

Australian Evangelical Lutheran Church
BETHLEHEM TOOWOOMBA, OUR SAVIOUR LOWOOD, ST JOHN'S AUBIGNY,
ST PAUL'S GREENWOOD, TRINITY MARBURG, TRINITY OAKEY
13th October Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost

HYMNS: 345 359 178 556

INTROIT: Psalm 90:12-17

Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a wise heart.
Return, O LORD! How long? Have compassion on Your servants.

In the morning satisfy us with Your mercy; that we may shout
happily and be glad all our days.

Make us glad for as many days as You have made us suffer, for as
many years as we have seen misery.

Let Your work appear to Your servants, and Your splendour to
their children.

And let the kindness of the LORD our God be upon us. Establish for
us the work of our hands. Yes, establish the work of our hands.

COLLECT: Lord Jesus Christ, whose grace always precedes and
follows us, help us to forsake all trust in earthly gain and to find in
You our heavenly treasure; for You live and reign with the Father
and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Welcome to all worshipping with us!

Pastor Ziebell can be contacted via phone/text at 0407 583922.

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

Email him at paziebell@gmail.com or to the church office at ddaclc@gmail.com. Pastor
is usually in his office Tuesday-Wednesday for anyone who would like to call in. Other
days of the week are set aside for visits.

READINGS:

Amos 5:6-7, 10-15 Hate evil, love good, maintain justice!

Hebrews 3:12-19 The living Word of God.

Mark 10:17-22 The rich man goes away sad.

Amos 5:6-7, 10-15

⁶ Be intent on the LORD and live, that He may not break in like a fire among the family of Joseph and that it may not burn it down! Bethel will have no one to put it out. ⁷ They are the ones who turn justice into wormwood. They have thrown righteousness down to the ground...

¹⁰ They hate a person who reproves another at the city-gate. They abhor a person who speaks sincerely. ¹¹ Therefore, because you have been trampling on a lowly person and, because you take a portion of his grain away from him, although you have built houses of hewn stone, you will nevertheless not live in them. Although you have planted pleasant vineyards, you will nevertheless not drink their wine.

¹² For I know that your wrongdoings are numerous and that your sins are great. You attack righteous people, you take bribes and have been depriving poor people of justice at the city-gate. ¹³ That is why a person who has insight will keep silent at this time. For this is an evil time. ¹⁴ Search for what is good and not what is evil, that you may live! Then the LORD, the God of hosts, will be with you, as you have been claiming. ¹⁵ Hate what is evil, love what is good and make justice effective in the city-gate! It may be that the LORD, the God of hosts, will be gracious to the remainder of Joseph.

Hebrews 3:12-19

¹² Be careful, fellow-Christians, that none of you has in him a wicked, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God! ¹³ Rather, encourage one another daily, while it is called “**Today**,” that none of you may **be hardened** by the deceitfulness of sin! ¹⁴ For we have become people who share in Christ, if we firmly hold the reality that we had at the beginning until the end. ¹⁵ When it is said: “**Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as you did in the rebellion!**” ¹⁶ Who, indeed, were those that heard Him and rebelled? Were they not, in fact, all those who were brought out of Egypt through Moses? ¹⁷ With whom was **He angry for forty years**? Was it not with those who sinned and whose **bodies fell in the wilderness**? ¹⁸ To whom did He **declare on oath that they would not enter His place of rest**, if it was not to those who disobeyed? ¹⁹ So, we see that they could not enter because of unbelief.

Mark 10:17-22

¹⁷ As Jesus was going out onto the road, a man came running to Him and fell on his knees before Him. He asked Him, “Good Teacher, what am I to do to inherit eternal life?”

¹⁸ Jesus asked him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good except One, that is, God. ¹⁹ You know the Commandments: ‘**Do not murder,**’ ‘**Do not commit adultery,**’ ‘**Do not steal,**’ ‘**Do not give false testimony,**’ ‘Do not defraud,’ ‘**Honour your father and mother!**’”

²⁰ He told Him, “Teacher, I have kept all these since I was a child.”

²¹ Jesus looked straight at him and loved him. He told him, “You lack one thing, Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor! You will have treasure in heaven. Then come here and follow Me!”

