

Australian Evangelical Lutheran Church
BETHLEHEM TOOWOOMBA, OUR SAVIOUR LOWOOD, ST JOHN'S AUBIGNY,
ST PAUL'S GREENWOOD, TRINITY MARBURG, TRINITY OAKEY

3 July 2022

4th Sunday after Pentecost

HYMNS: 308 247 232 513

INTROIT:

Shout loudly to God, all the earth!

Sing the glory of His name; make His praise glorious!

Say to God, "How awesome are Your deeds! Because of Your great power, Your enemies will feign submission to You.

All the earth will worship You and sing praise to You; they will sing praise to Your name."

Come and see some of what God has done; He is awesome in what He has done for the descendants of Adam.

He turned the sea into dry land. They crossed the river on foot. There let us rejoice in Him.

He rules by His power for ever; His eyes observe the nations; let the rebellious not be haughty. Psalm 66:1-7

COLLECT: Almighty God, You have built Your Church on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus Himself as the cornerstone. Continue to send Your messengers to preserve Your people in true peace, that, by the preaching of Your Word, Your Church may be kept free from all harm and danger; 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: Isaiah 66:10-14 Rejoice with Jerusalem.

Galatians 6:1-10, 14-18 Never boast in anything but the cross of Christ.

Luke 10:1-20 Rejoice that your names have been written in heaven.

SERMON:

Luke 10:1-20 Rejoice that your names have been written in heaven!

Where Did We Go Wrong?

There is a tragic parable that repeats itself all too frequently in our Christian homes. While it has many variations, there are common threads that run through all its versions. The concluding punchline is usually a question raised very quietly: *Where did we go wrong?* The story is seldom told publicly, and when shared, it is delivered in hushed tones.

The story is about how many of our baptised sons and daughters have made their exit from the Kingdom of God. They do not attend Christian worship services, they no longer confess Christ, and they often show animosity toward those who do. In the Christian's spiritual warfare against the world, the flesh, and the devil, it seems they have lost. Many parents are left asking themselves, "*Where did we go wrong?*"

What is it that the Christian community needs to understand and implement here in Australia in the twenty-first century to meet the challenge of faithfully nurturing our young baptised in the Lord? More pointedly, what do we need to know and do as parents, pastors, and congregations to prepare our children for the spiritual assault that they face today in our current anti-Christian culture? What do we need to provide that so often is not being provided, so that future parents will not be pondering the same question, "*Where did we go wrong?*"

The last things needed to conclude reflection on this parable are some sentimental spiritual platitudes or words that gloss over the severity of the spiritual warfare our children face to retain and grow in their faith. Yes, we will pray for our now not-so-young children who no longer confess Christ. Yes, with God all things are possible, and He has not given up these children. Jesus is the Good Shepherd who leaves the ninety-nine in search of the one who has strayed and is lost (Luke 15:3-7). Let us take comfort in these realities about our gracious Lord and God. Nevertheless, often not taught or explained to parents, especially to fathers, is that their child's Baptism has landed him or her in a spiritual war zone where the devil relentlessly prowls to get our children for himself. The often-unspoken truth is that the Baptism of our kids has landed them in a life-long spiritual war with the devil. Jesus taught; he who endures to the end will be saved (Matthew 24:13). With his close allies - the fallen world (say, youth culture) and the sinful self - Satan is working to see that your child is not one of them. They are out to make our children collateral damage in the Kingdom of God.

The Christian faith is all about understanding and appreciating that the problem of sin will always be our children's greatest problem. Sin has resulted in a death problem, and as with all of us, they have it 24/7 (Rom. 5:12, 21). Unsolved, it cancels the possibility of having a Happy Forever. About our death problem,

Christianity presents only two options: you can die to sin in Christ, or you can just die. Dying and rising in the cross of Christ and being covered with His righteousness is the only solution to the death problem (Rom. 5:3-11, 20-21). All other avenues just present escape and coping mechanisms. These biblical truths must command our greatest attention in the care and spiritual nurture of our children regardless of their age. Life with God in Christ means enjoying His undeserved forgiveness and favour, but it also means sharing in His undeserved suffering and the world's disfavour. If these realities about human existence and life in Christ are not understood and appreciated, being or remaining a Christian can make little sense. Then other options, most any other options, can easily be seen as more attractive and fulfilling. We pray that God may enlighten and use parents, pastors, and Christian friends as His instruments to help our children deepen their understanding and appreciation of these realities or recover them for a Happy Forever.

Nurturing children in the midst of their spiritual warfare to live in the freedom of grace and the bondage of the neighbour corresponds to a dual citizenship that God has called all His children to occupy as the Church Militant. Under the lordship of Christ, we are simultaneously citizens of the Kingdom of God and worldly, earthly communities. We live a secure life as beggars of the grace that makes us free, and we live significant lives with works that bind us to our neighbours. These are great and wondrous truths about the fundamental identity of all of us, including our children - yes, even the smallest of these. Yet we must always remember our children's very real spiritual warfare that will continually attack them in both communities. Attacks that will assault the life-giving freedom of grace, the bondage of the neighbour, or both. These children are simply on loan to us from their heavenly Father and, through adoption, our brothers and sisters in the Gospel. Let us put away (or demand to be put away) the glitter, the finger painting, and the silly things that we do in the name of Christian education and teach this paradoxical identity of life in the Cross of Christ. Let us rightly divide the Word of Truth, teaching and applying God's Law and His Gospel that our children might adopt a lifelong habit of dying to live - dying to sin, and rising unto newness of life, serving Christ in the neighbours need - lords of all, beholding to none, and servants of all and subject to all. Let us nurture our children with the goal and confident hope that in that day, when you gather your earthly family together in the fullness of salvation, by the grace of God, they will be there.

Welcome to all worshipping with us today!

Pastor Peter Ziebell, Phone 0407583922.

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

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

COMING SERVICES

**PLEASE ALWAYS CHECK YOUR BULLETINS FOR ANY LATE CHANGES –
THEY CAN HAPPEN!!!**

10 July 5 PENTECOST	17 July 6 PENTECOST	24 July 7 PENTECOST
8.30am OAK LR 9.00am TMBA LR 9.30am GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am MARBURG LR	9.00am TMBA LR 10.00am LOWOOD HC AELC Service	8.30am OAK HC 9.00am TMBA LR 9.30am AUB LR 10.15am GRN HC 9.00am MARBURG LR
Sunday, 10 July		
READINGS: Leviticus 18:1-5, 19:9-18; Colossians 1:1-14; Luke 10:25-37		
HYMNS: 499 326 380 454		
Sunday, 17 July		
READINGS: Genesis 18:1-14; LOWOOD: Isaiah 62:1-7;	Colossians 1:21-29; Romans 10:11-17;	Luke 10:38-42 Luke 24:44-53
HYMNS: 364 153 230 239	LOWOOD: 224 219 230 333 56 239	

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Wednesday, **13 July**, 10.00am. Women's Guild at Marburg. Opening Devotion: Pastor. Choose a Bible verse from Exodus 17-20. Item of Interest: a pretty scarf.

Tuesday, 19 July, 7.30pm. Men's Fellowship at Oakey. Opening devotion: John.

BIBLE STUDIES for JULY:

Greenwood. Friday, 22, 7.30pm.

Mar/Lowood. Thursday, 28, 10.00am at Marburg.

Aub/Oak. Friday, 29, 7.30pm at Aubigny.

While pastor is away on holidays, if an emergency arises, please contact an elder. If there is an extreme emergency, call pastor, and he will do what he can to help.