

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

2 September 2018

Bulletin for the 15th Sunday after Pentecost

HYMNS: 499 329 200 319 842 197

INTROIT: Your Testimonies are wonderful. Therefore my soul has observed them.

The revelation of Your Words gives light. It gives understanding to simple people.

I have opened my mouth wide and I have been panting, because I have been longing for Your Commandments.

Turn toward me and be gracious to me, as Your custom is toward those who love Your Name!

Make my steps steady by Your Promise, and let no misdeed gain power over me!

Redeem me from human oppression, so that I may keep Your Directions!

Make Your face shine on Your servant, and teach me Your Prescriptions!

Streams of tears have been running down from my eyes, because people have not been keeping Your Instruction.

Psalm 119:129-136

COLLECT: O God, the source of all that is just and good, nourish in us every virtue and bring to completion every good intent, that we may grow in grace and bring forth the fruit of good works; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

The Lord's Supper has always been seen as a sign of unity between those who commune together at the Lord's table (1 Cor. 10:17). When Christians partake of the Lord's Supper in a church body that has a confession of faith, they thereby declare that they believe that they are one in faith with those who commune with them. Since people cannot honestly hold two differing confessions at the same time, they cannot honestly commune with those whose confession is in conflict with their own. If any do this nevertheless, they deny their own confession, and so deny Christ Himself (2 Cor. 6:14-18). **We ask visitors who are communicant members in a church not in fellowship with the AELC, or are not familiar with the AELC Statement of Faith, to refrain from communing today. If you have questions, please speak with the pastor after service.**

READINGS: Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9 An appeal to keep the commands of the LORD.

Ephesians 6:10-20 Put on the whole armour of God.

Mark 7:14-23 Nothing that comes into a person defiles him, but what comes out of a person defiles him.

SERMON: Ephesians 6:10-20 Stand firm against the attacks of the devil

The lies of Satan

Though Satan often wears a friendly disguise, the tactics he employs for our destruction have not changed since the time of the fall in the garden. First, he attacks or tries to undermine in some way the truth of God's Word and our trust in it. Just a little compromise on a little doctrine, that's all. Life for the Christian and for the church will be so much easier if we just stop insisting on every word. So much opposition could be avoided and so much ridicule prevented if we just dropped such things like the doctrine of creation or the doctrine concerning the proper roles of men and women or the Bible's teaching about chastity before marriage. But his goal is destruction. His intention is to drive a wedge between the Christian and the Saviour by causing us in effect to call God a liar; for that's what we do whenever we deny or contradict any part of His Word. If the devil succeeds in drawing us away from one doctrine, he will have an easier time of it in drawing us away from more and more of God's Word. Those who oppose sound doctrine, St. Paul says, have fallen into the snares of the devil (2 Timothy 2:25-26). Ultimately his goal is to tear us away from the heart and core of God's Word, the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins and eternal life that are ours through faith in the saving merit of Christ our Saviour. When he has succeeded in his attacks on that most fundamental doctrine of the Scriptures, church for us will have degenerated into a social club with a cross on the roof. Only then will he be satisfied.

When the devil does not at once succeed in his attacks on doctrine, he may turn his attack to the Christian's life. If he can get pastors and teachers and laity to see their faith only in terms of memorised doctrinal formulae without any follow-through in their lives, then he will have an easy time of it later on in tearing them and others away from the pure doctrine they may have taught. The pure doctrine of the drunkard, the gossip, the gambler, the adulterer, the liar, or the cheat impresses no one; the life of the hypocrite drives away those who might otherwise have listened to the Word. Jesus connects our lives to our doctrine when He tells us, "*Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven,*" (Matthew 5:16). The life that is seen by others as flowing from the Word of God may well draw others to hear that Word. But the hypocrite's life may well become such a mess that

he not only repels a potential hearer but he himself finally has no energy or time left for pure doctrine. St. Peter's warning of the devil prowling around like a roaring lion (1 Peter 5:8) remains a very good one indeed. For if the devil can seduce us into ignoring Peter's warning, then the devil will have already won half the battle. Doctrine and life will be his easy targets, and Christians his easy prey.

Whether the temptation is to dilute sound doctrine or to compromise the Christian life, the devil likes to start out with a small temptation and work up to the bigger ones as one error begets another, and one compromise makes another all the easier. How clear that is already in the Garden of Eden at the time of the fall of Adam and Eve!

This is how the devil so often proceeds: First, he minimises the sin to which he tempts us, lest the conscience be shocked and resist. After he has succeeded in convincing us that sin is trivial and nothing to be concerned about, it is an easy matter for him to seduce into one sin after another, until our fall is complete. Then, after he has seduced us into sin by convincing us that sin doesn't really matter, he comes with his second favourite trick: He maximises guilt. First, he says the sin is nothing to worry about. Then, after the sin has been committed, he bellows through the conscience: "You did what? And now you imagine that you will be forgiven? Never! Do you think that you can play God for a fool?" He tries to drive us to despair of the grace of God. In Satan's mind too, doctrine and life are always connected. First, he lies to us about God's Law and tries to get us to believe that God doesn't really mean it or take it all that seriously. When he succeeds with that lie, he follows up by lying about the Gospel, insisting that God doesn't mean that either. Thus he seeks to deceive by bringing God's children to shame, attempting to destroy their faith. Therefore we must always be on our guard and place our lives completely in the care of Jesus, who has overwhelmingly destroyed the works of the devil. It is in Him alone that we have salvation, and it is His voice of peace and forgiveness that drowns out the lies of the devil.

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

Pastor Peter Ziebell, Phone 0407583922.

Email him at paziebell@gmail.com

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

9 September 16 Pentecost	16 September 17 Pentecost	23 September 18 Pentecost
8.30am TMBA HC 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	8.00am TMBA Bible Study & 9.00am HC 8.30am OAK LR 9.00am GRN LR 10.30am AUB HC
Sunday, 9 September		
READINGS: Isaiah 35:4-7a; James 2:1-10, 14-18; Mark 7:24-37		
HYMNS: 161 450 356 (325 294) 508		
Sunday, 16 September		
READINGS: Isaiah 50:5-10; James 3:1-12; Mark 9:14-29		
HYMNS: 526 241 378 (789 848) 441		

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Wednesday, 5 September, 10.00am. Women's Guild at Trinity Marburg. Pastor Ohlson will lead our Bible Study, then we will have an early shared lunch followed by a guided tour of the Emu Farm at Marburg. Cost is \$6.00 per person. Husbands are invited to attend our meeting. Ladies, please note, we will not be following our regular program for the day (no need to bring an item of interest etc.).

Friday, 7 September, 7.00pm. Family Evening bushdance at Greenwood. Bring a plate for a shared supper and remember to invite your friends!

Saturday, 8 September, 10.00am. CoC/Seminary Committee meeting at Minden.