Jesus and Peter should be a warning to us as well. Peter's master had just told him that He was to suffer and die. It's very likely that Peter not only considered Jesus to be his master, but also a close friend. Who would want a friend to suffer and die? Peter, in his ignorance, was responding in the way that he thought was best. I can empathize with Peter. I can understand why Peter did what he did. Nevertheless, Peter was wrong and Jesus scolded him severely.

How often do we make decisions based on what seems right to us instead of checking in the Word of God? How often do we assume things about God without checking the words that He Himself gave us? How often do we, like Peter, proceed in the way that we think is best and forget that God may have something totally different for us? How often do we follow in Peter's footsteps?

How glad we can be that Jesus didn't listen to Peter. Jesus followed up on His promise, He went to Jerusalem and there the elders and the chief priests and the scribes did exactly what He said they would do. They arrested Jesus and held a mock trial. Then they took Jesus to Pontius Pilate and used political pressure to have Him crucified. Jesus died just as He said He would and then He also rose - just as He said He would. Jesus did all this in order to take away our sin and give us His righteousness instead. Because Jesus did not listen to Peter, but followed through on His plan, we now have forgiveness, life, and salvation.

When we talk about Jesus, it is very important that we talk about the right Jesus ... the Jesus who suffered many things, was rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and died and after three days rose again. The only Christ who can save us for eternity is the true Christ - the Christ crucified and risen from the dead. It's in this Christ and this Christ alone that we have eternal life. Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. **Amen**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Hymn: 688,**

## PRAYER FOR THE 2nd SUNDAY IN LENT

P The God and Father of our Lord Jesus has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing. Let us bring our prayers before Him, trusting that God will pour out abundant blessing on all for whom we pray.

*Brief Pause.*

P For the Church, that the baptized may be renewed in the faith of Abraham, trusting the promises of Him who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist by His all-powerful Word.....  
Lord, in Your mercy,

**C hear our prayer.**

P For an increase in the vocation of the holy ministry, that the Lord would raise up men to proclaim His Word and administer His Sacraments to the joy and edifying of His peoples.....Lord, in Your mercy,

**C hear our prayer.**

P For a renewal of our Parish and all the congregations of the A.E.L.C., that they become centers of outreach, shining the light of God's love through witness, mercy, and life together and for our pastors, church workers and their families.- Strengthen those that are in nursing homes, hospitals and care facilities that You would give them with unity of heart, mind and witness, that nothing may hinder the work You have called us to do ..... Lord, in Your mercy,

**C hear our prayer.**

P For those in authority over us, especially our prime minister, federal, state, and local governments. Those in the police, doctors, nurses, fire and ambulance and state emergency services, and our military personal serving to aid all Your people. Instill upon them the conviction that they are Your servants to guide, protect, defend, and to promote peace and good order in our land. Lead them to act honestly and justly for the welfare of all..... Lord, in Your mercy,

**C Hear our prayer.**

P For all who receive the Saviour's Body and Blood in the Holy Sacrament today, that God would preserve them in repentance and saving faith, and that through this holy meal He would strengthen their witness to His love in their daily callings.....Lord, in Your mercy,

**C hear our prayer**

P For Your wonderful creation, - the air we breathe, - the water we drink and the food we eat. Continue to sustain us through these we pray and continue to support those who work the land,- thank You for the good rain that grows our crops and feeds our stock.....Lord in Your Mercy,

**C hear our prayer.**

P Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Jesus Christ, our Lord,

**C Amen.**

**4<sup>th</sup> Hymn:737.**