TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

The Problem With Living

AS WE GATHER

Today's sermon topic is called "The Problem with Living." It might also be entitled, "The Struggles of Life" or "Blind Faith."

The problem isn't that we don't have faith. The problem is that we have faith AND we see problems everywhere in life. And these problems sometimes cause us to shift our focus from the Mountain-Mover to the mountain itself, causing us to fear, worry or even doubt. That is misplaced focus according to all the prophets and apostles.

Paul, aware of our tendency to be distracted by the obstacles of life, reminds us that our vision is currently limited. We dare not trust our eyes alone: "For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known" (1 Cor. 13:12). It's an admission that while living on earth, we can't always see or know God's great designs and how He is working out "all things together for good" in our lives.

But by faith, we can trust that the One who knows all and completely loves us and has a perfect plan to see us through every struggle until that glorious day when there is "no sorrow, suffering or pain." It's a matter of focus, refusing to trust our eyes and instead trust our faith or more accurately, trust the Focus of our Faith: Jesus. Paul says confidently, "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28).
※ PREPARATION ※

PRELUDES  “O Sons and Daughters of the King”  Paul Manz
          “Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending”  Timothy Shaw

PASTORAL GREETING

TOLLING OF THE BELL

HYMN  “Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending”  LSB 336

INVOCATION

Pastor:  In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
People:  Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor:  It is God who executes judgment,
People:  putting down one and lifting up another.
Pastor:  Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled,
People:  and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

A time for silent reflection

Pastor:  Almighty God,
People:  we are a disobedient people who have forsaken Your ways and chosen the desires of our own hearts over Your Word. In thought, word, and deed we have sinned against You and against one another, done what is evil, and failed to do what is good. In pride we have sought to repair our sinful condition and have failed. We are sorry for all our sins, and we pray You to forgive us for the sake of Jesus Christ, Your Son, asking You to send also Your Holy Spirit that we may amend our sinful lives and live to the praise of Your glory; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Pastor:  Be comforted, dear people, for the Lord has heard Your cry for mercy and forgiven You for the sake of Your Savior Jesus Christ, our Lord. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People:  Amen
Pastor:  May He who began this good work within you bring it to completion on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

People:  Amen.
KYRIE “Kyrie, God, Father”  
LSB 942

HYMN OF PRAISE “Beautiful Savior”  
LSB 537
On Verse 3, Sing in Harmony, acapella

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.  
People: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray.
O Lord, You resist the proud and give grace to the humble. Give to us the true humility of Your Son, Jesus Christ, that we shed all arrogant and prideful ways that would condemn us and by Your grace learn to love and serve You above all and to love and serve our neighbor as Christ has loved us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

Old Testament: Job 1:17-22

While he was still speaking, another messenger came and said, “The Chaldeans formed three raiding parties and swept down on your camels and carried them off. They put the servants to the sword, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!”

While he was still speaking, yet another messenger came and said, “Your sons and daughters were feasting and drinking wine at the oldest brother’s house, when suddenly a mighty wind swept in from the desert and struck the four corners of the house. It collapsed on them and they are dead, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!”

At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship and said:

“Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised.”

In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.
Second Reading: Habakkuk 3:16-19

I heard and my heart pounded, my lips quivered at the sound; decay crept into my bones, and my legs trembled. Yet I will wait patiently for the day of calamity to come on the nation invading us. Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior.

The Sovereign Lord is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to go on the heights.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

Congregation, please rise for the Alleluia verse and the Holy Gospel.

VERSE  Luke 14:11

Pastor: Alleluia. Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.
People: Alleluia.

Holy Gospel: John 20:24-29

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the twentieth chapter.
People: Glory to You, O Lord.

Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord!” But he said to them, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe.” A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.”
Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!”
Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.
People: Praise to You, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE DAY “O Sons and Daughters of the King” LSB 470
Verses 1-2, 4-6, 8

SERMON “Blind Faith” Pastor John Larson
TEXT: II Corinthians 4:18, 5:7

NICENE CREED Text found in the back of the Hymnal.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: In humility and faith we come, O Lord, before Your throne of grace, and we ask You to hear us for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Kill the pride that would cut us off from Your grace and teach us the humility of faith that we serve You and delight in Your will here on earth and live in peace and love with all people. Lord, hear our prayer,

People: and grant our supplication.

Pastor: Give to our president, Congress, governor, and all elected and appointed public servants a heart for Your people, a desire for justice, and a passion for service. Give special blessing to all emergency and disaster workers who serve us in our greatest moments of need and protect those who defend us at home and abroad. Lord, hear our prayer,

People: and grant our supplication.

