

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

9 August 2020

Bulletin for the 10th Sunday after Pentecost

HYMNS: 272 404 609 150 291 410

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 kept on 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 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.

"Then the earth shook and quaked. Even the foundations of the mountains were trembling. They shook violently because He was angry.

"Smoke went up in His nostrils, and **a devouring fire was coming out of His mouth**. Glowing coals blazed up from Him.

"He spread out the heavens and came down, with thick darkness under His feet.

Psalm 18:1-9

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.**

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 foundations of the earth?”

Romans 10:5-17 Israel needs the Gospel.

Matthew 14:22-33 Jesus’ stilling of the storm.

SERMON: Romans 10:5-17 Jesus is Lord

Good Intentions¹

Haven’t we all heard that “the road to hell is paved with good intentions!”? Some may even think that it is a quote from the Bible. Perhaps it’s a phrase loosely based on Matthew 7:21-23. Near the end of Jesus’ “Sermon on the Mount” He says “*Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord!’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father, who is in heaven.*”²² *Many will ask Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, in Your name driven out demons, and in Your name performed many miracles?’*²³ *Then I shall tell them frankly, ‘I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who do what is evil!’*

As Lutheran Christians we can simply “explain away” this sobering passage by categorising it as a warning against self-righteousness. Indeed it is that! Note that this “Day of Judgment” comment from the Judge Himself is His own summation of His famous sermon just before He concluded with the parable of the storm testing the two foundations. “Good intentions” serve to justify self and is no foundation. Can we imagine the impact these words had on its first hearers?

We don’t really have to imagine as Matthew 7:28-8:1 describes their reaction. How may these words from Jesus’ first full recorded sermon impact us today? Hitting us hard, these words wake us up out of our own comfortable, spiritual tendency toward self-righteousness?

Perhaps try the following take for a personal fit: On that day many will say, “Lord, Lord, did we not preach pro-life sermons in Your name, at least once a year; and didn’t we march in a pro-life rally a few times; and didn’t we contribute to Lutherans for Life

¹ Christian News, Scott Blazek, blazek.scott.r@gmail.com

and the local pregnancy resource centre; and didn't we pass pro-life resolutions in our church conventions all in Your name? And didn't we vote for pro-life politicians too?"

Now these actions are, each and every one, indeed virtuous to be sure, (as are the actions cited above in Matthew 7:22), but.... What stinging words would follow such a defence? "*I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who do what is evil!*" For in spite of your "good intentions", still thousands of lives of unborn souls were brutally slaughtered each day across your land. Pragmatic toleration of indescribable evil in your nation is bearing its fruit. You bemoan the destruction of your nation's history and constitution by evil anarchists, Marxists and atheists; but, in actuality, you watched as this evil destroyed a whole generation to whom that legacy should have been entrusted. Those who survived the abortion holocaust, were, with good intentions, sent off to liberal universities to have their minds reprogrammed from the Christian principles they may have received earlier.

Evil will always exist in a fallen, sinful world, but woe to those who "know better" and tolerate it (Matthew 23:1-36, Rev. 2:12-29). And do not "good intentions" blur the clarity of evil having its way? This is brought out in Matthew 16:23, as Jesus admonishes the "anti-Christ" in Peter with the words, "*Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me, because you do not have in mind the things of God but the things of human beings.*" "Good intentions" do not win a war. "Good intentions" do not rescue a nation. "Good intentions" do not save the soul.

Thanks be to God who had more than "good intentions" toward us. Jesus, who started His sermon in Matthew 5 with the "Beatitudes" concludes with a statement that our "good intentions" could never fulfil such ideals. The Beatitudes can only be and have been completely fulfilled in Christ through His incarnation, life, death, resurrection and ascension.

May we, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit unto true saving faith, never offer a defence based on our good intentions, but solely on the good accomplishments of our Saviour for us and on our behalf. In other words, who is in the subject of the sentence, and who is the object? Here we may take admonition and comfort from the words of Jesus in Luke 18:15-18. The Pharisee's "good intentions" offer an unheard defence, whereas the publican knows God is the subject of salvation and he the object of God's mercy. Doesn't Christ's statements to the sheep and goats in Matthew 25 also indicate that intentions don't save? For Jesus to know us is for us to know and trust Him as the one and only Saviour of our souls. Those who attempt to save themselves through their "good intentions" do not really know the Saviour, and their sins of commission and omission still cling to them. Through the holy absolution (bought with the Lamb's holy blood shed on the cross) lavished upon a humble and contrite heart (Psalm 51), "good intentions" are forgiven. Only then may one be empowered to fight the good fight of faith for the wellbeing of others while all to His glory, not ours.

Welcome to all with us today!

Pastor Peter Ziebell, Phone 46333604 or 0407583922.

Email him at paziebell@gmail.com or to the church office at ddaelc@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

16 August 11 Pentecost	23 August 12 Pentecost	30 August 13 Pentecost
8.30am TMBA LR 8.30am OAK LR 9.30am GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am MARBURG HC Harvest Thanksgiving & Bible Study	8.30am TMBA HC 8.30am OAK LR 9.30am GRN LR 10.30am AUB HC 9.00am MINDEN LR	8.30am TMBA LR 10.00am MARBURG HC AELC service and Sunday School Picnic
Sunday, 16 August		
READINGS: Isaiah 56:1, 6-8; Harvest: Deuteronomy 26:1-11;	Romans 11:1-2a, 13-15, 28-32; 2 Corinthians 9:6-15;	Matthew 15:21-28 Luke 12:13-21
HYMNS: Downs: 151 401 443 643 Marburg: 567 563 814 138 840 643		
Sunday, 23 August		
READINGS: Isaiah 51:1-6;	Romans 11:33-12:8;	Matthew 16:13-20
HYMNS: 457 188 377 (148 83) 217		

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tuesday, 11 August, 7.30pm. Men's Fellowship at Oakey. Opening devotion: John Ritter.

Downs Parish: We shall hold our Parish AGM in Oakey on Sunday the 16th of August at 7.30pm.

Bible Studies:

Sunday, 16 August, after service at Marburg.

Thursday, 20 August, 10.00am at Lowood.

Friday, 21 August, 7.30pm at Greenwood.

Friday, 28 August, 7.30pm Aub/Oak at OAKEY.