²² He looked gloomy when he heard that and went away sad, because he had great wealth.

COME HERE AND FOLLOW ME!
Sermon for the 21st Sunday after Pentecost 2024
Mark 10:17-22

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 is our Gospel from before, Mark 10:17-22: **As Jesus was going out onto the road, a man came running to Him and fell on his knees before Him. He asked Him, “Good Teacher, what am I to do to inherit eternal life?”**

¹⁸ Jesus asked him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good except One, that is, God. ¹⁹ You know the Commandments: ‘**Do not murder,**’ ‘**Do not commit adultery,**’ ‘**Do not steal,**’ ‘**Do not give false testimony,**’ ‘**Do not defraud,**’ ‘**Honour your father and mother!**’”

²⁰ He told Him, “Teacher, I have kept all these since I was a child.”

²¹ Jesus looked straight at him and loved him. He told him, “You lack one thing, Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor! You will have treasure in heaven. Then come here and follow Me!”

²² He looked gloomy when he heard that and went away sad, because he had great wealth.

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

Dear friends in Christ,

Today’s story is recorded in three Gospels: Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

Luke tells us that the man was a ruler, probably meaning a leader in his local synagogue, while Matthew tells us that he was young. All three, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, tell us he had great wealth. Thus, we have the story of the rich young ruler, which is a story of of idolatry, repentance, and faith. So, ultimately, this is a story about Jesus and how He calls each of us to give up on our idols and follow Him in faith. This is a story about the love of Jesus for sinners.

“As Jesus was going out onto the road, a man came running to Him and fell on his knees before Him.” Perhaps this rich young ruler had heard about this Rabbi who had been showing much wisdom in His teaching and obviously had a strong interest in getting an answer to a question that had been bothering him. He asks Jesus, **“Good Teacher, what am I to do to inherit eternal life?”**

There are two false presuppositions in his question.

First, he calls Jesus **“Good Teacher.”** It was rare in Jewish circles to address a man as “good.” As we shall see, Jesus reminds this man that God is the One who is good. But perhaps this man could see that Jesus was divine. However, it was more likely that he placed Jesus in the same category as other rabbis he had heard or learnt from. And then he asked, **“What am I to do to inherit eternal life?”** He thinks it’s a matter of his doing. *“There must be some good deed I need to perform to make it into eternal life. What is it? Have I left something out? I’ll ask this teacher, and maybe He can tell me.”*

Jesus takes on these two false presuppositions found in the young man’s question. **“Jesus asked him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good except One, that is, God.”** In other words, if you want to discover the key to inheriting eternal life, you will need more than just one man’s opinion. *Only God can unlock the door to eternal life.* You’ll need an answer from God, not just advice from a good rabbi or philosopher.

Now, what is good about the young man’s question is that he is concerned about inheriting eternal life. That’s important. At least he realises that we’ll all have to face the music someday and meet our Maker. There will come a day of accounting, the final Judgment Day, and then it will be eternal life or eternal damnation for everyone.

But Jesus must deal with this idea of somehow receiving eternal life through good works. He must correct this young man of that notion – a common thought people have. We come to it rather naturally that the way to get on God’s good side is by how much good we can do. We have to show ourselves to be better than bad people, and we do that by piling up our good works, accumulating enough points to outweigh our slip-ups and outscoring the people we outshine.

And so, if the young man is going to ask a Law question, Jesus will give him a Law answer. **“You know the Commandments,”** He tells the young man, and then quotes the commandments: **“‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not give false testimony,’ ‘Do not defraud,’ ‘Honour your father and mother!’”** In other words: *“There’s no secret special good deed you need to find out about if you want to gain eternal life by way of your works. You already know what to do. God has already told you in the Ten Commandments. So then, young man, how do you measure up?”*

“Teacher, I have kept all these since I was a child,” the rich young man replies. Now we’re getting to the problem. The young man thinks he has already done these things well enough. And, compared to most people, he probably has. I’m sure he was a fine young man. To be a synagogue ruler already at such a young age - he was probably an exemplary young fellow.