Pastor: Guide us to look beyond ourselves and to behold the poor and those in need. Give us voices to speak on their behalf and give us generous hearts to supply their need from our abundance. Lord, hear our prayer,

People: and grant our supplication.

Pastor: Govern our lives by Your Word so that we know the truth and keep it in holy hearts. Bless especially our Sunday School, catechumens, Bible studies, parochial schools, universities, and seminaries that our learning be directed by Your Word. Lord, hear our prayer,

People: and grant our supplication.

Pastor: Give us grateful hearts so that we not presume to come to this Table of the Lord trusting in our own merits but solely in the merits and mercies of Jesus Christ, who gives Himself to us in this bread and cup. Help us to be people of love, and strengthen us in this love by this blessed Communion. Lord, hear our prayer,

People: and grant our supplication.
Pastor: Guard the hearts of the mentally ill, give to the suffering relief, grant healing to the sick and those recuperating, and guard the dying in Your peace, [especially . . .], that all be healed according to Your will, sustained in their hour of need by Your grace, and kept to everlasting life. Lord, hear our prayer,

People: and grant our supplication.

Pastor: Give us a grateful heart for the gift of labor and for the fruits of our labors we enjoy. Give to the unemployed and the underemployed the work they seek, and guide us all to use well and wisely the resources this labor provides, that we honor You both with the songs of our lips and the tithes and offerings we bring. Lord, hear our prayer,

People: and grant our supplication.

Pastor: Other Intercessions may be added here... Lord, hear our prayer,

People: and grant our supplication.

Pastor: Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

People: Amen.

THE SHARING OF THE PEACE

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: And also with you.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY “God Bless the USA” Lee Greenwood
Ann Westra, flute

HOLY COMMUNION AT ASCENSION

The Lord, our Host, invites to his Supper those who are baptized into the Christian faith, confess him as Savior, have been instructed and have examined themselves, truly repent of sins, believe the Risen Lord is present in the sacrament with his true body and blood, and resolve to live faithfully and obediently. For those with an intolerance to alcohol, the center ring of the tray contains grape juice. Gluten free wafers are available to those with wheat allergies. Children who have not been instructed, yet desire a blessing, are invited to come forward with arms crossed. When receiving the bread and wine, the communicant may respond with “Amen!”, a word of affirmation and belief.
PREFACE

Pastor: The Lord be with you.  
Timothy 4:22

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts. [Colossians 3:1]

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
[Psalm 136]

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

PROPER PREFACE

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who, out of love for His fallen creation, humbled Himself by taking on the form of a servant, becoming obedient unto death, even death upon a cross. Risen from the dead, He has freed us from eternal death and given us life everlasting. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

961 Sanctus

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

LORD’S PRAYER Matthew 6:9–13 Text found in the back of the Hymnal.

AGNUS DEI

DISTRIBUTION MUSIC

“Lord Jesus Christ, We Humbly Pray” LSB 623
“Lord Jesus Christ, We Humbly Pray” (organ) Paul Manz
“Jesus Comes Today with Healing” LSB 620

GENERAL COMMUNION BLESSING

BENEDICTION
Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. Numbers 6:24–26

People: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN “By All Your Saints in Warfare” LSB 517 Verses 1,6,3

CONGREGATIONAL CONCERNS

DISMISSAL

Pastor: Go in peace! Serve the Lord!
People: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE “O Sons and Daughters of the King” John Leavitt
The Sovereign LORD
is my strength ... He enables me to go on the heights ...

Habakkuk 3:19
“Stop doubting and BELIEVE.”

JOHN 20:27, NIV
Serving in Worship

OFFICIANT and CELEBRANT
Pastor John Larson

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES
Michael Zehnder

ORGAN ASSISTANT
Gwen Geisler

YOUTH BAND
Ashley Boeding, Brooke Boeding, Larry Boeding, Lilly Brinkman, Kayden Erling, Will Kopriva

ELDER
8:00 Bill Redden
10:00 Don Loptien

LECTOR
8:00 Joyce Dowdy
10:00 Carol Shepherd

ACOLYTE
8:00 Ian Avedissian
10:00 Nolan Pierce

USHERS
8:00 Art Gordon, Members of the Congregation
10:00 Jason Dierking, Members of the Congregation

SERVER
10:00 Margo Pasha

ALTAR GUILD
Sally Atchison, Gloria Gaudreault, Laurel Shurtleff

FLOWERS
Jim and Tanya Schmitt, in joyful celebration of their 19th wedding anniversary (August 26).

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