But something was missing, nagging at his conscience like he hadn’t done enough. Otherwise, he wouldn’t be asking Jesus this question. *“I’ve led a pretty decent life. I’ve tried hard. But is it enough? How can I be sure? How can I know when I’ve done enough to inherit eternal life?”*

How about you? On what basis do you think you will inherit eternal life? Or is this even a question you think about? Most people in our culture probably don’t even give this a thought anymore. Or if it does pop up, they try to suppress it. They don’t want to think too much about death and what comes after it. They do not want to think about a God they are accountable to. It is too scary. So, let’s numb ourselves into thinking happy thoughts. *“I’m good. You’re good. Everybody’s good - except the really bad people, of course. And you and I, we’re better than that. How dare God judge anybody, especially me! Why, that would be so judgmental!”*

Sadly, no amount of wishful thinking isn’t going to change the reality, and the reality is that there is this matter of eternal life looming ahead and knowing now how to obtain it. And thinking you have done enough good works isn’t going to do it. The commandments will only accuse you.

And so, if the young man thinks he has done enough by way of commandments about not murdering, stealing, committing adultery, and so forth - an outwardly respectable life - now Jesus is going to put His finger on an even bigger problem that the young man has, namely, his idolatry. The young man has a wrong god that he’s worshipping.

Mark writes, “**Jesus looked straight at him and loved him. He told him, “You lack one thing, Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor! You will have treasure in heaven. Then come here and follow Me!”**”

Notice that Jesus looked at the young man and “**loved him.**” What Jesus is about to say is not because He’s mean and wants the young man to be lost and damned. No. Far from it. Jesus loves this young man, even as He loves all people, no matter how old or young, rich or poor they may be. Jesus looks at you and me today *and loves us*. And when He reveals our idols to us and calls us to repentance, He’s doing that because He loves us. He wants us to be saved. He wants us to inherit eternal life. He wants us to have treasure in heaven.

“You lack one thing,” Jesus tells the young man; **“Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor!”**

Is Jesus here giving the secret to eternal life? Is this the missing ingredient? Voluntary poverty. Selling off your possessions. If you carry out that good work, then you will have it made. It’s okay that you’ve done all that other stuff, leading an outwardly moral life. But now, if you take this extra step of being so generous, selling off all your stuff, and giving all the proceeds to the poor, you’ll have your ticket to heaven! Yes, one more super-duper. Good work to do, and you’re in! Right?

Wrong! That would be a total misreading of what Jesus is saying here - although some have tried to spin it that way. No, Jesus is not here prescribing an additional really good work for you to do to earn your way into heaven. In fact, just the opposite. Jesus here is putting His finger on the young man’s idol. And in this man’s case, it was *his wealth*. He couldn’t give that up. His money, his possessions - that was his god. That’s what he placed the highest value on. This was the idolatry that the man needed to repent of.

Jesus here is showing the young man that he is indeed a sinner. If he thought he could skate by on his outward good works, Jesus here shows him that he still is clinging inwardly to an idol, which is to break the very First Commandment, “*You shall have no other gods,*” and dear friends, like the rich young man, we all need to hear that we are sinners and that we’re not going to make it on the basis of our works. That will not gain us eternal life and treasure in heaven.

So what will, or are we lost forever? No, we are not lost. There is a way. It is the only way, and that is why Jesus adds these words that are the key to the whole story. It is when Jesus says to the young man and to each one of us, **“Come here and follow Me!”**

Come, follow Jesus! This is the way of everlasting life! There is no other. Listen to the voice of Jesus, and come, follow Him in faith. Here is where you will find eternal life. In Christ. Here is how you will have treasure in heaven, namely, through Christ. For Jesus is truly the “rich young ruler” who left everything behind for you and me. He, the very Son of God, came down from heaven for us men and for our salvation. Paul writes, “*For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you by His poverty might become rich*” (2 Corinthians 8:9). Yes, Christ set aside the riches of heaven and came in our flesh as a servant. He walked the way of the cross to bear our sins and the weight of our idolatry - for we all have false gods of our own making - to suffer the judgment for our sins on the cross. He did this for your sake so that you might become rich and gain a treasure in heaven.

What is this treasure that you will inherit? It is the gift of eternal life. Death is not the end for you. Rather, everlasting life opens up before you. It is life with Christ. It is life that overcomes the grave, even as Jesus Himself rose from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. It is eternal life in Christ’s everlasting kingdom, a kingdom of righteousness, peace, joy, and blessing. Rejoicing with all the saints of all ages in the presence of God. No more sin, no more sorrow. Glorified bodies in a restored creation. Singing and praising and unending joy. This is the treasure that Christ has won for you, and that is waiting for you in heaven.

And so you have this treasure to inherit. You have these riches by God’s grace. God has given you the gift of faith, of trusting in Jesus as your Saviour, as your only hope. And with that gift comes everything else, all the riches of heaven.

When the rich young man heard these words of Jesus, he “**looked gloomy... and went away sad, because he had great wealth.**” He was not ready to give up on his idol. But not so with you today. You know that the false god of possessions, or any other idol we may value - those false gods cannot save you. Instead, today, you hear the voice of the one true God, who can and does and will save you. Today Jesus is calling you once again to repentance and to faith. This is a voice you can trust. “**Come here and follow Me!**” Jesus is saying to you today. “Come, follow me, and **you will have treasure in heaven.**” Amen.

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

PRAYER FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Almighty God, heavenly Father, we come to You in the precious name of our Saviour Jesus Christ, to praise You and pray to You. We thank You for Your constant love to us in days of happiness and prosperity, and for Your unfailing mercy in times of trouble and hardship. We thank You also for the joys of family life, the warmth of friends, and the blessings of all other God-pleasing human relationships. We praise You for giving us clear and sure directions for our life, and for standing by us when the future looks dark and uncertain. But, above all else, we thank and praise You for the gift of Your dear Son, through whose death and resurrection You have made us Your own for ever, and shown such great love to us.

We trust You to continue to supply our food and clothing, and pray You to make us content with what You provide. Grant that we may not set our hearts on uncertain riches. Keep material things from competing with our duty to love You with our heart, mind, soul, and strength.

Bless your church with faithful pastors. Give Your Church warm love for You, joy in its fellowship around the Gospel, true faithfulness to Your Word, and eagerness to do Your work. Give us opportunities to witness to people who need to hear the Gospel from us, and bless our efforts for Your kingdom. Lead us daily by Your Holy Spirit, that we may understand Your Word and will more clearly, and to walk the path of faith, obedience, and love. Guide us by Your light, that we may turn from every folly of our evil age, and use every opportunity to claim Your grace and to live in Your wisdom. Give us joy and happiness, not in evil, but in a life lived in fellowship with You and Your people.

Make all rulers obedient to You, so that all tyranny and oppression may be put down, all lust for power wiped out, and all love for man-made gods destroyed. Protect us from every enemy, so that we may live to serve You and our fellowmen in peace and safety.

Teach all in our families to look to You for every need. Provide them at the right time with everything they need for body and spirit. Guide them, above all else, to rejoice in Your Word, to give thanks to You for everything, and to sing hymns to Your praise.

Be with those who face sickness or sorrow, trouble or danger, and free them from all worry and dis-tress. Be with those who suffer persecution and injustice, and increase their faith and trust as they wait patiently for Your deliverance.

Grant us all these things, and anything else we need, in Christ's name and for His sake. Amen.

Article: Where to now, LCA?

As you know, the LCA, at its recent synod, removed the obstacle to ordaining women into the ministry. Of course, that obstacle was the Word of God. The Word of God was cast aside and trampled underfoot. Unless they repent, those who rejoiced in the decision will now have to look forward to the Lord's judgment (1 Cor. 14:38).

However, WO has not yet been implemented and won't be for a few months. How to implement it (changing the Theses of Agreement and any other doctrinal statements that maintain a men-only ministry, etc.) will be discussed early next year in a scheduled ZOOM 'non-convention' meeting. Theoretically, WO could still be rejected at that upcoming ZOOM meeting, but even if it was (and it won't be – 71% of the delegates voted for the implementation of WO), the damage has already been done. The LCA is a church divided, and if things aren't a mess already, they will get messier. In its *Way Forward Framework* leading up to synod, the LCA pushed the fanciful notion of one church and two teachings. One church – two teachings – will not and cannot work. You are either for God and His Word or against it.

This past week, some members of the LCA have resigned, and some pastors are preparing to resign as well. Last Sunday, at churches around the Adelaide area where the synod was held, some refused to commune out of protest, while others recognised that they could no longer be part of a heterodox church, and their communing would have given the indication that they agreed with the decision. These members and pastors must be commended.

However, some still communed because they were confused and unsure. We pray that they will come to a proper understanding. Some of these continue to reach out to the AELC for guidance.

But there are also those—and I think this will be a majority of pastors and congregations—who will continue as they are. They may not be for WO, but since they are against it on a congregational level, they see no need to leave. They do not have a proper understanding of fellowship and must be reminded of the Apostle Paul's words when he writes, "*Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread*" (1 Cor. 10:17). Union with Christ results in union with one another. The symbol of sharing "one bread" corresponds to the reality of the "one body."

Children's Message:

Can you tell me what the sign on this page is? Right. It's a caution sign. And what's this caution sign for? A caution sign alerts us to pay attention and be careful of something that might be dangerous to us. For instance, we might see a caution sign in a store, alerting us that the floor is wet so we don't slip and fall. We might see a caution sign alerting us that kangaroos are in the scrub, so we keep an eye out that we don't hit any that may come bounding across the road.



The author of the book of Hebrews is holding up a caution sign for his congregation. They've been struggling through some really tough times. Some of them had been beaten, some had their homes taken from them, and some had been put in jail - not because they did anything wrong, but simply because they had told everyone they believed in Jesus.

Their pastor, the author, is afraid these new Christians might lose hope and get discouraged. They might even be tempted to stop believing in Jesus. So he holds up a caution sign and warns them, "Be careful, fellow-Christians, that none of you has in him a wicked, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God!" (3:12). A "wicked, unbelieving heart," not believing in Jesus - anyone who has that will be lost to hell!

The ancient Israelites in the wilderness eventually fell away from the faith because they refused to listen to the voice of God and trust in His ways. Could the same thing happen to these Hebrew Christians? Unfortunately, yes, it certainly could. So when God cautions them, what should they do? They should listen to God's voice, His Word, because, in His Word, God tells them that He'll always be with them no matter how tough the times may be. That's because Jesus made them God's children again by dying on the cross. And they should encourage one another with the same Word.

When we continue to come to church, we hear that same Word of God that keeps us believing in Jesus. It keeps telling us, too, that Jesus took away our sin so that God will always be with us - and that we're connected to Him by Baptism. Besides, when we're here to hear, we also encourage everyone else here to keep believing in Jesus - all the way to heaven.

Thank You Father for giving me Your voice Your Word. Help me to always listen to You. Amen.

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

20 October 22 Pentecost	27 October Reformation Day	3 November All Saints' Day
8.30am OAK HC Harvest 9.00am TMBA LR 9.30am AUB LR 10.15am GRN HC Harvest 9.00am LOWOOD LR	10.00am HC GRN AELC Service and St Paul's Lutheran Church Greenwood 125 th anniversary.	8.30am OAK LR 9.00am TMBA LR 9.00am GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am LOWOOD HC
Sunday, 20 October		
READINGS: Ecclesiastes 5:10-20; (Oak & Grn) Deuteronomy 26:1-11;	Hebrews 4:1-16; 2 Corinthians 9:6-15;	Mark 10:23-31 Luke 12:13-21
HYMNS: 502 372 377 426 OAK/GRN: 563 814 566 (53 293) 437		
Sunday, 27 October		
READINGS: Revelation 14:6-7;	Romans 3:19-28;	Luke 19:1-10
HYMNS: 183 195 201 69 287 (292 if needed) 257		
Sunday, 3 November		
READINGS: Revelation 7:2-17;	1 John 3:1-3;	Matthew 5:1-12
HYMNS: 494 213 210 (169 284) 473		

OCTOBER Bible Study dates:

Wednesday, 16 October, 7.30pm Greenwood.

Thursday, 17 October, 10.00am Lowood.

Friday, 25 October, 7.30pm Oak/Aub at Aubigny.